

# La Fédération Française de la Couture du Prêt à Porter des Couturiers et des Créateurs de Mode

## I. Historical Background

The Fédération Française de la Couture, du Prêt-à-Porter des Couturiers et des Créateurs de Mode was founded in 1973.

Presided over by Ralph Toledano (President of PUIG Fashion Division), elected by the representatives of the houses which constitute its membership, the Fédération is the executive body for each of the specific Chambres Syndicales and is directed by Pascal Morand, Executive President who implements the policy decided by the Executive Committee.

Didier Grumbach is now Honorary President after having presided it over from 1998 to 2014.

The Fédération Française de la Couture, du Prêt-à-Porter des Couturiers et des Créateurs de Mode includes the following trade associations:

> **The Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture**, also chaired by Ralph Toledano, whose members include only those companies designated as Haute Couture houses. Haute Couture is a legally protected and controlled label that can only be used by the fashion houses which have been granted the designation by the French Ministry of Industry. The group of companies that enjoy the Haute Couture label is reviewed annually.

> **The Chambre Syndicale du Prêt-à-Porter des Couturiers et des Créateurs de Mode**, chaired by Bruno Pavlovsky, which includes Haute Couture houses and fashion designers producing women's ready-to-wear.

> **The Chambre Syndicale de la Mode Masculine**, chaired by Sidney Toledano, which includes top brands of men's ready-to-wear.

Altogether, these three trade associations comprise about 100 corporate members, all of which are internationally-known brands with strong export sales.

A unique quality of the The Fédération Française de la Couture, du Prêt-à-Porter des Couturiers et des Créateurs de Mode is that its membership includes non-French companies from countries including Japan, Italy, Belgium, Chinese, Corean, etc. This mix reflects the growing globalization of fashion.

## II. The Federation's Objectives and Activities

### A- To preserve Paris' position as the world Capital of Fashion Design

Since the beginning of the 20th century, the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture has organized Haute Couture fashion shows twice a year.

After World War II, these fashion shows began to attract an increasing amount of media attention. In the beginning of the 1970s, french and international fashion labels started to show their men's and women's ready-to-wear collections in Paris during Paris Fashion Week™. The Fédération Française de la Couture has been the organizer of Paris Fashion Week™ since its inception and continues to expand and improve logistics thanks to the following initiatives :

***1. Establish the show calendars for each of the fashion weeks: optimize schedule and venues for shows.***

Each season, the Fédération sets the fall-winter and spring-summer show calendars for Haute Couture, and women's and men's ready to wear.

Every year, in January and July, Paris hosts some 30 Haute Couture fashion shows and 40 men's wear shows. In March and October, there are 150 fashion shows for women's ready-to-wear. The Fédération organizes the show schedule in such a way as to prevent time conflicts and to allow the international press and buyers to cover as many collections as possible. To take into account the growing number of fashion presentations which take place in Paris and to have the various fashion weeks take up as few days as practically possible, the Fédération tries to regroup the shows at venues in the center of the city. It also tries to regroup shows to take place one after another in nearby venues. In addition, transportation is offered to journalists and buyers. These services help members of the fashion profession use their time more efficiently during the busy show weeks. The Fédération works closely with fashion and accessory trade show organizers on scheduling to enable the press and buyers attend all that Paris has to offer during show week. Furthermore, the Fédération works closely with its sister organization in Milan to make sure there the various European fashion weeks are time-coherent.

The fashion week calendar, produced and distributed, by the Federation is a great publicity tool for the labels which are included. The calendar is given out to the 2000 French and international journalists and buyers who attend Paris fashion week.

***2. Press List***

For each fashion week, the Fédération invites journalists, photographers and videographers to become officially accredited. The names of the accredited press are then compiled into a database that is sent to Fédération members who use the list to manage invitations to shows and events all year long.

Journalists have been able to register online via an accreditation service on [www.modeaparis.com](http://www.modeaparis.com) since July 2015

***3. Press and Buyer Welcome & Information Centers***

During women's ready-to-wear weeks in March and October, the Fédération operates an international press and information center. This center gives the 800 buyers, 2000 journalists, 400 photographers, and other fashion professionals access to information in all formats: print, audiovisual and digital. The center boasts:

- > A general welcome and information center with information about Paris (restaurants, hotels, transportation, culture)
- > An information center for the trade shows
- > An interactive workspace with computers, telephones and fax machines to help journalists prepare their articles.

The Fédération has also developed new tools of communication to improve public quality information about the shows:

- > The **Agenda & Contacts** book – 15,000 printed each season
- > Video program which displays the shows and events calendar for each fashion week.
- > A guide listing all the sales showrooms for men's wear
- > A Paris Fashion Week app.

Finally, a service of free shuttle transportation was introduced to help journalists and buyers get from show to show.

## **B- Facilitate the growth of emerging brands**

- > Increase the visibility of young labels by progressively including them in the various fashion week calendars : Couture, Ready-to-Wear or Men's fashion and by showcasing them on its website through the « New Now » operation,
- > Provide them with the Designers Apartment showroom with the support of the DEFI, in March and October, which now has its own dedicated pages at [www.modeaparis.com](http://www.modeaparis.com)
- > Help the brands expand to foreign markets,
- > Help brands find financing they need to grow their business.

Young labels that attempt to expand internationally often have a very strong and original design aesthetic that sometimes goes against current trends. The production cycle of these companies implies that they need significant cash reserves to bridge the gap between the period of the financing and development of a collection, and receipts from sales.

To better respond to the financial needs of young, growing fashion companies, an investment fund "Mode et Finance" was set up to take minority stakes in promising young fashion firms.

A guarantee fund managed by IFCIC facilitates credit for emerging brands by guaranteeing short-term loans granted by the banks.

## **C- Defend Intellectual Property Rights**

Innovation is a fundamental force of fashion companies that guarantees a competitive edge to Western companies facing competition from producers in low-salary markets. Innovation can help slow down outsourcing. For this reason, the fight against copyright infringement for sketches and actual clothing items is a fundamental purpose of the Fédération. Brands, creativity, intellectual property rights, drawings and prototypes: Couturiers and designers are regularly affected by counterfeits: illegal copies of their creations, counterfeiting of their brand or illegal use of the brand and/or its logo on products – these practices weigh heavily against the entire industry. The protection of the rights of brands and the control over the distribution of images are a major concern for fashion companies. As such, the issue is of primary importance for the Fédération. The Fédération, in collaboration with public services and all concerned administrations, strives to fight against all forms of counterfeiting whether in France, The European Union or in other countries. The Fédération works to create and promote coherent laws among major markets in order to efficiently fight all forms of copying internationally.

## **D- Develop Training and Education Programs**

The globalization of the economy and the resulting increased competition means that our companies have to be increasingly creative in terms of products and increasingly proactive in terms of organization in order to respond to the demands of the diverse markets into which they wish to expand.

Within this context, education and training are key factors in the strategic development of our companies.

The Ecole de la Chambre Syndicale de la Couture, created in 1927 by the profession, plays a major role at the Fédération and allows it to participate in training and education programs serving the industry.

The instruction offered by this school has always served a double-purpose:

- > Help foster creativity for those who want to succeed in a sector whose products are constantly being renewed.

> Help students acquire the savoir-faire needed to master manufacturing techniques required to turn their own creations into real products.

*Yves Saint Laurent, Valentino, Jean-Louis Scherrer, Issey Miyake, André Courrèges, Adeline André, Dominique Sirop, Gilles Rosier, Jean Colonna, Nicolas Le Cauchois, Jérôme L'Huillier, Tom Van Lingen, Stéphane Rolland, Véronique Nichanian, Anne Valérie Hash, Alexis Mabille,* among others, all attended this school.

Since November 2010, the Ecole de la Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne is located at 119 rue Réamur (75002 Paris) and comprises:

- A mixed work-linked center for technical matters including apprenticeships and professional training contracts.
- A center for continuous professional learning with programs focusing on notions such as garment, quality and good-fit, fashion culture, ...
- A 4-year study training in fashion design and pattern-making leading to the obtention of a professional title certified as Level II, Master I.
- A further 1-year training program in Fashion Design and pattern-making after completion of a superior training in Fashion sector.
- Summer school

#### **E- Resolve collective problems, provide information and advice to member**

The Fédération is a place for dialogue, discussion and decision-making about problems faced by member companies. These issues can be related to employment, taxes or general business. The Fédération acts as the industry spokesperson to the government and public agencies on the one hand, and to unions and employees on the other. The Fédération also is a source of information and advise for its members on issues of legislation, and regulations concerning business, taxes and trade.

To better handle the problems faced by members and to develop a collective approach based on the real business and employment concerns of members, the Fédération established two committees:

- > The Legal Committee presided by *Annick de Chaunac*, the legal director for Hermès International.
- > The Employment Committee presided by *David Morin*, Directeur du Personnel of Christian Dior Couture

These committees are made up of human resources or legal executives and their goal is to:

- Develop legal tools that are put at the disposal of the Fédération's members: licensing agreements, distribution agreements, sales conditions, official descriptions of various trades
- Prepare negotiations with unions
- Spearhead actions that make French and foreign governments aware and sensitive to collective issues of interest.

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[www.modeaparis.com](http://www.modeaparis.com)  
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