

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Delvaux looks to "Game of Thrones" for couture collection inspiration

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Still from Nic Courdy's animation featuring Delvaux's Black Beauty handbag. Image courtesy of Delvaux

By SARAH JONES

Belgian leather goods maker Delvaux is putting the emphasis on its savoir-faire this holiday season with a collection that takes its cues from fantasy.

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For its first Couture Exclusive Collection, the label based its designs on imagined narratives featuring characters that feature in many mythical realms, such as the knight and the enchantress. While produced as limited-editions, the haute handbags' launch enables Delvaux to showcase its broader craftsmanship capabilities during the important holiday season.

"The 'Couture Exclusive Collection' is a tribute to couture, and couture means mastery, tradition, craftsmanship and excellence, which are all Delvaux values," said Christina Zeller, artistic director at [Delvaux](#), Brussels.

"It is also the seamless continuity of our fall/winter collection—a collection that is both chivalrous and triumphant, embracing medieval accents reminding us of armors and Viking furs," she said. "The presence of gold and silver in the fall collection and my new and great love for the Game of Thrones' series simply motivated me to take it a step further for the holidays season.

"It was for us the perfect timing to launch our very first couture collection, which definitely matches with the holiday spirit and festivities, in a very unconventional and less traditional way."

Fashion fantasy

Delvaux's couture creations extend the world the brand created with its autumn/winter 2017 collection.

For a regal design, Delvaux applied brass embellishments made by Swiss watchmakers. Dubbed "Queen's Desire," this style nods to the created character's armor.

Referencing a knight's armor, "Iron Shield" features layered pieces of leather and metallic studs. Meanwhile, "Black Beauty" translates the darkened heart of a sorceress into handbag form, attaching raven hued flowers.

Delvaux also created its tribute to a "philosopher king" figure. This bag, named the "Golden Glory," features details

calling to mind medieval nobility and the sun.



Delvaux's Golden Glory handbag, as depicted by Nic Courdy. Image courtesy of Delvaux

These bags are all Delvaux's new Brillant Micro shape, which is about the size of a cell phone. This version of the classic model is new for the holiday season.

Micro handbags have been trending for awhile, as consumers are able to slim down their purses thanks to innovations such as mobile payments making wallets less of a necessity.

"To reinforce the exclusivity and couture aspect of this collection, we have introduced a new size 'Le Brillant Micro' that makes it a precious jewel-like bag and we used for the very first time the embroidery techniques of Miers d'Art like haute-horology and even embroideries applied to leather bags, while they are typically reserved for haute couture," Ms. Zeller said.

Along with handbags, Delvaux also made accessories within these themes, such as straps, key rings and clutches.

Delvaux's limited-edition line is retailing exclusively in its brand boutiques. While only sold in stores, this collection is featured online, allowing a broader audience to immerse themselves in the inspiration.

To showcase these designs, the label tapped artist Nic Courdy for a collaboration. He created a digital animation for each bag, bringing the fashion fairy tale to life.

Delvaux Couture Exclusive Collection - Queen's Desire

"The creative universe of the collection aesthetically and conceptually instantly felt connected to my work," Mr. Courdy said in a statement. "There were elements of fantasy and a strong presence of historical inspiration that made the collaboration feel right.

"The bags themselves look as if they would be right at home in a museum's sculptural collection which made it easy for them to become central characters in the animations," he said. "The animations explore a neo-fantasy visual narrative that work to enhance the ambiance of each bag's unique storyline."

Delvaux is also highlighting the hours of work that went into the making of these accessories via craftsmanship films.

"Delvaux is well-known for being a house of tradition, known for its craftsmanship, as well as for its technical innovation," Ms. Zeller said. "It is the world's single oldest leather luxury house that has been continuously in activity. Since its early beginning in 1829, Delvaux has always focused on the exceptional quality of its designs.

"To be timeless and go over the years, a bag need to be extremely qualitative and have a recognizable shape that can be worn with all styles. The choice of leather and the construction of the bag are essential for me," she said. "By

combining excellent quality and innovative fantasy, we reinvent our iconic bags in our very unconventional way and that pleases.

"For the Couture Exclusive Collection I wanted it to be very exclusive and sophisticated, almost jewel-like bags. With the embellishments, embroideries and the buckle inspired by an ex-voto, this collection represents the most refined savoir-faire that Delvaux ever created."

Story telling

Delvaux's digital marketing recently has blended humor and heritage.

Leather goods maker Delvaux is paying homage to the small but charming European kingdom it calls home with a collection of handbag charms expressing what the brand calls "Belgitude."

The Belgian leather brand's Les Miniatures Belgitude collection is a celebration of the known and lesser known treasures of Belgium and its culture. Country of origin is an important code for luxury brands, as heritage offers an endless source of inspiration with many houses embracing local culture to explore their own roles in society ([see story](#)).

With Game of Thrones a cultural phenomenon, other luxury brands have taken notice.

Italian fashion house Dolce & Gabbana tapped two "Game of Thrones" fan-favorites to front the men's and women's version of the same fragrance.

Dolce & Gabbana appointed Kit Harington and Emilia Clarke as the male and female campaign ambassadors for The One fragrance line. For fans of the show, Dolce & Gabbana's The One is fitting for the actors' characters as the penultimate season kicked off this past summer ([see story](#)).

"With the chivalrous, baroque and mythical universe of this collection we directly felt a connection with Nic Courdy's work," Ms. Zeller said. "His fantasy and his strong historical inspiration made him the ideal partner for this type of collaboration.

"He uses collage techniques, sceneries and music that able to reflect, in a very funny and unconventional way, the mood and inspiration behind each bag," she said. "This self-derision and innovative way of expression just felt more than right to us. We always try to play our iconic bags to make them playful and timeless at the same time."