Creative director Paul Andrew leaves Salvatore Ferragamo

By Dominique Muret - 14 April 2021

While the leadership of Salvatore Ferragamo has recently been confirmed with the entry of Leonardo Ferragamo who has succeeded his brother Ferruccio as non-executive vice president, creative director Paul Andrew is on his way out. The Florence-based luxury brand, which has been on a path of relaunching for several years, has opted for continuity on the management side but has decided to change its strategy with regards to design, and therefore its image.

“Paul Andrew will leave the business in May 2021 to pursue other professional opportunities. Ferragamo’s creative and design leadership will continue under the supervision of the existing internal team,” the brand said in a statement, confirming rumours which had been circulating for some time. The British designer, originally a footwear specialist, took some time to prove himself in the ready-to-wear world.

Considered as one of the most eminent talents in footwear, Paul Andrew had made a name for himself with his eponymous footwear brand which saw him recognised for his technical know-how and elegant style which is both modern and glamorous, epitomised by his signature, almost vertical high-heels, designed to be very comfortable. Andrew took a pause from his own brand when he took over design at Ferragamo.

Andrew graduated from Berkshire College of Art and Design and started out at Alexander McQueen before moving to New York in 1999 to join Narciso Rodriguez and then finally launching his own brand in 2013. Andrew received recognition in the U.S. where he won several accolades. Now in his forties, the designer has worked notably with designers including Donna Karan, Michael Kors, Calvin Klein, and Ralph Lauren, before being recruited in 2016 to work for Salvatore Ferragamo.

This was an important step for the brand which, for the first time in its history, had called on a design director for its line of women’s footwear. A year later, in 2017, Andrew was propelled to the role of creative director of the brand’s women’s ready-to-wear collections and he also took over creative direction of men’s fashion in 2019, overseeing all brand collections.
all product categories.

Under the aegis of the Ferragamo family, the brand has always maintained a fairly traditional image, without really innovating. In recent years, the brand has neither been able to renew itself creatively, nor to evolve its image, and has regularly found itself at the centre of speculation about a potential sale.

The brand was particularly affected by the Covid-19 crisis and experienced a net loss of €72 million ($86 million) in 2020. Following two challenging years in 2017 and 2018, Salvatore Ferragamo had begun to recover in 2019, but the pandemic impacted its turnover, which amounted to €916 million euros last year, a drop of 33.5%.

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