

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Roger Vivier composes musical plot to highlight fall footwear

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Image from Roger Vivier's "Belle de Nuit"

By SARAH JONES

French footwear and accessories label Roger Vivier is spotlighting its fall/winter 2016-17 collection through a lively nighttime tale.

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"Belle de Nuit" tells the story of a singer, played by model Louise Follain, as she records a track in a studio, appears on stage at a night club and wanders Parisian streets in the dark. Through the painstaking process of getting the record right, Roger Vivier's shoes and handbags become an extension of the artist's feminine, joyous persona.

"This is true storytelling," said Lauren Bates, storyteller at [Blue Moon Digital](#), Denver, CO. "Roger Vivier isn't taking a piece of marketing material, or an ad, and calling it storytelling.

"All of the elements in the short were carefully thought out to convey a story," she said. "A coming of age story that is decidedly French, yet still relatable across cultures. For instance, the song 'Adieu l'enfance,' means 'goodbye childhood.'

"The model, Louise Follain, is young, French, and reminds me of Caroline de Maigret. And the styling of the clothes is both playful, yet refined.

"Everything speaks to a theme of balance. Being able to balance a playful or carefree spirit with a more sophisticated or refined feminine aesthetic."

Ms. Bates is not affiliated with Roger Vivier, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Roger Vivier](#) was unable to comment directly before press deadline.

Creative process

Clocking in at two and a half minutes, Belle de Nuit opens as the protagonist stands looking at her own reflection in a dimly lit recording studio. As she hums a tune, an unseen voice comes through a speaker, saying, "Let's go."

As she steps up to a microphone and begins to sing, her foot taps out the beat on a stool, placing focus on her ankle boots.

The pop song picks up as an electronic soundtrack is added to her a cappella vocals. The artist is seen walking down a street swinging her handbag or tapping out a rhythm on the crossbody purse as it hangs at her hip.



Image from Roger Vivier's Belle de Nuit campaign

Over the course of the recording process, she appears in a variety of outfits and footwear. Her tapping foot is outfitted in a printed pump on one occasion and she wears a pair of sparkly over-the-knee boots as she plays the guitar.

Throughout the film, she and her faceless producer are depicted as perfectionists, doing one more take. Roger Vivier's shoes and accessories are seen as a companion to the artistic process.

Her hard work pays off, as she discovers her track coming from a car radio as she takes an evening stroll. She pauses in front of the vehicle to savor the moment, skipping away happily.

Roger Vivier - "Belle de Nuit" Autumn-Winter 2016/2017

The film was directed by Frdric Guelaff from film production agency Les Suffragettes with a soundtrack by La Fline.

"Everything in this video was carefully planned and beautifully executed," Ms. Bates said. "The product shots, particularly the close-ups of the shoes, blend seamlessly with the narrative.

"In many of those shots, the model is tapping her foot to the beat, or playing the kick drum, which showcases the shoe beautifully without breaking the story."

Sounding off

The worlds of fashion and music are colliding this season, with campaign films that read more like music videos than advertising.

French fashion label Balmain's fall/winter 2016 campaign film went viral thanks to the celebrity of collaborator Kanye West.

Released as a music video for the recording artist's song "Wolves," the video stars a cast that includes Mr. West's wife Kim Kardashian-West and a bevy of top models. Since its July 29 premiere on the rapper's YouTube channel, the campaign has been viewed more than 4 million times, giving the house a platform to reach an audience that extends

past its own social followers ([see story](#)).

Similarly, U.S. menswear brand John Varvatos is reiterating its rock n' roll appeal through an original music video featuring pieces from its fall/winter 2016 campaign.

For the fall/winter 2016 advertisements, the menswear label worked with Irish singer/songwriter Andrew Hozier-Byrne, known as Hozier professionally. Since debuting its "iconic rock star" ads in 2005, the brand has used only black-and-white imagery, but for fall/winter 2016, John Varvatos opted for color photography, a move that is likely to give pause among enthusiasts who have become accustomed to its grey-scale aesthetic ([see story](#)).

While Roger Vivier's pop star is an imagined character, the effect is similar, blending entertainment and marketing into one medium.

"Music and fashion have always had a close relationship, though not overtly so," Ms. Bates said. "In the '80s George Michael used models in his music videos. In the '60s you had Jimi Hendrix and The Rolling Stones with exceptional stage presence, clothing included. Not to mention Prince and David Bowie's boundary pushing with their perhaps avant garde at times personal style.

"And now you are seeing a host of artists partner with musicians in one way or another," she said. "For example, Guns N' Roses with John Varvatos and Kanye West with Balmain. It will be interesting to see if this trend takes off. And really, it could prove an effective marketing approach to reach a broader audience.

"Musicians, typically, have large social followings. Often much larger than some fashion brands, so the partnership makes sense. In addition, video has mass appeal and is constantly evolving.

"In order for brands to reach a younger audience, they will have to go where that audience is. And often, that is social and video."

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