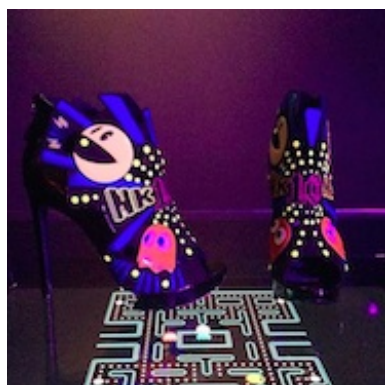


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Nicholas Kirkwood looks to 1980s pop culture for 10-year anniversary

September 22, 2015



Instagram image from Nicholas Kirkwood 10 launch

By SARAH JONES

LVMH-owned footwear and accessories label Nicholas Kirkwood is feting its 10-year anniversary with a video game-themed capsule collection, microsite and social campaign.

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Based on the 35-year-old eponymous designer's place in the video game generation, the campaign and made-to-order collection play on iconic vintage games, toys and films of the 1980s. With a much younger heritage than many of its competitors, this campaign helps to differentiate the label, showing its modern take on craftsmanship.

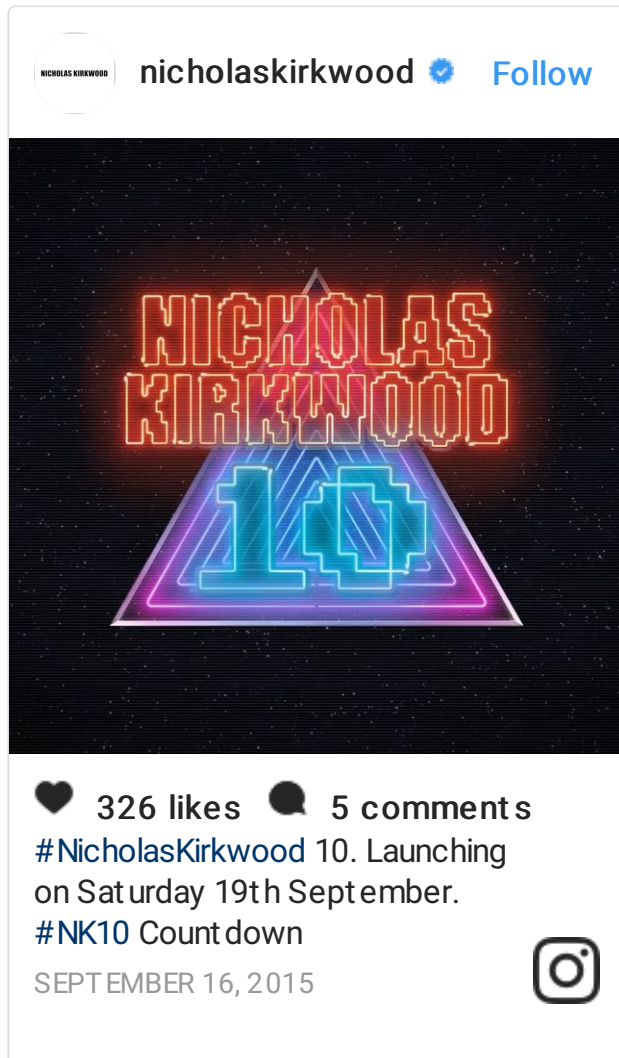
"Born in 1980, that decade's pop culture icons – from Pac-Man to Star Wars and Back to the Future – obviously made an impression on Nicholas Kirkwood," said Jim Gentleman, senior vice president of account management and strategy, SK+G, Las Vegas. "This collection represents a uniquely fun fashion statement and tribute from Kirkwood to that decade by putting a modern spin on retro culture."

Mr. Gentleman is not affiliated with Nicholas Kirkwood, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Nicholas Kirkwood was unable to comment directly before press deadline.

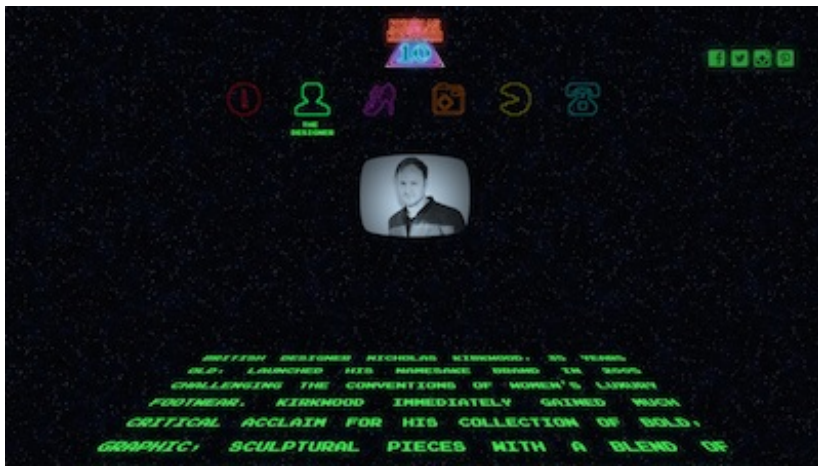
Playing games

Nicholas Kirkwood hosted a countdown until the campaign launch on Sept. 19. Short videos posted to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram look back on the early digital era. For instance, programming language on a computer screen appears as if typed and the neon sign logo for Nicholas Kirkwood 10 is slowly eaten by Pac-Man.



Following the teasers, the brand sent consumers to its campaign microsite to discover the initiative.

From the homepage, consumers can navigate to an "About" page. In scrolling text on a starry background that mimics the introduction to "Star Wars" films, the brand explains the concept for the campaign.



Screenshot of Nicholas Kirkwood 10 microsite

This “playful approach to heritage” is a numbered, made-to-order collection of 10 styles meant to change perceptions of what couture means. Keeping with the designer’s aesthetic, the footwear and accessories use feminine shapes and graphic imagery and mix traditional luxury materials with more unconventional fabrications.

The 10 shoe styles include “Game Over,” a slingback in satin with details such as laser cut acetate and a pixelated video game scene. “Short Circuit” is a lace-up sandal with a mirrored gold heel of acrylic glass. Each of these come in packaging resembling a toy box, meant to heighten the collectibility of the shoes.

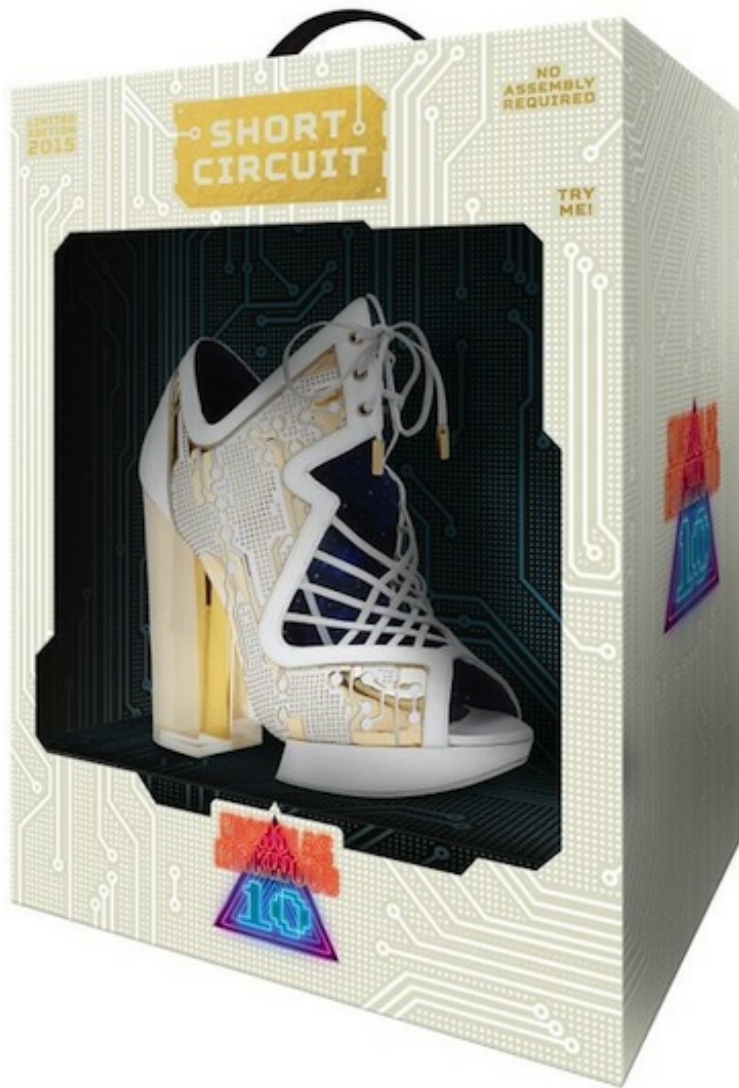
Consumers can enquire about the shoes via a client services email.



Screenshot of Nicholas Kirkwood 10 microsite

In addition to being available through Nicholas Kirkwood stores in London, Paris, New York, Las Vegas and Berlin, select retailers including Selfridges, Bergdorf Goodman, Lane Crawford and Le Bon Marche will also allow consumers to order styles during a world tour. The limited-edition collection will only be available until Dec. 1.

Beyond the shoes, more affordable accessories including tote bags, key chains and pouches can be purchased online through the brand’s ecommerce site.



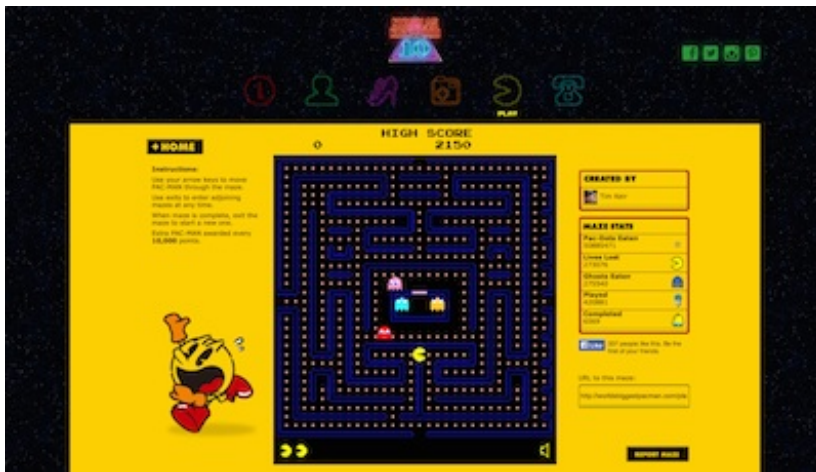
Short Circuit

"I wanted to celebrate 10 years of the brand with a collection that sums up many things for me and what I stand for," said the designer Nicholas Kirkwood in a brand statement. "To go back to the essence of why I started designing shoes; to challenge convention and subvert people's ideas of what footwear should look like and in this case, for '10', I wanted to experiment with graphicism in a, quite literally, playful way.

"'10' explores the concept of being 10-years-old again and the excitement of discovering something for the first time," he continued. "Many big defining moments in pop culture have a strong influence on me, but growing up in the '80s, the culture of arcades, toys and films was the first I actively participated in, and it's this energy I wanted to recreate!"

Also on the microsite is a gallery of images that take consumers behind-the-scenes of the creation of the collection. These show the hand craftsmanship that goes into each pair, letting consumers know that while modern, Nicholas Kirkwood's shoes have the same level of care as those from more established houses.

For those inspired to play by the pop culture-infused site, Nicholas Kirkwood provides an online game of Pac-Man.



Screenshot of Nicholas Kirkwood 10th anniversary microsite

"The 10th Anniversary microsite communicates that Nicholas Kirkwood is first and foremost an artist who appreciates the power of pop culture," Mr. Gentleman said. "Kirkwood's known for his signature sculptured shoes. This effort reinforces that connection."

Recent heritage

Last year, Nicholas Kirkwood used a series of pop-up stores to grow its global presence as the brand expanded its product offerings.

The first pop-up, at French department store Printemps' location on Boulevard Hausmann in Paris, opened in March, and from there the brand hosted pop-ups in six other cities ([see story](#)).

For younger luxury establishments, playful anniversary campaigns may be more in line with their age.

For instance, department store chain Lane Crawford commemorated the one-year anniversary of its mainland China flagship in Shanghai with a playful arcade-themed storewide campaign.

"Future: Play," which officially launched in-store Oct. 10, 2014, celebrated emerging fashion talent as well as Lane Crawford's expanding apparel portfolio through a transformed store environment, mobile interaction and pop-up retrospectives. While Lane Crawford began in Hong Kong, it has been expanding rapidly in China, opening four stores since 2007, underscoring the growing importance of the Chinese consumer ([see story](#)).

This effort from Nicholas Kirkwood focuses on what is unique to the label, rather than trying to align with preconceived notions of luxury.

"The 10th Anniversary collection and microsite is fresh and forward-thinking," Mr. Gentleman said. "I can't imagine another shoe collection looking like this. Original, fun and epic."

"I'd bet this collection and marketing approach will grow the Nicholas Kirkwood brand."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, staff reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/hZASXvIGtyo>

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