

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Mulberry makes comparison between country house, contemporary artist

May 16, 2018



*Mulberry is sponsoring a Damien Hirst exhibit at Houghton Hall. Image credit: Mulberry*

By SARAH JONES

British fashion label Mulberry is exploring the stories of two entities with a shared affection for breaking rules and rethinking tradition.

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Mulberry is the supporting sponsor of the exhibit "Damien Hirst at Houghton Hall: Colour, Space, Paintings and Outdoor Sculptures," which displays work by the contemporary artist in a country estate. Celebrating its role in the project, Mulberry teamed up with video content platform Nowness to capture Houghton Hall through its resident's eyes.

"Mulberry is passionate about contemporary creation and modern thinking," said Charlotte O'Sullivan, marketing and digital director at **Mulberry**, London. "We are proud to support Houghton Hall's exhibition of Damien Hirst's 'Colour Space Paintings and Outdoor Sculptures,' the first public exhibition of his newest work.

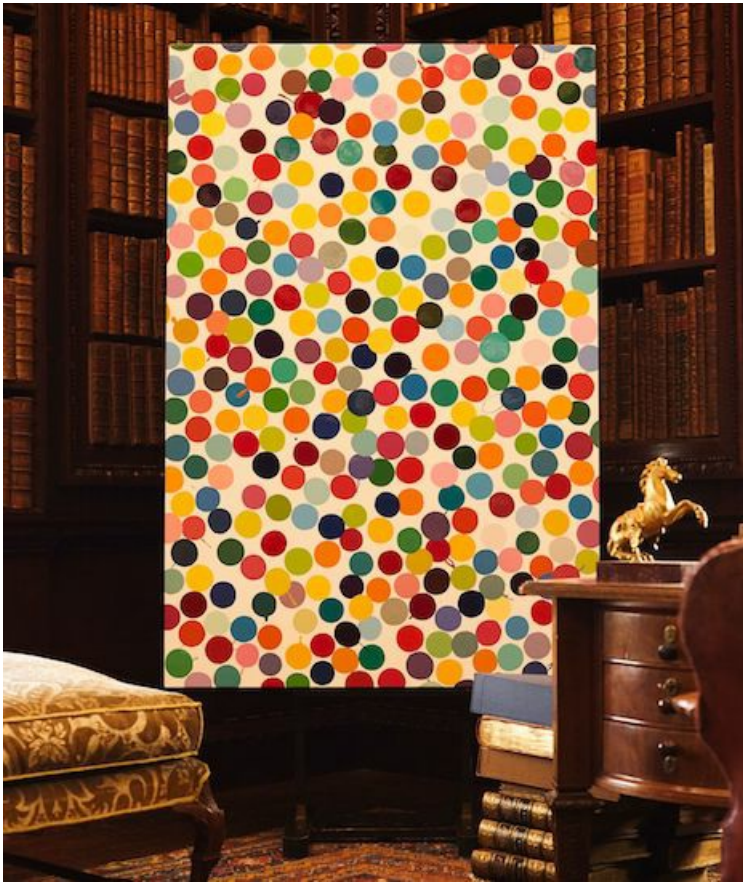
"Houghton Hall's bold vision of making exciting contemporary art accessible to a wide audience resonates with Mulberry's celebration of heritage and our passion for the here and now," she said.

### Country house

The exhibit at Houghton Hall features 46 new paintings by Mr. Hirst. Part of the artist's Colour Space series, the works are an evolution of his iconic Spot Paintings.

Fifteen of Mr. Hirst's sculptures are also on display in Houghton Hall and its grounds. These include large-scale bronze works.

Among the showcased sculptures are "Dog with Bone," which is inspired by pipe cleaner animals, and kinetic ball works from Mr. Hirst's Mental Escapology series.



*Damien Hirst at Houghton Hall. Image credit: Mulberry*

Curated by Mario Codognato, the exhibit marks the first time that Mr. Hirst's art has been displayed at a traditional country house. Taking a different approach from the typical stark white spaces used to house art in galleries, Houghton Hall provides a more historic backdrop for the pieces.

Originally built by Britain's first prime minister Sir Robert Walpole in 1722, the house features a Palladian style of architecture. Now, almost 300 years later, the house is being restored to how it would have looked in its earliest years.

"Hirst's pieces being displayed outside the traditional gallery, and in a historical home, create an intimate and interesting dialogue between the past and present," Ms. O'Sullivan said. "We are interested in these juxtapositions and tensions as they build a new layer of understanding and bridge opposites.

"The future genuinely has roots in the past, and we believe that heritage is created every day," she said.

Capturing the personality of the house, Mulberry teamed with Nowness on a short film. The video features one of the house's residents Lady Rose Cholmondeley, the wife of Sir Robert's descendent David Cholmondeley, 7th Marquess of Cholmondeley.

In the film by director Stella Scott, the noblewoman talks about her house. She explains that each room has its own character.

While Sir Robert originally filled the home with art, many pieces from his collection were sold to Catherine the Great. Now, the current lady of the house says that over the years, more has been collected.

In the film, the protagonist almost becomes part of the house, as she is depicted staying still while seated at a dining table or looking out of a window.

#### *Mulberry Celebrates Damien Hirst at Houghton Hall*

"We think that Nowness is an incredible digital platform that showcases the best in art, culture and fashion, working with both emerging and established filmmakers and photographers," Mulberry's Ms. O'Sullivan said. "They also have a diverse and creative audience online and on their social media channels."

"Fashion and art have long been intertwined as a co-existing expression of creativity," said Lauren Klostermann, vice president of client services at [Blue Moon Digital](#), Denver, CO. "Mulberry's sponsorship of this exhibit also

serves to extend Mulberry's reach outside of its current audience with custom video content."

"This strategic partnership will continue to reinforce the image Mulberry is hoping to capture around an appreciation for history, both past and present, and integration of art and fashion with artists like Damien Hirst," she said.

"Using a medium like video is the perfect visual representation of this exhibit for those who are not able to attend in person, but will still capture the essence of the campaign. Online content will help to tell the overall Mulberry story, which in turn will attract new customers."

#### Art history

Mulberry has previously aligned itself with iconic British homes, celebrating its heritage through activations.

The fashion label manifested its British history with interactive events at a landmark residence to spur purchases through tangible experience.

"Beyond Heritage" was a series of workshops and presentations on Feb. 17 and 18 at London's iconic Spencer House. The exhibit celebrated the launch of its spring/summer 2018 collection, encouraging sales with a two-way purchasing route ([see story](#)).

The art and fashion worlds have been intertwined for decades and luxury brands are able to leverage the high-class market of art to drive business from the overlap of affluent people who love both.

In a report, Fashionbi took a look at some of the many ways that fashion brands have collaborated with the art world over the years, noting some specific examples that serve as barometers for the relationship between the two. Fashion brands need to be careful in striking a balance between comparing their products to art without overly commercializing the art that people love ([see story](#)).

"The integration of fashion and art work to build each other up, challenge each other and drive an overall appreciation of shape, form and color," Blue Moon Digital's Ms. Klostermann said. "Both Damien Hirst and Mulberry are also contemporaries, and born in England."