

RETAIL

Barneys debuts holiday installation featuring Haas Brothers' art

November 3, 2017



The Haas Brothers' designs recall a childlike atmosphere. Image credit: Barneys

By DANNY PARISI

Department store chain Barneys New York is going all out this holiday season with an extensive collaboration with artists Simon and Nikolai Haas that includes a full redesign of its flagship store and an accompanying social giving campaign.

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The collaboration, headed by the Haas brothers and Barneys creative director Matthew Mazzucca, is inspired by the idea of modeling the store throughout the ages, spanning from prehistory to the future. Barneys' redesign marks the first big United States-based holiday retail event of the season, although more are sure to follow soon.

Holiday spirit

With the holiday season approaching, retailers are gearing up for their most profitable time of year with big holiday redesigns.

Barneys is one of the first U.S. retailers to announce a big holiday installation in collaboration with the Haas brothers.

Through this collaboration, Barneys' Madison Avenue location will be fully transformed including window displays, unique merchandise and interactive in-store experiences brought to life through animation and sculpture.

The idea of the installation is that Barneys is transformed into a vision of Earth throughout different ages. The Haas Brothers have divided this idea into four eras: Primordial, Utopia, Millennium and a far future dubbed "Mushroom Singularity."



Haas Brothers' art. Image credit: Barneys

The installation is marked by a cartoonish, almost childlike aesthetic featuring characters with comical names such as Rhinona Wyder and Rainbow Baggins.

While the Madison Avenue location will be the focus of this collaboration, Barneys locations around the country will also be redesigned along the Haas Brothers' idea. The installation will run from Nov. 16 until Jan. 1, 2018.

Barneys and the Haas Brothers have also created a companion campaign focused on promoting positive messages for the holiday season. Under the umbrella hashtag of #HaasRules, the store will be tweeting small witticisms related to spreading the holiday cheer, as well as plastering these messages on the windows of Barneys.

Ages of earth

While Barneys is certainly one of the first big retailers to unveil its holiday plans in the U.S., a few others have come forward as well.

British department store Selfridges is getting a head start on its Christmas celebration with the unveiling of window displays, but its new strategy will keep the display from getting stale.

The retailer is the first in the world to display its Christmas window decor so soon, which will likely gather significant attention and free publicity. Selfridges' display will see a second unveiling in November, which is the first time in the retailer's history it has had a dual-staged unveiling ([see story](#)).

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#HaasRules. Image credit: Barneys

While every retailer expects the lion's share of their annual sales to occur during the holiday period both in-store and online a shifting landscape has forced them to adopt new strategies with the arrival of each new holiday season, resulting in innovative developments in online sales, digital ads and, now, chatbots.

The National Retail Federation estimates holiday sales will hit nearly \$656 billion in 2017, with \$117 billion coming from non-store sales, which includes ecommerce activity. And 30 percent of that activity will come from mobile devices. That is a surprisingly low number, given that a majority of United States shoppers actually spend more time online using a mobile device than they do using a desktop or laptop computer ([see story](#)).

Barneys' combination of in-store renovations with an accompanying digital component shows that the retailer is committed to the kind of cross-channel marketing that has been on the mind of retailers across the industry over the

last year.

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