

Achilleas Constantinou LLB (Hons) London

Chairman & Managing Director Of Ariella Fashions Limited And Group Of Companies

Born 21st April 1948 .Completed his secondary education in Southgate, North London, obtaining 13 'O' levels and 4 'A' level GCE passes. In 1969 he was admitted as an Honorable Member of Grays Inn and gained admission to Kings College, London University, graduating in 1971 with an LLB Honours Bachelor of Laws Degree.

He joined his late brother, Aristos, who started trading in the fashion business in Carnaby Street in 1966 and in 1971 they together founded Ariella Fashions Limited. Starting from a small retail premises on a first floor in Carnaby Street, they soon expanded to owning retail shops in Newburgh Street, Carnaby Street and Oxford Street and Duke Street. Punch Magazine described Ariella in the 70's, as being "the power in Carnaby Street".

The dynamic and successful retailing of Ariella styles was soon noticed by other retailers and to supply this demand Ariella soon opened wholesale showrooms in Great Portland Street and Mortimer Street, the heartland and renowned international centre of London mainstream fashion.

By 1974 Ariella had its main offices, design studios and factory in new headquarters in Marylebone, NW1, maintaining its showroom in Great Portland Street and now administrating the running of nine retail shops including one in Chicago, Illinois and one in Lausanne, Switzerland. However, the wholesale side of its business through both home and international demand was rapidly expanding and soon overtook in turnover and importance its retail operation. In the early 1980's Ariella once again relocated its headquarters to much larger freehold premises in Wood Green, North London.

In 1985, with the tragic death of his brother Aristos, Achilleas lost both his closest companion and his business partner. He, therefore, decided to sell off the company's retail operation and became focused exclusively on the wholesale division.

In 1985 Ariella won two "Woman" fashion awards for Best Evening Wear and Best Cocktail Wear. One was awarded to Achilleas Constantinou and the other to his late brother, Aristos, posthumously.

In 1992 Ariella was honoured by a visit from the Princess Royal to its Wood Green headquarters in celebration of its 25th Anniversary.

In January 1997 Ariella won the British Apparel Export Award for 1996 in recognition of its outstanding export achievements.

On 21st April 98 Ariella was awarded The Queen's Award for Export Achievement 1998.

On 5th June 2008 Ariella was presented with the UK Fashion Export Award 2008 for outstanding export achievements in women's fashion. The award was presented at a Gala lunch at the Landmark Hotel, London, by Her Royal Highness Princess Anne

2007/08 was Ariella's 40th year of continuous trading and throughout this period it has never lost its identity in supplying its loyal clientele and its international market with up to the minute styling of London High Street Fashion, specialising always in cocktail, evening and special occasion wear.

Ariella has worked with such designers as Anthony Price, who designed Ariella's 'Later Collections in the early 90s; and Christina Stambolian who is renowned for her exclusive creations for celebrities such as Catherine Deneuve and the late Princess Diana. Achilleas Constantinou has over 30 years experience at the forefront of British Fashion, always directing Ariella design teams to award winning achievements.

In his 25-year career, Achilleas has served the fashion industry on numerous committees and trade bodies. He was a founder member of the Fashion Industry Action Group (FIAG) (responsible for the formation of the British Council) and an ex-Chairman of the Women's Wear Executive Committee of the BKCEC (British Knitting and Clothing Export Council). He also served on The Advisory Board of the London Fashion Exhibition, and on the Midseason Exhibition Committee. He is a founder member and current Director of The British Fashion Council (BFC), and the current Chairman of The BFC Mainstream Fashion Committee. In May 1998 he was appointed to the Board of Management of the British Knitting and Clothing Export Council.

He also founded the British Fashion Design Protection Association (FDPA) in 1974 whose aims and objectives were to protect the interests of creative and original designers and seek appropriate changes in the Copyright Laws to this end. The FDPA has, more than any other body, been responsible for the dramatic changes in the Law that have occurred since its formation in 1974 and the Law has now, through its concerted efforts, effectively been changed, achieving the extension of Copyright to cover original fashion designs in a High Court action in 1980 in which Mr. Constantinou appeared as an expert witness. He has also appeared on numerous national television and radio programs, including ITV, BBC and CNN discussing fashion topics. In 2007 he was appointed to the Design Board of Skillfast UK and to the Graduate Fashion week Industry and Media Board.

The FDPA's most recent success has been to negotiate legal fees insurance for its members, at rates even the smallest designer can afford, thus enabling the smallest "David" to take on the biggest "Goliath" if justice was on his side. As Chairman of the FDPA, Mr. Constantinou was also the UK's representative at the EEC meeting of the Association Européenne des Industries de L'Habillement and is acknowledged as the leading lay authority in the UK on Intellectual Property Law in the fashion industry. Mr. Constantinou has appeared in Debrett's People of Today since 1992.

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1998
Winner of
Queens Award for
Export Achievement

