

RETAIL

Barneys, Highsnobiety team for 30 capsule collection-strong pop-up

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For two days only, Barneys Madison Avenue will host the drop@barneys, in partnership with Highsnobiety. Image credit: Highsnobiety

By JEN KING

Retailer Barneys New York is taking cues from streetwear culture by hosting an exclusive two-day "drop" at its Madison Avenue flagship.

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The term drop is most commonly used by streetwear brands when a new limited-edition collection or product is unveiled, often in an exclusive location for a very short time period. Similar to a temporary pop-up shop, the retail format requires consumers to take quick action or risk losing out on purchasing a hard-to-obtain product.

"The idea of price as the only factor determining luxury as exclusive or alluring is outdated," said Drew Caldwell, senior buyer, developing designer at **Barneys**, New York. "The next generation of engaged clients are more varied in their desires, coveting equally the \$100 and the \$1,000.

"The experience, engagement, personal expression and a sense of discovery are the magic behind 'drops,' and that is the whole concept behind the drop@barneys," he said.

Drop in

On Oct. 28-29, Barneys will host "the drop@barneys," a first-of-its-kind event for the department store.

The drop@barneys is in partnership with Highsnobiety, a sneaker blog turned media brand covering fashion, lifestyle and culture through the lens of high-end and streetwear brands.

"Highsnobiety is similarly a player in the next wave of media, part of a group of hybrid social/digital/print news sources covering fashion, style, music and design," Barneys' Mr. Caldwell said. "They were a natural fit for this project when Barneys was seeking to add a layer of editorial depth to complement our own channels."

During the two-day drop, Barneys' Madison Avenue flagship will feature 30 exclusive capsule collection and product launches. In total, there will be more than 80 vendors and 40-plus in-store activations and designer appearances by some of fashion's biggest names.

On day one of the drop@barneys, nine of the 30 collections will be released throughout the day in various "drops."

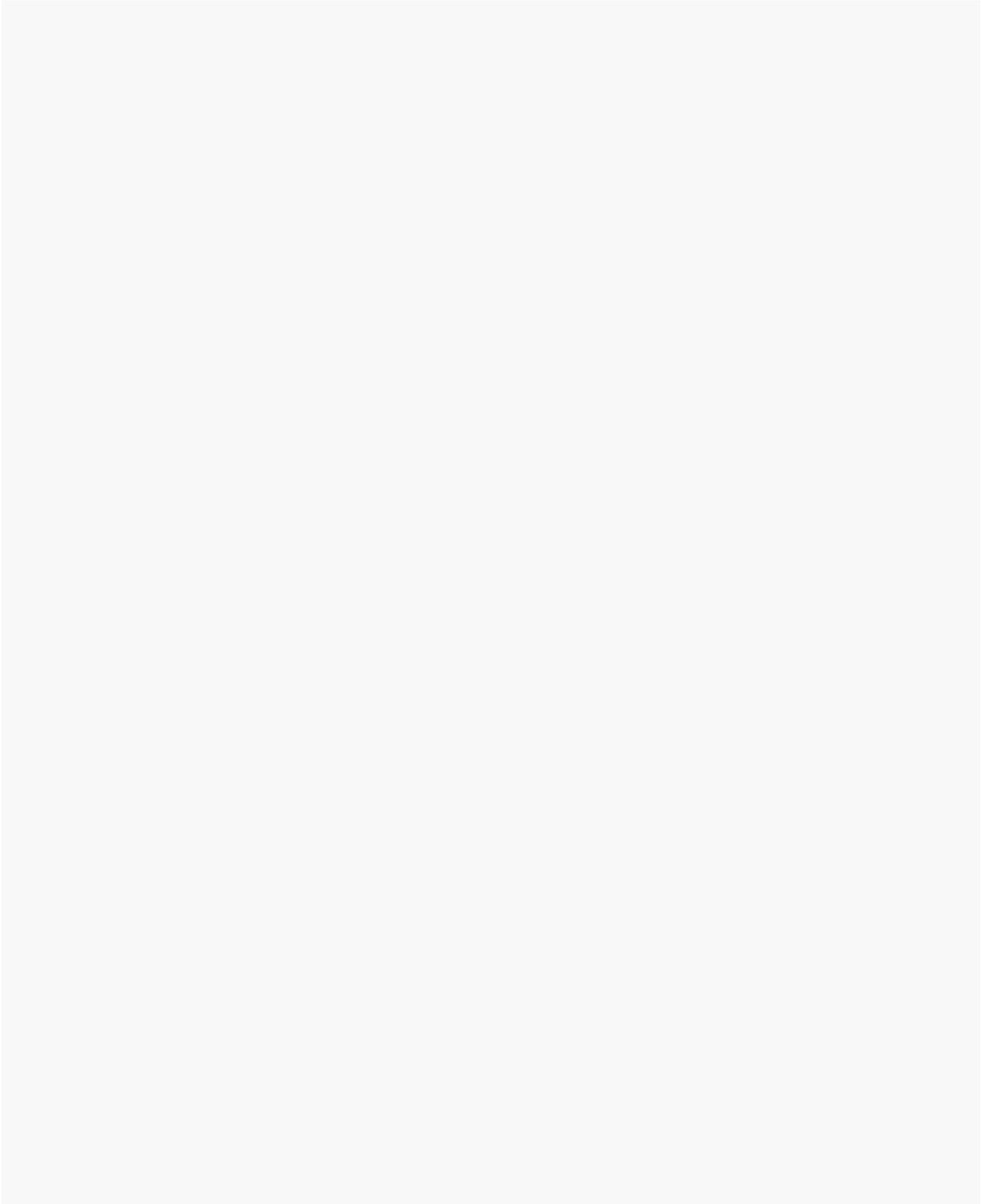
Personal appearances will also be made by the designers behind the collections including Virgil Abloh of Off-White, Greg Lauren, Mike Amiri of Amiri and Jerry Lorenzo of FEAR OF GOD ([see story](#)), among others.

Additional designers in the drop, also available via Barneys.com, include Gucci, Alexander Wang, Ambush and Visitor on Earth, to name a few.

Much of the in-store activations for [thdrop@barneys](#) will occur on the event's second day.

Programming includes panel discussions at Barneys' Madison Avenue location hosted by the retailer and Highsnobiety. Panelists will include a variety of designers, influencers and fashion industry insiders.

To include its online audience, and those outside the radius of Barneys' flagship, the panels will be live streamed.



Additional in-store activities include a signing by Tariq "Black Thought" Trotter of The Roots, a Saint Laurent handbag activation, custom hat orders from Nick Fouquet and Converse chain-stitching customization.

TheDrop@barneys-related activations will be found across the Madison Avenue location with a wide range of experiences throughout the retailer's men's, women's, children's, home, beauty and jewelry departments.

Consumers can stop by a T-shirt bar featuring 25 exclusive graphics from coveted brands, enjoy a DJ set from designers Heron Preston and Off-White's Mr. Abloh, sit for a tattoo by celebrity artist Jonboy or get pierced by renowned piercer J. Colby Smith.

Given the scale and exclusivity of theDrop@barneys, interested consumers must register to attend through Barneys' Web site.

Street cred

Once very separate segments of the fashion industry, streetwear culture is becoming increasingly intertwined with high-end apparel and accessories.

French fashion house Louis Vuitton, for example, skated into streetwear through an early 2017 collaboration with New York-based label Supreme.

In less than two decades, Louis Vuitton went from taking legal action against Supreme for allegedly using a pattern that resembled its logo to designing a menswear collection alongside the label. For Louis Vuitton, this collection offers an opportunity to tap into a new audience.

With limited direct-operated points of sale and a strategy that involves releasing only a few pieces at a time, Supreme fans tend to descend on its stores to get their hands on its apparel and accessories. A demand that outpaces supply also leads to a strong secondhand market for the label ([see story](#)).

As with Louis Vuitton x Supreme, Barneys is just one of many retailers taking note of changes in dress and behavior.

"Barneys has always been a champion of the new, whether that's young designers, changes in dress or evolving shopping behavior," Barneys' Mr. Caldwell said.

"This is what theDrop@barneys is about promoting a new guard of designers, creators and zeitgeists that have captured an audience in a way that many established brands have not," he said.