

IN-STORE

## Barneys draws consumers with graphic window installation by famous artist

May 8, 2015



*Alex Katz created a collection of home goods to complement Barneys' windows*

---

By KAYSORIN

Department store chain Barneys New York is bringing art to fashion with a new installation in its Madison Avenue store windows by American artist Alex Katz.

**Sign up now**

**Luxury Daily**

The artist collaborated with Barneys to produce an extensive four-window mural for the Upper East Side location, along with a collection of home goods, gifts and limited-edition prints. Introducing an artistic flavor to the spring windows will allow Barneys to reach a different demographic of consumers and draw foot traffic from a variety of people interested in the arts.

"The Barneys customer is not only interested in clothes and fashion, but also has an appreciation for art, culture, music, and many other things," said Dennis Freedman, creative director of **Barneys**, New York. "We view Barneys as more than just a store—it's an experience.

"The Katz windows on Madison Avenue really allow for our customer to enter into an environment that excites them. It was really exciting for us to have the opportunity to display Katz's amazing works of art to everyone who passes by on Madison Avenue."

## The Katz meow

This is Barneys' second collaboration with the Art Production Fund, which put the department store chain in connection with Mr. Katz and facilitated his murals. The first project between Barneys and the nonprofit organization took place in the summer of 2013 when together they decorated the windows with the artwork of Roy Lichtenstein.



*The mural will fill all four windows on Madison Avenue*

One thing that is unique about this collaboration is Mr. Katz's decision to also create a line of home décor and gifts to complement the windows. The collection will include everything from pillows and bath towels to lighters and dishes, small items that consumers can take home with them to reinterpret the show at a different date.

Mr. Katz is an American artist who rose to prominence in the 1980s for his large and colorful portraits. He grew up in Brooklyn and has lived and worked in SoHo for most of his life, making him an ideal choice for the New York-based Barneys.



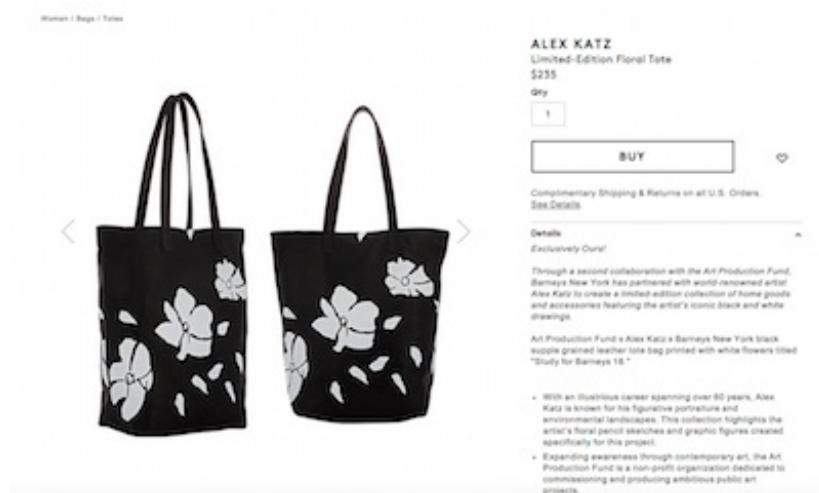
*The mural features sketches of fashionable women in black and white*

Mr. Katz has never done store windows before, but he describes the project as similar to street art. For the mural, he drew sketches of 18 fashionable women in black-and-white, as opposed to the bold colors he became famous for, because he feels black and white

better represents the New York street scene.

The limited-edition products from this collaboration will be available for purchase at Barneys, allowing consumers to take a small piece of the experience home with them. The pillows, water bottles, mugs and tote bags that Mr. Katz created are all done in the style of the mural with a bold, black-and-white contrast and sketched drawings.

Having artists design the windows of a department store can help draw a different demographic of consumers to the store and perhaps increase foot traffic among tourists. It is also a fun way for the department store to show off its artistic style and expand into a different realm of visual display.



*The Alex Katz collection will be available for purchase at Barneys*

## Window treatment

This is not the first time that the department store chain Barneys has used its prominent, public, New York windows as part of a larger artistic project. For example, Baz Luhrmann and designer Catherine Martin dazzled consumers for the 2014 holiday season.

The partnership entailed window and in-store displays, special events and exclusive products. For New York retailers, the holiday season is always the pinnacle of brand expression as stores get flooded with shoppers and light shows bedazzle the darkened streets ([see story](#)).

Other department stores have also sought artistic inspiration for their elaborate window-displays. In 2014, New York retailer Bergdorf Goodman unveiled a series of in-store art installations during Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week to draw attention and foot traffic from fashion show attendees staying in the city.

Bergdorf's "Art Matters!" project was the result of a partnership with duo Grey Area, who, with the help of artists, transformed the retailer's windows and store interior. These installations around the store likely attracted art and fashion lovers alike, who could then spread the word to their networks ([see story](#)).

Mr. Katz's installation will likely be just as popular with consumers.

"At 87 years old, Alex's work is still just as vital, interesting, and compelling as it's ever

been," Mr. Freedman said. "He is very in-tune with style and is interested in the way people dress, which is something that comes through in his work.

"Much of Alex's work is very New York-centric, so that combined with his appreciation for fashion was really something that appealed to us."

#### Final Take

*Kay Sorin, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

---

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.