

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## John Varvatos casts modern "Renaissance man" Machine Gun Kelly in campaign

August 4, 2017



*John Varvatos' fall/winter 2017 campaign. Image credit: John Varvatos*

---

By STAFF REPORTS

U.S. menswear label John Varvatos is speaking to its rock n' roll aesthetic with a fall/winter 2017 advertising campaign starring a multihyphenate performer.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**  
Plus: Just released  
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

As the face of the effort, singer-rapper-actor Machine Gun Kelly is following in the footsteps of other performers such as Hozier and Ringo Starr, who have fronted ads for the brand. Like many of the brand's past campaigns, the effort focuses on shedding light on the artist in organic style content.

### Shared background

Colson Baker, whose stage name is Machine Gun Kelly, first made moves into the music industry as a teenager. However, it was more recently that the 27-year-old found more notoriety .

After signing a record deal in 2011, his debut album released in 2012 reached the number four spot on the Billboard 200 albums chart, and he has since had two other top-10 records. This year, the performer was nominated for a Billboard Music Award for the song "Bad Things," a collaboration with singer Camila Cabello.

In a black-and-white campaign still, the musician appears in an animal print motorcycle jacket which leaves parts of his tattoos visible.

A short campaign film shows the artist playing an electric guitar on a busy street.

The musician tells a story behind his song "Let You Go." He explains that he broke the instrument he originally used to record the track before performing part of the song.

### *John Varvatos Fall/Winter 2017 Campaign Video Ft. Machine Gun Kelly*

Like a music video, the film captures the recording artist in a number of scenes as he sings, whether walking a city street or playing the guitar.

The brand's eponymous founder, who is originally from Detroit, felt a kinship with Machine Gun Kelly given their shared roots.

"I've followed Machine Gun Kelly's career as he's risen from the streets of Cleveland to an international star," Mr. Varvatos said in a brand statement. "Our shared passion for music, mid-western roots and living life with a rebel spirit has bonded us in friendship."

Last year, John Varvatos reiterated 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](#)).

---

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

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