



233 RUE ST HONORE, 75001 PARIS
 T +33(0)1 4271 2046
 www.favoriparis.com
 M nadia@favoriparis.com

LAFFANOUR GALERIE DOWNTOWN/PARIS

Février 2018

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL MAGAZINE

p 53 , 54

Thomas Gebremedhin



LEADING THE CONVERSATION

THE EXCHANGE.

FEBRUARY 2018



AND SQUARE
 Assche takes in
 the room and stainless-
 steel sculpture by
 Do Ho Suh at
 the gallery in Miami.

TRACKED

KRIS VAN ASSCHE

The longtime artistic director of Dior Homme has created a distinctive vision for the menswear brand.

BY THOMAS GEBREMEDHIN
 PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROSE MARIE CROMWELL

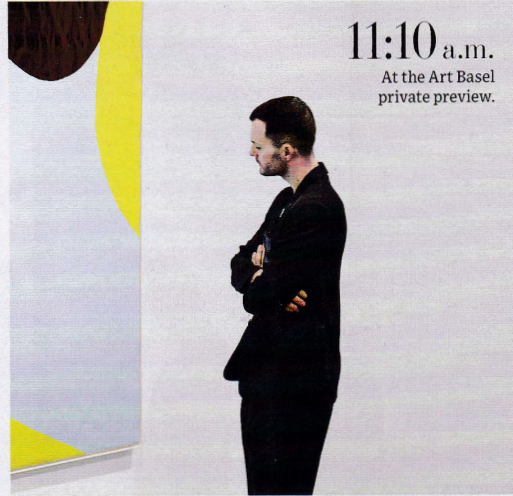
ON A CLEAR, warm night in December, roughly 50 paper lanterns by the late artist Isamu Noguchi adorned a private room at The Webster boutique in Miami. An animated crowd, including musicians ASAP Rocky and Ricky Martin, gathered for dinner to celebrate Dior Homme's latest collection for its Black Carpet eveningwear line. The night capped off a milestone year for Kris Van Assche, the Belgian-born designer who has spent a decade at the helm of the French menswear label. As other fashion houses engage in a dizzying game of designer musical chairs—even the womenswear arm of Dior has seen its share of leadership turnover the past few years—Van Assche, 40, has garnered acclaim for his rebellious take on sportswear and suiting. “I don’t take it for granted,” Van Assche says. “You never know what’s going to happen. Fashion is a competitive world. It’s a challenge to make every show better and question what can be done differently. The moment you think it’s a done deal, you’re a done deal.”

Van Assche was born and raised in Londerzeel, Belgium. An only child, he spent his time sketching, reading magazines and watching music videos. “I was always intrigued by how clothes and imagery completed the music,” he says. Paris, the loud, creative fashion hub he dreamed about, felt like “the other side of the world.” But Antwerp was just a 30-minute drive away. So when he turned 18, Van Assche enrolled at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, following in the footsteps of notable alumni like Ann Demeulemeester and Dries Van Noten. And eventually, after graduating in 1998, he found his way to Paris, assisting Hedi Slimane at Yves Saint Laurent, before the pair moved to Dior in 2000. Van Assche left in 2004 to start his own eponymous label, but returned to Dior Homme three years later (he hit pause on his label in 2015). In that time, he has moved the collections toward more playfully subversive designs.

Throughout, Van Assche has enriched the brand by overseeing collaborations with artists Larry Clark, Paolo Roversi and François Bard, whose paintings of orchids and of men in hoodies embellish shirts, jackets and bags this spring. As the brand has grown (Dior Homme opened its seventh store in the U.S. last year), he has produced some unexpected offerings along the way—like the recent launch of a \$3,200 limited-edition BMX bike. Van Assche continues to revel in the design process, while remaining forward-looking. “The work method at Homme is intensive,” he says. “We are full speed, and I think ambitions have never been bigger. It’s a good time to be ambitious.” >



10:27 a.m.
Above: Van Assche has breakfast at The Dutch in South Beach.



11:10 a.m.
At the Art Basel private preview.

1:31 p.m.
Left: A detail from the Standard Spa in Miami Beach, where Van Assche stops for lunch.



3:42 p.m.
Van Assche meets with François Laffanour (second from right), director of Paris-based Galerie Downtown, at Design Miami.



4:03 p.m.
He heads to the Dior Homme boutique before returning to his hotel to prepare for the evening.



7:38 p.m.
Below: Van Assche at his dinner at The Webster, with Ricky Martin (left) and Cordell Broadus. Right: He chats with A\$AP Rocky (left) and Woodkid.



100
pairs of sneakers
The estimated number Van Assche has in his collection.

4
photographs
Works by Robert Mapplethorpe in Van Assche's art collection.

8
trips
The number of international trips Van Assche took for work last year, including to New York and Tokyo.

46
looks
The total number of ensembles in Van Assche's summer 2017 collection.

2
artistic directors
Aside from Van Assche, Hedi Slimane has helmed Dior Homme since its founding in 1984.

3
tattoos
He has two tulips and a black and white skull.

6
Akari lanterns
The Noguchi-designed light fixture is customized by Van Assche with a black and white valley design.

200
hours
Amount of time it took to create a Black Carpet jacket with a black and white valley design.

26
bees
The number embroidered on the Black Carpet collection.