ANDAM enlists Martin Margiela in emerging designer prize jury

By Dominique Muret - 6 February 2019

ANDAM, the French national association for the development of the arts and fashion, has announced that Martin Margiela will be a member of the jury for the 30th edition of the association’s emerging designer prize, of which Margiela was the first winner in 1989.

“It’s a significant gesture on the part of Martin, now a visual artist after ending his fashion design career. And it’s important for us, it’s a welcome recognition,” Nathalie Dufour, the competition’s founder and director, told FashionNetwork.com, as the ANDAM Prize 2019 opened to applications.

“I find it extremely generous on his part. It’s a way of passing his experience on, handing it over to the new generations,” added Dufour.

The visionary designer, who retired in 2009, will take part in the prize’s entire selection process, and will then meet the finalists at the end of June for their final interview with the jury, on the day the results will be announced. As is his custom, Margiela will refrain from being photographed.

In a press release, Margiela said that it was ANDAM which provided the financial support to kickstart his career.

“In 1989, Nathalie Dufour discovered a gilet-object made with pieces of broken crockery at my second show. She understood that recycling would form the basis for a specific collection, and had the idea of creating the ANDAM prize to assist emerging designers. I was the first to be awarded the prize, and this enabled me to fund my ‘artisanal atelier’ and start [my label’s] commercialisation; the label would eventually join the haute couture calendar in 2006. I will never forget how vital the prize was for my development.”

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It may be a coincidence, but Renzo Rosso, the president of Italian fashion group OTB, which bought Maison Martin Margiela in 2002, will be the winner's mentor at this year's ANDAM Prize. It is the second time that Rosso will feature in this role, having already done so in 2013, when the ANDAM Prize went to Ami.

The prize was founded in 1989 by Nathalie Dufour, together with the French Culture and Communication Ministry and public body DEFI (the Committee for the Development and Promotion of Apparel). Since 2017, the competition is chaired by Guillaume Houzé, a member of the family which founded department store group Galeries Lafayette. In the last three decades, the prize has significantly grown in influence thanks to the backing of several private sponsors, among them top luxury labels and leading players in the fashion world (Chanel, Chloé, the Pierre Bergé – Yves Saint Laurent Foundation, Galeries Lafayette, Hermès, Kering, Longchamp, LVMH, OBO, OTB, Première Classe, Saint Laurent, Swarovski, Tomorrow London Holdings Ltd and others).

This year, the prize will welcome a new sponsor in sportswear brand Lacoste, featuring for the first time among ANDAM’s supporters. To celebrate the prize’s 30th anniversary, ANDAM will also launch a series of initiatives with Galeries Lafayette. The first is an exhibition scheduled for next September on the first floor of the Parisian department store’s flagship branch, a retrospective look at ANDAM’s thirty years of design history in relation with the socio-cultural changes of the period.

In parallel, Galeries Lafayette will shine a spotlight on former prize winners, whose labels are by and large sold at the department store. It will do so via pop-up stores and special projects, including collaborations between the labels and their mentors, like Pigalle with Chanel and Françoise by Johanna Senyk with Chloé. A series of round-table debates is also planned.

“ANDAM has become so complex and it involves so many people now, that it's hard to talk about everything. The 30th anniversary initiatives with Galeries Lafayette will provide an in-depth perspective on all the activities we developed over the course of these years,” concluded Dufour.

In 2019, the ANDAM competition will feature four prizes, as it did last year: the grand prize worth €250,000; the creative label prize, which substitutes the first collection prize, worth €100,000; the fashion accessories prize worth €50,000; and the innovation prize, first introduced in 2017, with a €30,000 endowment. Altogether, the prize money this year will again add up to €430,000. Winners will also benefit from a global mentorship programme offered by the sponsors.

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