

IGN

EXOTIC DREAMS

*A Glimpse Into The Luxuriously Exotic,
Imaginatively Inspired Couture of Farbod Barsum*

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When counting the stars of the couture world, names like Hermes, Louis Vuitton, Alaïa and Ferragamo readily trip off the tongue. While not (yet) a household name, the house of Barsum is securely perched in the highly covetable catbird seat; perfectly poised to take its rightful place amongst those giants of couture. Headed by Farbod Barsum and his passionate and multi-dimensional design prowess, the collection is a deliciously distinctive array of bespoke handbags and accessories that have been creating quite a stir - and provoking quite a loyal following - in both the designer's Beverly Hills flagship boutique as well as the brand's impressive, global locations.

"Design is always an evolutionary process," says the eloquent and elegant Barsum. "The reality is that the design evolves from drawing table to reality." And in the case of the collection of handbags and accessories by Barsum, reality is nothing less than stunning.

The pieces crafted by Barsum for his collection are created by hand from sustainable, exotic skins including alligator, crocodile, ostrich, ostrich leg, pirarucu, karung, and lizard. While no doubt stunning, the exotic skins can be difficult to obtain and even more difficult to perfect - one of the reasons why so few high-end designers venture into their use. "When I was first interested in using pirarucu (the world's largest freshwater fish from the Amazon) for instance, the tanners came to the United States to discuss their product and processes with me," Barsum explains. "The skins must be of exceptionally good quality, and so I worked with the team to ensure that the texture, the colors and the quality were perfect. As a result, we are the only fashion house to be using pirarucu on a couture level." Regardless of the exotic skin chosen for any given piece, each Barsum Bag is a laboriously crafted, artisanal masterpiece. Each creation features exquisite handwork, hand-cast hardware, signature linings, turned edge detailing, sumptuous materials and stunning aesthetics - all designed to delightfully shock and awe even the most discerning, seasoned collector. Indeed, the pieces created by Barsum are coveted by some of the world's most glittering fashion icons including international royalty and A-list celebrities. Heidi Klum, Sarah Jessica Parker, Cindy Crawford and Sofia Vergara to name just a few have all been smitten by the lure of a Barsum.

"The collection has expanded to a level where we now offer the most variety of

couture exotic skin handbags and accessories anywhere in the U.S.," says Barsum goes on to explain that, "what sets pieces apart is their overall distinction, unparalleled quality, their uniqueness." the reminiscently retro Empress satel the sleek, metropolitan chic Genevieve to the elegantly understated Brigitte c each Barsum Bag is painstakingly created hand in the United States, with the multitude of pieces the designer offers to exist a of a kind beauties. "Even in cases where the same bag is produced more than once identical material and color," says Barsum inherently will be unique due to the natural exotic skins."

Barsum offers his clients unlimited freedom through a bespoke selection of unique shapes and a seemingly endless variety of spectacular combinations utilizing the textures and colors found in the skins. The resulting products are indisputable statement pieces - timeless classics that are not only wickedly indulgent, fully functional and ultra exclusive. His expansive knowledge of the exotic skins not only inspires designer himself but also allows him to serve his clients through the design process. Clients are savvy, they are fashionable fashion forward and they come to us importantly, for the quality and craftsmanship we provide - but they are also aware that they come to us they will discover something that can't be found anywhere else. Clients are looking to invest in that statement piece that is both textural and timeless statement piece we have made our mark in providing that possible range from which to choose. It is - literally - a dream bag for every customer that walks through our doors." In while Barsum collectors can dream up perfect handbag from the myriad exotic and color available, there is one thing that remains consistent - the signature hardware on each piece. "The hardware on our bags is hand cast and rhodium plated," says Barsum. "We do that for a very good reason. The inherent nature and tone of rhodium is the metal to reflect the color of the bag. That reflective ability allows the hardware to become an intrinsic element of the bag rather than simply ornamentation."

If one were to try to pinpoint Barsum's signature style, it would likely be the designer's penchant for classic design reinvented through inspired combinations. The aesthetic is illustrated, proven when one finds oneself swooning over a timeless tote crafted from pirarucu and trimmed in ostrich leg leather.

HOT DESIGNS



Carmen Antique Pewter & Matte Black Lizard



Candis Taupe Alligator & Ostrich



Empress Ruby Red Alligator



Brigitte Copper Lizard & Swarovski

Brigitte Inverted Natural Lizard



Jackson Briefcase Navy Alligator & Anthracite Ostrich



Holly Bronze Ostrich Leg



Genevieve African Violet Pirarucu & Ostrich Leg



Empress Ruby Red Alligator



Jackson Briefcase Navy Alligator & Anthracite Ostrich



"We pioneered the usage of certain skins on the market such as pirarucu and ostrich leg that has been spliced and fused into continuous sheets, - very new technology." Each awe inspiring Barsum Bag is fully faced and trimmed with the exotic skins as well, thus ensuring the distinction of the material and craftsmanship is apparent both inside and out. The sigh-worthy collection is available in richly hued jewel tones with decadently tactile, attention demanding textures - yet feature the styles and functionality needed for chic, everyday use.

At Barsum's flagship boutique in Beverly Hills, the shop itself is a gorgeous backdrop to the collection and a space worthy of praise. Featuring two original pieces by Jackson Pollock and the largest array of crystal chandeliers to be found in any Beverly Hills retail settings; the space was custom designed by Barsum along with his parents, both of whom are well-respected designers and architects. "My father is still in architectural practice on the West Coast," Barsum explains. "My mother left the architectural firm to join me as my business partner, lending not only her design skills but a woman's view as to how a well-made handbag should look and function." Barsum's own design background is impressive. After obtaining a degree in Art History from

UC Berkeley and one in Fashion Design from FIDM the designer was a protégé of the late Bijan Pakzad, working side by side with the icon in the legendary House of Bijan in Beverly Hills. "That experience and the education I received working with someone like Bijan has dramatically inspired me as a designer," Barsum recalls. He subsequently followed in his parent's footsteps, bringing his design education to an exponentially higher level by earning a Master's Degree in Architecture. "Growing up with architects," Barsum recalls, "led me to see scale, proportion, and design elements very clearly. Design is everywhere, and while I believe you are 'born' with an eye for design, the exposure to architecture that I had while growing up certainly helped hone my skills and focus my design vision. My parents encouraged me to continue my education in architecture, and that background has played an important role in how I see the physical structure of my pieces. The rhythmic thread of architecture is woven throughout everything we do here. Combined with my studies in fashion design and art history, my studies in architecture have given me a unique design perspective and one that can be seen in the pieces I create."

To view the exquisite line of accessories & Barsum Bags by Farbod Barsum, please visit www.farbodbarsum.com