

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Bally remixes '90s designs for now

May 4, 2018



*Bally Animals are back. Image credit: Bally*

By SARAH JONES

Swiss apparel and accessories label Bally is reintroducing an iconic design for today with a streetwear-style launch.

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Originally introduced in 1991 to celebrate the Swiss federation's 700th anniversary, the Bally Animals design is getting an update as the motif is placed across ready-to-wear, shoes and accessories. Intended to pay homage to the hip-hop scene of the 1990s that developed out of New York and New Orleans, Bally's collection simultaneously honors its heritage.

"We're going through a period of rediscovering the '90s through culture and lifestyle, which includes fashion and music," said Dalia Strum, educator at [The Fashion Institute of Technology](#), New York. "There's a sense of nostalgia that is associated with the featured aesthetic and by reviving them, they're providing the opportunity to share these with a new generation.

"This new affinity for sneaker culture has been the catalyst towards relevant collaborations and bringing back past styles," she said. "Bally has an opportunity to highlight their history along with maintaining their thought leadership within this space by relaunching this collection."

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

### Animal aesthetic

In the 1980s, Bally was embraced by New York hip-hop culture as rappers such as Slick Rick and Doug E Fresh wore the brand and name-dropped the label in their songs. Later, the brand's popularity extended to other parts of the United States.

New Orleans in particular latched onto Bally's Animals as a status symbol, and the shoes created a sense of hysteria among residents. Local rapper Bust Down reflected this footwear fever with his track "Putcha Ballys On."

The brand is now relaunching Animals exclusively in the United States, paying homage to the love that grew out of New Orleans.



*Bally Animals are being reintroduced to the U.S. Image credit: Bally*

Bally Animals includes sneakers with cows traipsing across the sole and pool slides with golden cows. The bovine decorations represent the traditional procession of cows up to the Alps.

Other designs feature a man waving a Swiss flag while another plays an alpine horn.

As Bally launches its Animals collection, the brand is marketing the line with an animated cow character. For the launch, the Claymation creature appears across the label's Web site, popping up on product pages to wag its tail or give viewers attitude.

The cow also stars in a short film by Bally, which features a pair of tattooed arms manipulating clay.

At the start, a cassette tape is inserted into a boom box, and a hip-hop track begins to play. Inspired by the music, the cow begins a break dancing routine, spinning on his head.

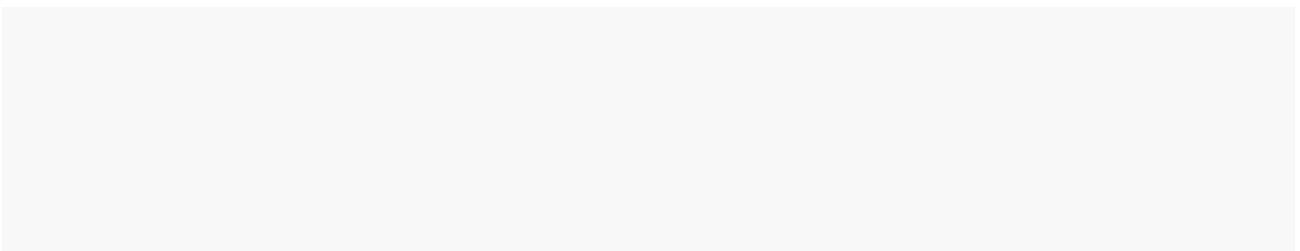
The clay is shaped into a ball and is reformed into a Bally baseball cap or two hands performing a middle five.

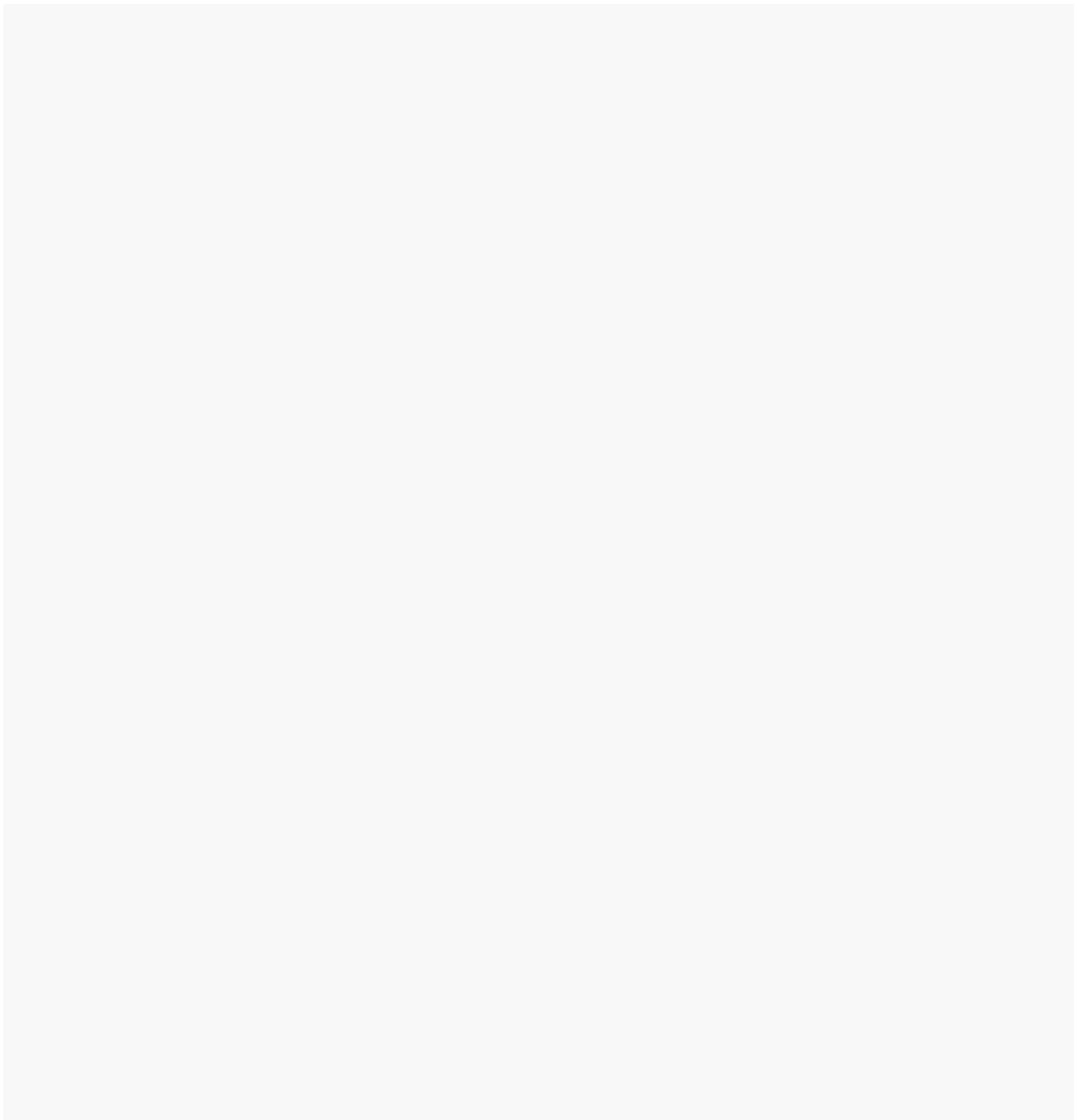
When the cow reappears, he is accessorized with a gold chain. The animal crosses his arms, looking tough.

*The Bally Animals are back*

In addition to debuting on Bally's Web site, the Animals collection dropped at New Orleans boutique Live on May 3. Leading up to the drop, Bally promoted the launch with the hashtag #PutchaBallysOn.

Furthering the hype around the collection, Bally teamed with Hypebeast to shoot the line.





The #BallyAnimals capsule collection shot in partnership with @hypebeast

A post shared by Bally (@bally) on May 3, 2018 at 8:41am PDT

### Streetwear strategy

As the luxury business looks to drive sales in an increasingly competitive retail environment, it is turning to a streetwear-style tactic to create consistent newness.

A growing number of luxury labels and retailers have been adopting the drop retail format, opting for a series of limited-edition releases per year rather than the traditional seasonal store arrivals ([see story](#)).

With hip-hop a part of its history and present, Bally previously spoke to the "urban explorer" through a collaboration with Roc Nation recording artist J. Cole.

Incorporating the brand's heritage of crafting hiking boots, the partnership resulted in a collection featuring a modernized version of the utilitarian footwear along with a water-resistant backpack. Demonstrating the city to country appeal of these pieces, Bally filmed Mr. Cole's retreat to Kingston, Jamaica ([see story](#)).

"Sneaker culture highlights the desire for inherent exclusivity and status," Ms. Strum said. "The companies to support verification are actually going to be how this industry evolves because fraud is going to be extremely limited to

maintain the exclusivity status."

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