

# DEUTSCHES LEDERMUSEUM

Press release from  
Deutsches Ledermuseum in Offenbach/Main

**TSATSAS**

**past present future**

**April 1 – October 30, 2022**

Since 2012, Esther and Dimitrios Tsatsas have been creating leather bags and accessories that are well outside the conventional fashion designs and possess a persuasive formal vocabulary of their own. To mark the Tsatsas brand's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary Deutsches Ledermuseum is hosting a solo exhibition showcasing the work of the designer label that has an international reach but still produces locally in Offenbach/Main. The exhibition focuses on presenting the many different sides to the creative work process, from the initial idea and the transformation of a traditional artisanal craft to the sources of cultural inspiration in contemporary art, design, architecture and even music.

It all started with the LUCID bag that like all its successors has a markedly aesthetic design language. The FLUKE tote bag is the icon still associated with the label today – its ingeniously draped leather lends it its signature style. By highlighting varied thematic sections, the exhibition **TSATSAS. past. present. future** offers many an insight into the sophisticated design of the leather goods and the craftsmanship that goes into them. It also spotlights various collaborative projects and joint ventures such as to give a fascinating peek behind the scenes of this successful label.

The climax of the presentation in DLM is a kinetic installation that shows over 30 models from the past ten years of the TSATSAS collection. In an endless loop the bags glide past visitors as if transported on a conveyor belt. Presenting the models like this according to a system that is neither chronological nor hierarchical serves to symbolize the idea of timeless design so typical of the label.

## **How does a TSATSAS bag come about?**

When devising a new leather bag such as TAPE, for example, Esther and Dimitrios Tsatsas explore their ideas using sketches, innovative patterns, illustrative paper models, and a mood board. The exhibits allow visitors to participate in this design process – from the first idea, via sources of inspiration through to production and shootings for ad campaigns.

Production tools are also showcased, in this way visualizing the professional nature of this leather-making craft. A glance behind the scenes transports visitors to the workshop in Offenbach/Main and gives a good idea of the immense craftsmanship that goes into making

the collection. Each design starts out in the Frankfurt studio that the duo has used since 2014. And selected furniture items and photos included in the presentation also provide an insight into the studio's special atmosphere – albeit in a museum setting.

In selecting the materials, the designer duo takes a holistic approach ensuring that each component in a bag meets with their personal criteria for durability and sustainability. For example, the zips are made of metal, the metal fittings from recycled brass. Great care goes into selecting the high-quality leather. The exhibition provides information on the materials used and their characteristic properties.

The “Pattern Project” will be on display for the first time in DLM: Esther and Dimitrios Tsatsas succeed here in visualizing the complex design and various stages of work behind the models FLUKE, LINDEN and OLIVE. Indeed, what we see looks like a dressmaker’s pattern: the leather for the bags could be mistaken for paper and is marked at crucial points with handwritten instructions from the couple to the bagmakers who will then work it.

## Collaborations

Projects and collaborations with renowned figures from a wide variety of creative fields extend the TSATSAS design cosmos. Among other things, they took up a design by Dieter Rams, the former head of design at Braun, and 50 after he first came up with it launched the timeless design of his Bag 931. In another collaboration they were consulted by architect Sir David Chipperfield – the joint result was the SUIT-CASE leather travel bag that is completely free of plastic.

In 2017, Esther and Dimitrios Tsatsas created a new version of their design icon FLUKE as a limited edition. In the project SO\_FAR they used textiles by Danish textile firm Kvadrat from a special collection by Belgian fashion designer Raf Simons. These are also presented in the exhibition as are other collaborations including one with jewelry designer Saskia Diez.

## Esther and Dimitrios Tsatsas

Born in 1975 in Wiesbaden, Esther Tsatsas was fascinated by architecture and journalism while still at school. After graduating from high school, she combined both interests by starting to study Architecture in Frankfurt and writing articles for daily newspapers, but also magazines on design and architecture. Following her studies, she worked at the design agency Stylepark, first as a project and marketing manager and later in an executive capacity. Commenting on the upcoming exhibition Esther Tsatsas says: *“Reflecting on our work of the last decade and presenting it in a solo show is both a challenge and simultaneously a great opportunity. We are deeply grateful to Deutsches Ledermuseum for offering us this opportunity.”*

Born in 1978 in Filiates, Greece, Dimitrios Tsatsas migrated to Germany with his family at the age of four. While still at school he would help in his father’s bagmaking workshop and gained his first impressions of the craft of leathermaking. All the TSATSAS bags and accessories continue to be hand-crafted in the selfsame workshop today. After studying Product Design at the Offenbach University of Art and Design he also worked at Stylepark, more recently as Creative Director, where he met Esther. Of the label, Dimitrios Tsatsas says: *“We established TSATSAS in 2012 with the idea of creating timeless yet modern bags. My father’s leather*

*workshop gave us the means of developing our own approach to production down to the last detail.”*

## **Deutsches Ledermuseum**

Deutsches Ledermuseum owns a collection that is unmatched the world over and which also features high-quality products from Offenbach’s leathermaking workshops. Today, the museum continues to believe that one of its key tasks is to promote outstanding leather-working designers. Speaking about the special project Museum Director Dr. Inez Florschütz says: *“We are delighted that designer duo Tsatsas took up our invitation and in an exhibition created in close collaboration with the museum, is highlighting the complex and varied processes that lead to the creation of a TSATSAS bag.”*

## **Publication**

The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive, bilingual (German/English) publication with lavish color photographs, edited by Dr. Inez Florschütz, Deutsches Ledermuseum. Alongside articles by Esther and Dimitrios Tsatsas, contributions by design journalist Yoko Choy and professor of design and media theory Markus Frenzl, provide insights into the world of TSATSAS. Furthermore, both Sir David Chipperfield and Dieter Rams give personal accounts of their own collaborations with the label.

The press conference is scheduled for 1.00 p.m. on Wednesday March 30, 2022 at Deutsches Ledermuseum. The exhibition will run from April 1 to Oct. 30, 2022.

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Dr. Marschner Stiftung

**Deutsches Ledermuseum**

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Tuesday to Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Weekends and public Holidays 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

On the second Thursday of the month 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.



From Frankfurt main station: LRT lines S1, S2, S8, S9  
to station "Ledermuseum", exit Ludwigstrasse  
(approx. 10-minute walk)

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