

RETAIL

La Rinascente spotlights stylish citizens to usher in fall

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Illustrations by Jungwoo Kasiq for la Rinascente

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Italian department store chain la Rinascente is putting a lens on Milanese street style for its fall/winter 2016 campaign.

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Working with style blogger Scott Schuman of The Sartorialist and artist Jungwoo Kasiq, la Rinascente has captured six locals in both photography and illustration. Creating an authentic portrait of the spirit of Milan, the effort was cast from an open call to civilians.

"This collaboration is interesting because of the international approach it embraced," said Dalia Strum, professor at the [Fashion Institute of Technology](#) and founder of [Dalia Inc.](#) and [MommysToolbox.com](#), New York.

"With the photo shoot held in Milan, an American photographer and Japanese illustrator, it opens up interest to a vastly large audience," she said.

Ms. Strum is not affiliated with la Rinascente, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[La Rinascente](#) was unable to comment directly before press deadline.

Personal style

People at la Rinascente builds off the "watercolors" campaign concept debuted this spring.

The effort is meant to portray the idea that a place, in this case Milan, is defined by its people.

The 12 spring/summer 2016 subjects were depicted in street-style photography and a coordinating illustration as well as a Cinemagraph. These captured a number of the characters that populate la Rinascente and its hometown, from the young to more mature and the casual to formal, allowing the retailer to show off its product selection and range.

During Milan Fashion Week in February, la Rinascente hosted a street casting with Mr. Schuman. Using direct marketing channels including social media and email campaigns, the store prompted its followers to attend for a chance to be photographed by the popular blogger.

la Rinascente Street Casting - Fashion Week

From this open call, la Rinascente cast its fall campaign.

Consumers can explore the personalities featured through a mobile-responsive microsite. Originally created for the spring effort, the hub now holds content for a new season.

"Unexpected classic" shows a woman wearing work-appropriate attire with a modern update, while "urban temper" finds a city wanderer with a camera dressed for exploring in a shearling coat.

A "glamorous spirit" is shown in high heels and a leather jacket by day as she bends the rules, and a man imbues "timeless elegance" with sharp suiting.

These profiles are explained in text, enabling consumers to get a better understanding of each style personality.



Screenshot of la Rinascente campaign microsite

Also on the microsite, videos with Mr. Schuman and Mr. Kasiq take consumers inside the project.

Mr. Schuman explains that he does not actively look for subjects, but instead he responds to what he sees, since focusing too hard on one thing could mean missing something else. He also talks about the similarities between his and la Rinascente's views on inclusivity.

In his film, Mr. Kasiq is seen illustrating in watercolor based on a photograph, as he did for la Rinascente. As he paints, he explains the process behind his art form, which requires him to move fast, as well as the way in which he approaches his work and the idea of fashion.

La Rinascente is again allowing consumers to share their own style by posting to social media with the hashtag #LaRinascentePeople.

Model behavior

In the age of social media, everyone thinks they have what it takes to be a model or style influencer. Brands have fed off this desire for a moment in the spotlight with open castings.

Last year, Canadian retailer Holt Renfrew similarly highlighted the diverse cast of characters in its network through a fall campaign aimed at fostering a sense of community.

"All Together at Holts" features 14 of the store's customers and two sales associates from across Canada, who are shown in still imagery and in video talking about their individual sense of style. Going beyond those profiled in the campaign, Holt Renfrew is offering consumers the chance to be a part of the campaign through user-generated submissions, making this a truly democratic marketing effort ([see story](#)).

Also, Simon Malls and Cond Nast's W magazine are teaming up to scout new modeling talent at shopping centers across the United States.

Beginning Aug. 20, modeling hopefuls will have the chance to attend casting calls at 10 different malls, during which they can vie for the chance to appear in W's March edition and a Simon ad campaign. As a publication that prides itself on discovering the next big thing and nurturing young talent, hosting these open calls may enable W to spot the next big thing ([see story](#)).

"The opportunity to leverage user generated content could create a higher demand during international events, including Milan Fashion Week and the audience that it brings," Ms. Strum said.

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