

JOHN GALLIANO

British Contemporary Design

ABOUT JOHN GALLIANO

John Galliano is a British fashion designer. After graduating from Central Saint Martins, he launched his own line. Famous for whimsical, outrageous designs, he headed the French haute couture houses Givenchy (1995-1996) and Christian Dior (1996-2011).



Early Life

John Galliano was born in the British Overseas Territory of Gibraltar on November 28, 1960. His Spanish mother and Gibraltarian father moved the family to South London when he was six years old. The transition was difficult. His mother, a flamenco teacher, prided herself on the family's appearance and would dress her son in elaborate outfits, even when toting him along on the simplest of errands. Despite being teased by his sloppily dressed schoolmates, Galliano's mother instilled in him a bold and creative sensibility.

HIS DESIGNS

Striking, Colourful, Bold



Galliano struggled financially for years, still producing work intermittently, until he met and gained the support of American *Vogue* editor-in-chief Anna Wintour and *Vogue*'s creative director for the American edition, Andre Leon Talley. These high-powered connectors introduced him to the Portuguese fashion patron Saõ Schlumberger. To regain his footing, Schlumberger loaned him her house for a fashion show, and several top models worked for free. He designed the entire collection from one bolt of fabric. Schlumberger's adoration brought several new financiers to the fore. As a result, Galliano was appointed head designer of Givenchy in 1995, becoming the first British designer to head a French haute couture house. After two years, he moved to Christian Dior.



Galliano created some of the industry's most famous collections, including the Blanche Dubois in October 2008 (inspired by the 1951 film *A Streetcar Named Desire*), the Napoleon and Josephine in March 1992 (inspired by the love story of these famous historic figures) and the Princess Lucretia in October 1993 (inspired by the Russian princess). Beyond the clothing donned by his models, Galliano is known for his own dramatic final-bow-costumes, finishing his shows wearing fantastical get-ups inspired by the likes of [Napoleon Bonaparte](#) and U.S. astronauts.



YOUR TASK

Select one of his designs

Write down why you chose this design, giving at least one reason

Give the name, date it was created and material it was made in

Comment on the inspiration and aesthetic

Where did he get his ideas and what does it look like?