

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Gucci enlivens Ace sneaker through conceptual camerawork

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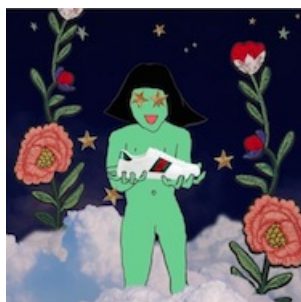


Illustration by Winnie Chi for Gucci's #24HourAce

By SARAH JONES

Italian fashion house Gucci is highlighting the international appeal of its Ace sneaker through a series of artistic films.

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The brand's #24HourAce project commissioned works from global artists that interpret the shoe style's relationship to movement and activity. This initiative takes the product marketing beyond the brand, allowing Gucci to diversify the messaging around the Ace.

"Engaging with a group of international artists allowed Gucci not only to emphasize the variety of product styles, but create a variety of beautiful content, serving as digital commercials for the Ace," said Yuli Ziv, founder/CEO of [Style Coalition](#).

"This unique, artistic expression paired with branded content is a very effective promotion tool in the age when traditional advertising doesn't cut it anymore," she said. "The series created a rich, authentic experience for Gucci's existing and potential consumers, which may lead to enhanced affinity with the brand."

Ms. Ziv is not affiliated with Gucci, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Gucci](#) did not respond before press deadline.

Acing content

Gucci's #24HourAce comes on the heels of other art projects based on its motifs and designs.

Earlier this year, the brand opened up its Tian print to reinterpretation through the second installment of its #GucciGram campaign.

House creative director Alessandro Michele curates the series, which asks illustrators and visual creatives to remix some of its prints into works of art sharable on Instagram ([see story](#)). This initiative prompts a second look at Gucci's newest motifs as they are turned into surreal or whimsical visual displays ([see story](#)).



Gucci's Ace sneaker

Now Gucci is extending that sense of surrealism to the Ace, a style introduced for pre-fall 2016, is a white low top based on a classic Gucci shoe. Taking the footwear into creative director Alessandro Michele's Gucci, the sneaker has been embellished with motifs such as bees, flowers and studs, with the signature red and green evident in metallic snakeskin details.

Gucci launched the project on its Web site, creating a dedicated platform for consumers to discover 17 conceptual films. These are also shared on social media by the brand and the artists, many of whom have thousands of followers that may give Gucci a new audience.

In her film, Korean skateboarder Hyo Joo Ko glides through the streets of Seoul, performing smooth dance moves atop the board as she rolls.

Creative director Marlon Rueberg took inspiration from Bollywood, even though he shot in Milan. In the film, Indian actors tell a brief narrative of a surreal ride on a child-sized train, complete with dance numbers.

Communicating the transportational qualities of the Ace, Sammy Slabbink created a collage of retro film and photos showing people boarding airplanes. Amid the footage, the Ace sneakers take off from a runway, thereby likening them to the planes themselves.

Continuing the theme of movement, Winnie Chi illustrated a green skinned lady's life atop a cloud. After fending off insects with dancelike movement, a thundercloud rains down a pair of Ace sneakers, inciting a moment of celebration.

Australian native Prue Stent went to Joshua Tree in California, filming two women wearing red bodysuits that turn them into something slightly inhuman. They twist and maneuver their bodies, becoming part of the landscape.

All of Gucci's videos can be viewed [here](#).

Fashion on film

Fashion should not be treated as a series of products, but as the presentation of a lifestyle, according to an Armani executive.

At the Cond Nast International Luxury Conference Armani global communications director Claudio Cal spoke of how the brand has leveraged the power of cinema to elevate its brand beyond products. Fashion and cinema have had a dialogic relationship for decades, and by leveraging cinematic tools, fashion brands can give themselves and their products a fuller lifestyle ([see story](#)).

Film can be an effective tool for influencer marketing, as long as the initiative focuses on building quality content rather than pushing product.

The majority of brands now have influencer marketing strategies, but budget remains an obstacle, according to a report from Fashion and Beauty Monitor.

Almost 70 percent of brands, which include United States and British brands mostly in luxury, but also in the mass-market sector, say they have or will soon have influencer-marketing strategies, but two-fifths are held back by budget constraints. While marketers are still trying to determine cost-effective practices, the tactic is beginning to prioritize

commerce ahead of content and lose its authenticity ([see story](#)).

"It's great to see a brand pushing the boundaries of traditional influencer engagement by collaborating with artists, versus traditional celebrities or models, for example," Ms. Ziv said. "By doing that they don't only expand their own audience, but contribute to the success of these creative individuals."

"It's a trend we've been seeing a lot lately, as influencer marketing expands as an industry and the competition among the brands forces everyone to look for other emerging talent," she said. "While collaborations with style bloggers typically focus on their own style and personality that inspires consumers, working with artists brings more attention to the creative expression around the product and brand."

"Both tactics are equally successful in creating great authentic content that resonates with today's consumers."

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