



50 CONTEMPORARY FASHION DESIGNERS

YOU SHOULD KNOW

Doria Santlofer



PRESTEL

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1940 The first McDonald's restaurant opens

1961 Construction of the Berlin Wall

1969 Woodstock Festival

1930 1935 1940 1945 1950 1955 1960 1965 1970 1975 1980



Haider Ackermann Spring/Summer 2010 Prêt-à-Porter show, Paris Fashion Week

1993 Bill Clinton sworn in as 42nd US president

2007 The Apple iPhone goes on sale

2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro

1981 First recognized cases of AIDS

2001 First same-sex marriage in the Netherlands

2011 After 14 years of collaboration, Dior suspends John Galliano

1985 1990 1995 2000 2005 2010 2015 2020 2025 2030 2035

HAIDER ACKERMANN

The avant-garde aesthetic comes naturally to Haider Ackermann, the Colombian designer who has become known for his fluid draping and sophisticated sense of color. In 2010, the Belgian-trained designer presented a stellar and evocative collection and catapulted himself into fashion-world stardom.

Born in Santa Fe de Bogota, Columbia in 1971, Ackermann's cartographer father moved the family around several times throughout his childhood, bringing them on travels throughout Europe and Africa. Upon graduating from high school in the Netherlands, Ackermann moved to Belgium in his early twenties to study at the Royal Academy of Antwerp. In 2001, after interning for John Galliano, the young designer launched his own womenswear label, presenting his first collection in Paris for Fall 2002. Ackermann's Belgian training is perhaps the reason for the designer's darker, more austere sensibility, albeit one that never fails to be beautiful. Now, a decade after his debut, Ackermann's draped and tailored style has made an immense impact on fashion.

In November 2010, after seasons of solid reviews yet quieter commercial success, great praise from Karl Lagerfeld was bestowed upon the Colombian-born designer. When asked who would be the person to replace Lagerfeld at Chanel, the famed designer replied: "At the moment I'd say Haider Ackermann." So, when Ackermann presented his Fall 2011 collection the following spring, all eyes were on him as possible heir to the Chanel throne. And Haider Ackermann did not disappoint. In a show that critics hailed as "transporting" and "exuberant," the designer maintained many of his signature elements, including draping on beautifully wrapped coats, a long, lean silhouette, and small, cinched waists. The show opened with a series of black coats, belted at the waist and trailing in back. As it progressed, the palette turned to rich jewel tones of deep burgundy, intense teal, and cobalt blue. The jackets, which were wrapped and twisted with an expert skill, came in silk, leather, and suede, worn over slim-fitting slouchy pants and wide-leg, more masculine-inspired trousers. While the clothes were more masculine on the whole, the collection was not without elements of sex appeal, like the asymmetric body-conscious skirt with cutaways at

the thighs or the draped silk tops that opened under jackets to reveal slivers of skin. So beautiful and romantic was Ackermann's Fall 2011 collection that many, it was said, were moved to tears.

The following year marked another triumphant season for the designer. The Fall 2012 collection focused on organic shapes and a deeper exploration into color. The show opened with a fitted, cropped jacket in sage green, firmly belted at the waist with a wide brown leather belt and paired with a form fitting black skirt. Despite the sleek intro, signature Ackermann shapes were not far behind. "I can't help myself," said the designer of his trademark. "I love to wrap." The wrapped jackets featured structured peplums, while several of the dresses were draped from a point at the middle of the chest, creating a shape that resembled a butterfly. A wrapped leather bomber, tightly belted, was worn over skinny metallic pants, and coats with full collars were shown with high-waisted trousers. The color pairings were a triumph in and of themselves, with deep aubergine mixed with warm marigold and a rich cobalt blue layered over maroon, gray, and rust.

In the past two years the fashion world at large has taken note of Haider Ackermann, a designer once celebrated by a much smaller, yet devoted, circle of followers. Now, his elongated silhouettes and sculptural drapes have attracted a whole new audience and a welcome group of customers. His impeccable tailoring and romantic aesthetic are sexy without being obvious and dramatic without being over-the-top. It's this fastidious craftsmanship, and the fact that his runway shows have the ability to invoke tears, that has made Haider Ackermann one of this decade's most relevant designers.



- 1971 Born in Colombia
- 1994 Enrolls at Antwerp Fashion Academy of Fine Arts; interns for John Galliano
- 2001 Launches own womenswear label; first collection presented in Paris in March
- 2003 Directs collections for Ruffo Research
- 2004 Wins Swiss Textiles Award
- 2005 Contributes to *A Magazine* as guest curator
- 2010 Presents capsule collection for both men and women as guest designer at Pitti W in Florence
- 2011 Karl Lagerfeld refers to him as his ideal successor

1945 Marilyn Monroe discovered
as a photo model

1959 First Barbie doll shown at
a toy fair in New York

1978 Forming of
the band
Duran Duran

1930 1935 1940 1945 1950 1955 1960 1965 1970 1975 1980



Steven Alan Fall 2012 presentation,
Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week, New York

1981 Ronald Reagan sworn in as 40th US president

1999 First e-book reader

1996 First cloned mammal (Dolly the Sheep)

2012 Picasso's *Nu au Plateau de Sculpteur* fetches \$106.5 million at Christie's

2000 Tate Modern Gallery opens in London

1985 1990 1995 2000 2005 2010 2015 2020 2025 2030 2035

STEVEN ALAN

With eleven stores located across the United States, Steven Alan and his signature label, Steven Alan Collection, has become the go-to brand for updated American classics.

The man behind the brand, born Steven Alan Grossman, grew up in New York, studied art in high school, and had a passionate interest in design. In 1994, he opened his first store, a small women's multi-brand boutique that focused on accessories. Two years later, Alan began representing some of the emerging designers he carried, launching the Steven Alan Showroom, and gained a reputation among a young, downtown set of customers who deemed him a talented curator and tastemaker. In 1999, with his position as a notable retailer, coupled with his own style aesthetic, Alan started making his first pieces of clothing and he began with a classic: the men's button-down shirt, to which he applied subtle details and a particular washing process that resulted in a shirt with perfect fit that looked as though it had been worn for years and just the right amount of slouch and softness. Now known as the Reverse Seam Shirt, this early model has become a Steven Alan signature, featuring a slightly tailored body, French seams at the side, and a twisted placket.

Soon the idea of the perfect shirt expanded to include a line of boyfriend-inspired women's shirts. The concept and details were the same, applying Alan's classic shape to women. From there, both collections grew and grew, each starting from the signature shirt and expanding into full ready-to-wear lines. The collection, said Alan, is about the wardrobe "essentials for life in the big city." As a native New Yorker, it is something he understands well, and his customers agree, stocking up on pieces at one of the several New York stores located in Tribeca, Nolita, the West Village, the Upper West Side, and Brooklyn. The expansion didn't stop there. Within a decade of launching, Alan had added a store in East Hampton along with three stores in and around Los Angeles and one in San Francisco. The showroom has also been steadily growing, with Alan representing an eclectic group of young talent. Now, with over twenty designers on his roster, Steven Alan has created a mini fashion empire with

a highly curated aesthetic that can be described as "classic American with a twist."

For Spring 2011, Steven Alan staged his first formal presentation, showcasing, on models, both his men's and women's collections along with his accessories. The inspiration for spring was travel, specifically the Mediterranean. The look was based on the idea of "getting out of New York, but having the New York sensibilities in a different place," said the designer. For women, Alan showed summery trousers in cotton and linen along with casual, pleated minidresses and breezy, printed jumpsuits. The men's collection featured several variations on Alan's now-famous shirting as well as vests, jackets, and some casual, slim-fitting, cinched-waist pants. The cited beach look was the epitome of relaxed sophistication.

For his Fall 2012 collection, Alan drew his inspiration from the Diego Rivera exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, taking elements of ideas in Rivera's paintings and distilling them into pieces that made sense for his brand. Rivera's Mexican heritage came across in the striped jackets and jersey dresses, as well as the knits that had been handmade in South America. On the whole, Alan's collection was muted, his palette a mix of primarily grays and sepias, with occasional pops of bright red and a darker burgundy. The menswear line incorporated dressier elements, such as tailored suiting in washed wool and herringbone tweed. The womenswear, as well, came in masculine tweeds and checks, with the more feminine brocades and florals used sparingly.

Each season, Alan's inspiration comes from somewhere new, but his collections always manage to stay true to their roots. His brand is based in New York and he looks to the city constantly for ideas and updates. The easy-feeling, American-inspired classics that have garnered Steven Alan a loyal following remain a touchstone for his ever-growing brand.



- 1994 Opens first store in New York
- 1999 Begins designing his own line, starting with the men's button-down shirt
- 2008 Steven Alan becomes bicoastal, with six stores in New York and three in Southern California
- 2011 Stages his first Fashion Week presentation
- 2012 Opens his second store in San Francisco, making that his eleventh store in the United States

1953 French actress Isabelle Huppert is born

1974 Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood open their boutique SEX in London

1943 First New York Fashion Week

1956–59 Guggenheim Museum constructed in New York

1930 1935 1940 1945 1950 1955 1960 1965 1970 1975 1980



Sarah Burton for Alexander McQueen
Fall/Winter 2011/12 Prêt-à-Porter show, Paris