

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Loewe leans on craftsmanship for Lunar New Year push

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Loewe is taking a look at ancient crafts. Image credit: Loewe

By SARAH JONES

Spanish fashion house Loewe is highlighting its dedication to craft by showcasing time-tested artisan skills in a Chinese New Year content campaign.

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In honor of the holiday, the brand is telling the stories of three families that have passed down a particular craft through generations. Rather than making an overt product push, Loewe is instead positioning itself through its heritage to draw attention to its Lunar New Year gift ideas.

"Loewe decided to take this craft-centric approach to Chinese New Year to connect with a customer that enjoys one-of-a-kind and limited-edition items and in exchange, they will receive richer customer data, which they wouldn't typically have access to and will empower them to be more targeted and intentional within other marketing initiatives," said Dalia Strum, educator at [The Fashion Institute of Technology](#), New York.

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

Artisan approach

Loewe filmed a trio of documentaries that each center on one family.

The first in the series takes place in Northern Shaanxi and focuses on paper cutting. In the film, two women who descend from a paper-cutting master talk about how they naturally picked up their craft by watching their mothers intricately maneuver scissors.

The craft, which dates back to the second century, is common in rural areas, where women would use the art form to create symbols of good luck.

For Chinese New Year, Loewe teamed with the family to design red envelopes, which are customarily exchanged during the holiday.

Loewe also traveled to Sandu, a county in southeastern China, to tell the story of a brother and sister who specialize

in batik. The siblings learned the centuries-old painting technique from their mother.



Loewe followed a pair of batik artists. Image credit: Loewe

The final video centers on dim sum, which means "touch the heart" in Chinese. In China, dim sum is traditionally eaten at afternoon tea.

Loewe tells the story of Lu Yaming, who runs the restaurant Lu Bo Lang in Shanghai. In 1984, Mr. Lu took over running the restaurant from his father Lu Goudou.

Mr. Lu talks about how his chosen profession can be monotonous, but he professes his love for the craft.



Loewe followed Lu Yaming. Image credit: Loewe

All of the videos end with the tagline, "Supporting craft since 1846," nodding to Loewe's own heritage.

Many of the films touch on the fact that these artisan skills are not tied to lessons learned in schools, but rather natural learning from generation to generation. Those profiled also discuss the importance of passing on their knowledge.

"They're communicating that craftsmanship, no matter where it comes from, has common themes of humanity, honesty and strength," said Jasmine Bina, president of [Concept Bureau](#), Santa Monica, CA. "By using their platform to highlight these Chinese artisans, Loewe is sending the message that there is a single thread that ties all of these people and brands together.

"They're exploring the very concept of heritage itself, and underscoring common values that exist across the globe," she said. "It's a smart and reverent way to bridge two different cultures.

"This is evergreen content that can stand on its own regardless of time or place, and it's very well executed. There's no overbearing agenda other than to celebrate something beautiful and unique about a part of Chinese culture that may be easy to overlook, especially with foreign eyes, but actually runs very deep.

"That's the kind of content that spreads, and the kind of storytelling that consumers, as they continue to become more sophisticated co-creators of a brand's heritage, are increasingly demanding."

Campaigning for craft

Craft is a central component to Loewe's positioning and outreach.

In 2016, Loewe launched an international award to celebrate excellence in craftsmanship.

Organized by the brand's Loewe Foundation, the annual Loewe Craft Prize is judged by a distinguished panel of experts from the design, architecture, journalism, criticism and museum curatorship sectors. Acknowledging craftsmanship skills has become common for the luxury industry, as many heritage brands work to preserve skilled, artisan workmanship for future generations ([see story](#)).

Loewe also created a guide to floral styling to demonstrate how expert craft can take many shapes.

In a series of three videos, Loewe showed its community how to design floral arrangements with texture, volume and bursts of color by using a wide range of flowers and greens. Similar to a traditional craftsmanship effort, displaying the skill and expertise needed likely resonated with consumers to bring forth appreciation ([see story](#)).

"By spotlighting these traditional artisan skills, Loewe is communicating that it truly values craftsmanship and it creates a sense of exclusivity amongst tastemakers," Ms. Strum said. "Loewe has an opportunity to visually as well as contextually story-tell the brand by connecting with their target market during Chinese New Year."

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