

Designer profile

Jil Sander

German fashion designer Jil Sander is known for her purism, combining innovation and minimalism to make a modern statement. Her designs are grounded in technical and aesthetic developments with an effortless, contemporary style, free of gender stereotypes.

Jil Sander first emerged on the fashion scene in 1968 when she started her company and designed her first collection. Since then, few others have influenced the world of fashion like Sander. Her eye for detail and materials is legendary. Over the years, she has continued to expand her portfolio. In 1979, she launched JIL SANDER COSMETICS. In 1982, she granted the first Jil Sander licence for glasses and in 1984, the first for handbags. Her company went public in 1989, and in 1996, together with Alain Mikli, she launched JIL SANDER EYEWEAR. The following year she presented her first ever JIL SANDER men's collection.

Sander has also made a name for herself through the pioneering presentation of her products. Her advertising campaigns, beauty product packaging and the design of her flagship stores have all emphatically thrown convention to the wind. For the design of her stores, she collaborated with New York architect Michael Gabellini, resulting in futuristic rooms filled with innovative material decisions and avant-garde lighting. Her flagship store in Paris – opened in 1993 at Rue Avenue Montaigne No. 50 – became a pilot project for more than 80 stores worldwide. In 1995, she founded JIL SANDER AMERICA INC., expanding into the United States and opening her flagship store in New York City. During that same year, she also opened multiple flagship stores in East Asia, including in Tokyo and Seoul.

In 1999, the JIL SANDER brand entered into a joint venture with Prada. Sander stepped back from the design world in the year 2000 and left her company. She returned from 2003 to 2005, and again from 2012 to 2013, in the role of creative director. Between 2009 and 2011, Sander designed five +J collections for Uniqlo, followed by three more in the period from 2020 to 2021.

Her 2025 collaboration with Thonet was her first foray into the world of furniture design, in which she used her mastery of colours and structures to reinterpret an iconic Bauhaus design. Sander's redesign of Marcel Breuer's S 64 cantilever chair reflects her design philosophy, which takes traditional values and classic parameters and gives them a contemporary twist. Using a delicate balance of the perfect materials and colours, Jil Sander has given Thonet's tubular steel classics a new sensual quality and lent them fresh appeal.

Jil Sander is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, the International Linen Council Fil d'Or award (Italy), the Designer of the Year award from the FECJ Institute (Japan), the Brit Insurance Fashion Award from the Design Museum in London and the ADC award from the German Art Director Club.

Thonet press contact international

neumann communication
Claudia Neumann, Anouk Freund
Eigelstein 103-113
50668 Cologne
Germany
Tel. +49 (0) 221 – 91 39 49 0
E-Mail thonet@neumann-communication.de

Thonet GmbH
Susanne Korn
Michael-Thonet-Straße 1
35066 Frankenberg
Germany
Tel. +49 (0) 6451 – 508 160
E-Mail susanne.korn@thonet.de