

RETAIL

Barneys taps collegiate photographer for digital look book

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Rufus Barkley chose his grandmother as one of the subjects of his California shoot. Image credit: Barneys New York

By STAFF REPORTS

Department store chain Barneys New York is giving a student photographer real-world fashion shoot experience through a new competition.

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Rufus Barkley, a senior at the School of Visual Arts, won the Barneys New York Foundation's first Perfect Shot competition, earning him the chance to shoot a digital look book for Barneys' Web site. Education is one of the pillars of Barneys' eponymous charitable foundation, as the retailer looks to be a force in nurturing the fashion industry's next generation of talents.

Student shoot

The Barneys New York Foundation, founded in 2016, created a charitable arm for the retailer. While Barneys is not new to giving back, creating this foundation allows it to make more of an impact on efforts related to human rights, the arts and education.

Barneys' Perfect Shot fits into the foundation's desire to help students, offering those studying at The New School's Parsons School of Design and SVA the opportunity to apply for a chance to shoot a digital look book.

The judging was overseen by Matt Mazzucca, creative director of Barneys, and Chris Martinez, Barneys' vice president, digital creative director.

Mr. Barkley was chosen for his developed point of view, which stood out due to his age.

"We selected Rufus as the winner of our inaugural competition because of his versatility, creativity and his ability to marry the commercial and the creative," said Mr. Mazzucca in a statement. "He knows who he is, which is the hardest part of being an artist and photographer. His confidence really shows in his work."

The judges were intrigued by Mr. Barkley's stories of growing up in Laguna Beach, CA, that they expanded the prize. In addition to the intended studio shoot, they sent the photographer back to his hometown with film and fashions from the Barneys New York Collection.



Photos from Barneys' Perfect Shot look book. Image credit: Barneys New York

During the California shoot, Barneys entrusted the photographer to style, produce and shoot the collection.

While the student says his work leans more towards a documentary style, he has roots and relations to fashion. His mother is a designer, his great aunt was a muse to Richard Avedon and his sisters have modeled.

Barneys has not been afraid to hand over creative control of its look books to pre-professional talents.

To promote its fall children's collections last year, Barneys turned the look book production over to kids themselves.

In a short music video, children are seen lip syncing and showing off their dance moves to Rachel Platten's hit "Stand By You." Digital media has made it easier for kids to become creators, a role that the stars of Barney's marketing effort take on seemingly with ease ([see story](#)).

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