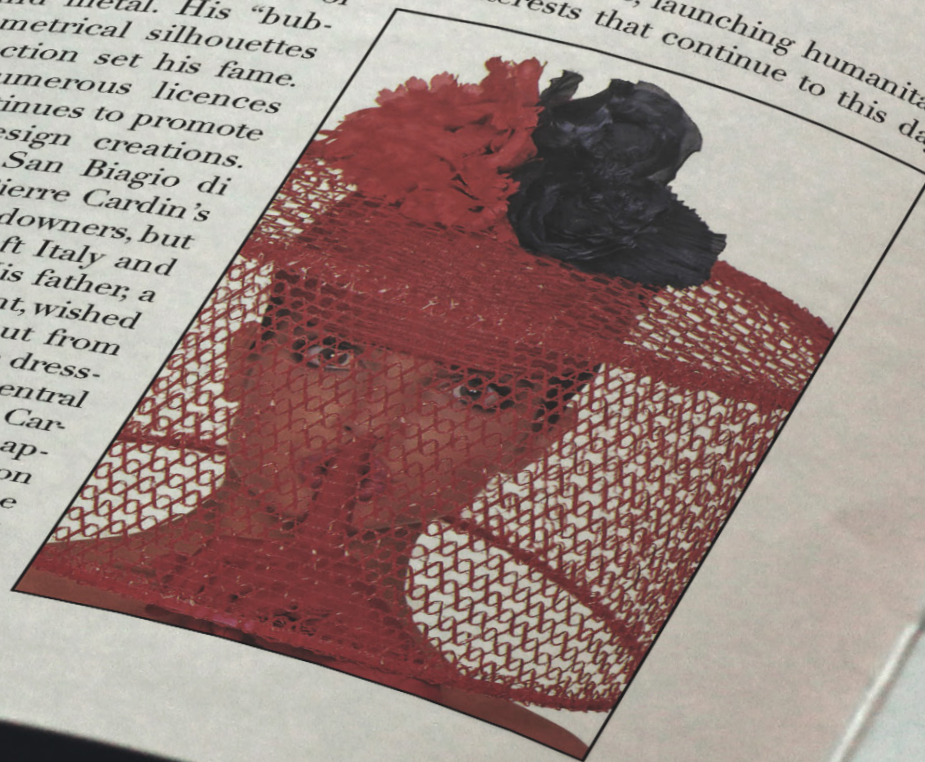


Pierre Cardin

*"They said pret-a porter
will kill your name,
and it saved my life"*

The French designer introduced unusual and contemporary garments for which he privileged the use of vinyl, plastic and metal. His "bubble dress", geometrical silhouettes and unisex collection set his fame. He developed numerous licences his fashion and design creations. Cardin was born in San Biagio di Callalta near Treviso. Pierre Cardin's parents were wealthy landowners, but to escape fascism they left Italy and settled in France in 1924. His father, a wealthy French wine merchant, wished him to study architecture, but from childhood he was interested in dress-making. Cardin was educated in central France. Beginning his career early, Cardin, aged 14, worked as a clothier's apprentice, learning the basics of fashion design and construction. In 1939, he left home to work for a tailor in Vichy. During World War II, he worked in



the Red Cross, launching humanitarian interests that continue to this day.

1922



Pierre Cardin Ensemble,
Hiroko Matsumoto, middle 1960s



Pierre Cardin, Ensemble,
photographed by Regina Relang, 197

Cardin moved to Paris in 1945, at the end of World War II. During his first five years in France's capital city, Cardin jumped rapidly from job to job. He found work in the Paquin fashion house, started designing and ended up working next to the famous dress designer Jeanne Paquin, who died before Cardin's time there. Cardin moved from Paquin to the Schiaparelli fashion house that same year. Also in 1945, he became acquainted with French film director Jean Cocteau. Cocteau hired Cardin to design dresses for his film *La belle et la bête* (Beauty and the Beast), which premiered in 1946, the same year that Cardin began work at Christian Dior's newly opened fashion house. During the 1960 period, Pierre Cardin began a practice that is now commonplace by creating the system of licences that he was to apply to fashion. A clothing collection launched around this period surprised all by displaying the designer's logo on the garments for the first time. As haute couture began to decline, ready-to-wear soared as well as Pierre Cardin's designs. Cardin was the first to combine the "mini" and the "maxi" skirt of the 1970s. He introduced a new hemline that had long swayed as the body panels of fringe that moved in motion. Cardin's move in design intended to emphasize a style of dress in women's clothing after the period of women taking on traditionally masculine roles during World War II. Although he was once part of a team that helped design a style that accentuated womanliness, Cardin is now best known for creating clothes that have the exact opposite effect. His cuts are often said to be planar; geometrical and even irreverent of the female form. "He was successful right away"