



## Milano (also) Means Fashion



**I Fabio MORETTI  
& Gavin LLEWELLYN**



On September 14, the UIA Fashion Law Commission, together with the Contract Law and the Intellectual Property Law Commission, will hold a seminar on: “*The Evolution of Fashion from Past Heritage towards the Digital Future – Intellectual Property, Contractual and Corporate Issues*”.

The purpose of the seminar is to focus on a very specific side of the fashion sector and, consequently, of the legal issues involved: how the tradition and heritage of fashion brands is used to develop the business for the future.

It is obvious that times are changing fast and all industries have to adapt to such

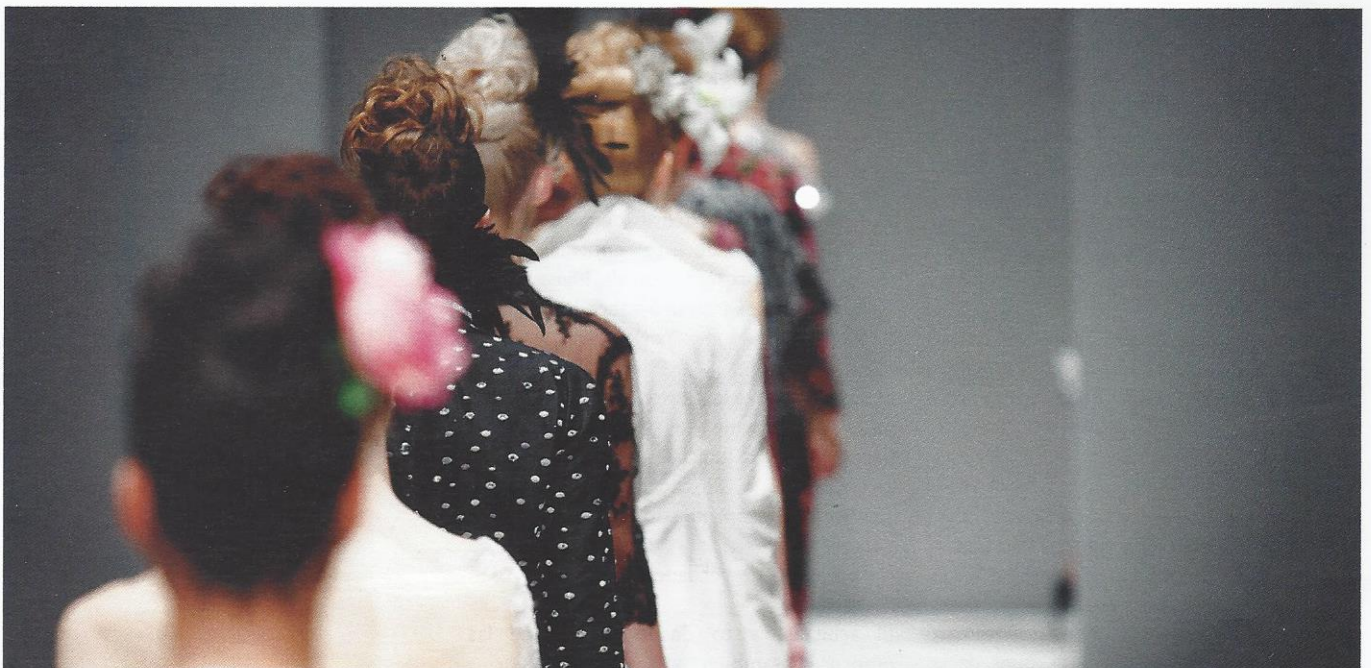
challenging technological advances, including fashion. In this regard, the fashion industry has seen extraordinary changes in the last two decades, including the globalisation and digitalisation of the sector. Indeed, the advance of e-commerce in the fashion industry is unstoppable. Some of the latest statistics published show worldwide revenue expected to rise from \$481.2 billion in 2018 to \$712.9 billion by 2022<sup>1</sup>.

The technological evolution of the fashion industry is not only about globalisation and e-commerce. Many new technologies will also impact on the way fashion businesses operate nowadays including, but not limited

to, cloud computing, 3-D printing and, amongst many others, blockchain. This is just the beginning. As Benjamin Franklin once said: “When you’re finished changing, you’re finished”.

However, although it is true that in life it is essential to have wings, it is sometimes even more important to have roots, particularly in the world of fashion. Consumers expect brands and fashion houses to maintain their essence, image and spirit despite the passage of time and the irruption of new technologies.

This difficult balance between preservation of heritage and implementation of new





technologies is the subject matter of our unique seminar.

As it is traditional in UIA seminars, the evening before the event we will hold a welcome cocktail for all the participants. This event is a unique opportunity to meet colleagues attending the seminar in an informal and relaxed atmosphere. We could say that it is, in the world of seminars, the typical Italian *aperitivo*, in order to start our engines for the seminar the following day.

The seminar will start with a short welcome speech by the three Commission Presidents, Fabio Moretti, Gavin Llewellyn and Milagros Poal-Manresa.

Then a presentation of Enrico Minio Capucci of Fondazione Roberto Capucci. The audience will see the extraordinary importance of the amazing historical archives of one of the most creative artists and fashion designers and will understand how the iconic "*haute couture*" pieces of Roberto Capucci became a source of inspiration for the whole fashion world.

Subsequently, members of the UIA Contract Law commission will present legal issues related to heritage in fashion and the best contractual approach. In particular Milagros Poal-Manresa will focus on protecting heritage in the internet era and Steve Sidkin on influencers and bloggers. Knowing how to protect the essence of the brand in such greenfield and unknown scenarios is sometimes difficult and providing cutting edge solutions is more than welcome.

Afterwards, Stéphanie De Smedt will explain the challenges of the fashion industry in the field of certification and digitalisation. The

fashion industry has always been considered disruptive on the outside (e.g. the clothing designs) but conservative on the inside (e.g. the design and manufacturing process). Ms. De Smedt will explain how fashion houses are adapting to new technologies without losing their essence.

The corporate issues are also an interesting area to be considered, in particular the role of historical fashion archives in M&A fashion transactions. As we will debate, purchasing a brand is not the same as purchasing a fashion house, including its heritage. This topic will be developed by Gianluca Ghersini and Nino di Bella.

Giuseppe Calabi, the former President of the UIA Art Law Commission, will focus on the legal issues of protecting fashion historical archives, from the perspective of their close connections with the concept of art works. This is an extremely interesting point of view, in particular for countries like Italy and France.

The afternoon will start with a presentation by Vanni Volpi, IP director of Gucci. He will explain how the tradition and iconic designs of Gucci are a constant source of inspiration for the Gucci designers and constitute a fantastic fashion trend tool as well as the link between the past and the future that consumers love. He will review some of the legal issues deriving from this extremely important concept.

Afterwards, the UIA Intellectual Property commission will hold a round table in order to discuss the protection of designs and brands in the field of fashion, particularly in relation to heritage new trends. In

particular, this table will analyse how new technologies are not only a challenge, but also an opportunity for fashion brands to protect their intellectual property rights worldwide. This table will be composed of the experts Gavin Llewellyn, Alain Cléry and Marita Dargallo and Cristina Mesa Sanchez.

The seminar will then reach the final part of the day with a round table on the challenges to heritage in the fashion industry in the era of globalisation. Asia has been seen by many fashion houses as an opportunity for the manufacture of products but also as a risk for the protection of their heritage considering the volume of counterfeit products coming from that part of the world. However, Asian markets have developed intensive intellectual property protection measures in the last decade and fashion consumerism has exploded. This last table will analyse the pitfalls and opportunities that Asia represents for the fashion industry through all the links of the chain (from commodity production until the sale of the finished goods). This table will be composed of Javier Garcia, Toshiki Nishimura and Sajai Singh.

At the end of the day, Jérémy Bensoussan will provide the audience with the view of the UIA President of the Privacy and rights of the digital person Commission on the impact of GDPR on the world of fashion.

Afterwards, we will hold a brief debate with all the participants in the seminar.

All in all, our Milano seminar will analyse the cutting edge topics that will affect well-known fashion houses in the next decade. You cannot miss it!

*Ci vediamo a Milano.*

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1. Source: <https://www.shopify.com/enterprise/e-commerce-fashion-industry>

