

RETAIL

## Yoox rethinks relocation in cultural commentary

February 8, 2019



*Yoox is working with Rob Pruitt on an art series. Image courtesy of Yoox*

By SARAH JONES

Italian online retailer Yoox is collaborating with artist Rob Pruitt to tackle what can be a tough subject through a multichannel project.

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For Richemont-owned Yoox, Mr. Pruitt created "Migration Moving Blanket, 2018," which explores the movements of people within a social context through an exhibit, a series of art pieces and digital content. Relocation is a universal issue, ranging from the ongoing European migrant crisis to debates about borders and immigration in the United States.

"It's a brilliantly authentic and flawlessly executed story," said Chris Ramey, president of [Affluent Insights](#), Miami. "Introduced during the coldest month of the year, the migration counterintuitively goes north – the wrong direction. "It's a reaffirmation of values and weather," he said. "And with only 40 blankets available, it guarantees its success by leveraging scarcity as a pillar of luxury. Raw and real touches customers."

Mr. Ramey is not affiliated with Yoox, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Yoox](#) was reached for comment.

### Great migration

Mr. Pruitt is known for his work that uses unconventional materials. In the past, he has constructed art out of everything from Ikea canvases to chrome dinosaurs.

For Yoox, the artist centered a series of pieces on the concept of a moving blanket, the padded swaths of fabric used to cover and protect furniture and other items during a relocation.

Putting his own spin on the utilitarian blankets, Mr. Pruitt covered them with silkscreen prints of geese. The fowl depicted on the pieces reference both digital pixels and traditional shapes seen in quilting.



*One of Rob Pruitt's American Quilts. Image courtesy of Yoox*

The 40 numbered blankets repurposed for “American Quilts” were made exclusively for Yoox, and are available for sale through the retailer. Mr. Pruitt signed each of the pieces, and they come with a certificate of authenticity.

Creating additional context around the blankets, Yoox created a short film, titled “Moving to Canada.”

In the video, a pickup truck travels from New York to Canada. In the bed of the truck is a chair covered in one of Mr. Pruitt’s blankets.

During the approximate 400-mile journey, the vehicle travels through small towns, cities and crowded highways. The driver stops at a motel along the way, and when he emerges from his room the next morning, the truck is covered in snow.

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/dnzawJWDHCg>

*Moving to Canada by Yoox and Rob Pruitt*

The film’s protagonist also makes stops along the way, pausing for a coffee in a diner or taking a moment to stand by the water. He eventually makes it to the Canadian border, where the film ends.

In addition to being featured on Yoox, the blanket series is on view for the Nomad St. Moritz art and design fair, where it made its debut on Feb. 7.

On the move

Migration is a subject that spans geographies and income levels.

The United Kingdom has traditionally been one of the most-desirable destinations for the world’s wealthiest people, but in 2017 the country experienced a larger outflow of high-net-worth individuals than inflow for the first time.

New World Wealth’s annual “Global Wealth Migration Review” tracked the movements of highly wealthy individuals around the globe in 2017, and found that in contradiction to previous years of growth, more of the world’s wealthy are leaving the U.K. for other destinations around the world ([see story](#)).

Art is one of the pillars of Yoox’s platform. Beyond carrying artwork and home decor, the site has found ways to support creative endeavors.

Yoox gave back to Italian cinema for its 15th anniversary, sponsoring the restoration of the award-winning film “Amarcord.”

Yoox worked with the Cineteca di Bologna L’Immagine Ritrovata’s laboratory to bring the Federico Fellini film back to its prime. This particular project enabled Yoox to showcase its Italian heritage and give back to its local culture in a lasting way ([see story](#)).

"Artification – the alignment of your brand with art – elevates the brand, product and price," Mr. Ramey said. "In this case, the value and high ticket is a direct result of the artist’s involvement.

"Fusing pillars of luxury drives desire and increases margins," he said. "A product need not be an impulse item or sexy to leverage pillars of luxury.

"It need only a marketer who recognizes that luxury is a business model very different from other categories."

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