Matthew Williams confirmed as Givenchy’s new creative director

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The rumour had been circulating since April, and now it is official: US designer Matthew Williams will very soon be inducted as the new creative director of Parisian luxury label Givenchy, an appointment confirmed to FashionNetwork.com by several industry sources.
On Monday afternoon, Givenchy finally gave its seal of approval to the news, indicating that Williams's contract will officially start on Tuesday June 16. He succeeds Clare Waight Keller, who took charge of Givenchy's style in 2017 and left the French fashion house on April 10. Williams will oversee Givenchy's menswear, womenswear and haute couture collections. This is the first major appointment made by the LVMH group's label in the wake of the arrival of Renaud de Lesquen as CEO last March.

Williams was born in Illinois in 1985, and moved to California aged two. From early on, he was strongly influenced by the world of streetwear. He failed to gain entry in various fashion schools, and began to collaborate with musicians, making a name for himself by working as Lady Gaga's first creative director, from 2008 to 2010.

Williams created the 1017 Alyx 9SM label in 2015

A close acquaintance of photographer Nick Knight, Williams then met rapper/producer/designer Kanye West, and was appointed creative director of Studio Donda, West's creative agency. At the time, he collaborated with future fashion heavyweights like Virgil Abloh, Heron Preston and Justin Saunders, setting up with them an art and music collective called Been Trill.

In 2015, Williams launched his own label, Alyx, first featuring womenswear and introducing menswear in 2017. Alyx hit the ground running, helped by Williams's association with Luca Benini, founder of distributor Slam Jam, and boosted by a nomination as finalist of the 2016 LVMH Prize. Alyx was soon commercialised via benchmark retailers such as Dover Street Market and Opening Ceremony.

The label was later rechristened 1017 Alyx 9SM ('1017' with reference to Williams's birthday on October 17, and '9SM' as a nod to the address of the New York design studio where Williams’ career began), and in the last few years it has partnered with names like Dior, Moncler, Nike and Mackintosh.

Williams is currently based in Milan, and has yet to indicate whether he will move to Paris with his family.

Translated by Nicola Mira

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