

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Max Mara embraces logomania via heritage rehash

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*#MaxMaraGram takes a new look at an archival font. Image credit: Max Mara*

By SARAH JONES

Italian fashion label Max Mara is proving that what is old can be new again by putting a modern twist on an archival design.

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The brand's #MaxMaraGram project for spring/summer 2018 remixed a typeface that was originally used in the 1950s into a logo print. Creating its own take on the trend towards more overtly logoed luxury goods, Max Mara's pieces center on an exploration of its history.

"From a branding perspective, this archival based print is a nod to [Max Mara's] heritage and showcasing that it can still compete in the current environment," said Kimmie Smith, celebrity fashion stylist and co-founder/style director of [Athleisure Mag](#).

"It is a call to action for those that may remember the beginnings of the brand to bring it back into their wardrobe as well as to showcase how this brand acknowledges that adding a twist to their offerings can be accomplished in this simple way," she said.

Ms. Smith is not affiliated with Max Mara, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Max Mara](#) was reached for comment.

Archive update

#MaxMaraGram debuted during the brand's runway show in September. The logo takes its reference from a font created by illustrator Erberto Carboni for a Max Mara poster campaign from 1958.

The Tuscans typeface style dates back further than mid century. Mr. Carboni was inspired by a 2,000-year-old Roman font that was discovered in the early 1800s.



*Max Mara was inspired by a classic ad. Image credit: Max Mara*

Now, the lettering is getting a new life on Max Mara designs. The brand name has been deconstructed into a logo print that features on a capsule of apparel, accessories and footwear.

Available both in-store and online, #MaxMaraGram pieces include high-heel sandals, handbags and jackets. The designs feature a neutral color palette, with the logo appearing in tone-on-tone sand garments.

To promote the line, Max Mara is leaning on the logo's history, educating consumers about the origins of the print.



*The #MaxMaraGram logo takes reference from the brand's archives. Image credit: Max Mara*

As the brand has often focused on more minimalist designs, this logo-centric capsule is a different direction for Max Mara.

"The logo-centric collection is an homage to any brand and allows fans of the brand to embrace the label in a new way and to put their own twist on it when wearing it with what they have in their closet," Ms. Smith said. "Most brands have a portion of their assortment that includes this and it's a great way to advertise a brand, even for those who are not enthusiasts when it comes to wearing a label outwardly in this way.

"It also reflects a manner of modernity by including this in the brand."

Logo love

While logos were largely going out of fashion in recent years, they have seen a resurgence in popularity.

Fendi's fall/winter 2018 runway show featured a branded homage to sportswear brand Fila's logo in fur. The

collection also played on Fendi's double-F logo, placing the iconic print on handbags and coats.



*Fendi's latest runway show featured an homage to Fila. Image credit: Fendi*

LVMH-owned department store Le Bon Marché Rive Gauche is encouraging overt visual branding in a limited-edition logo exhibition.

For "Let's Go Logo!" the Paris retailer invited 130 brands from fashion to food to rethink their unique nameplate for its bricks-and-mortar store and 24sevres.com platform. While logo-heavy fashion was once considered passé, it has found new popularity thanks to streetwear influences ([see story](#)).

Serving as a bond to a brand's past, the logo has long been debated, but contemporary updates can cement brand iconography in fashion's future, according to a keynote from Gucci's president and CEO at The New York Times International Luxury Conference.

Since becoming president and CEO of Gucci in March 2015, Marco Bizzarri has brought on board Alessandro Michele as creative director, promoting him to the lead position after 12-years of working for the house. With Mr. Michele's appointment, the designer has re-envisioned Gucci's iconic GG logo, a move that did not sit well with brand purists but that has been embraced by a younger consumer who had previously moved away from the house's designs ([see story](#)).

"I think the use of leading with your logo as it applies to merchandise is a mainstay in fashion as well as a fad," Athleisure Mag's Ms. Smith said. "The fad is only in the way in which the brand adopts this portion of the collection - is it limited edition, does it exist in certain portions of the collection, etc."

"It became a mainstay in fashion when this becomes a consistent element in the way that the line is presented so that customers have the option to purchase this."

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