

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Saint Laurent explores envy in Bret Easton Ellis-directed short

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Still from Saint Laurent's *The Arrangement*. Image credit: Saint Laurent

By SARAH JONES

French fashion label Saint Laurent is weaving a narrative about jealousy, portraying the confusion that can often come with love.

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The brand tapped author Bret Easton Ellis for a short film project, which focuses on an imagined love triangle. Titled "The Arrangement," the short uses Saint Laurent apparel to capture a luxurious lifestyle, but it puts storytelling ahead of selling.

"Bret Easton Ellis is good at capturing duality," said Lauren Bates, marketing manager and lead storyteller at **Blue Moon Digital**, Denver, CO. "Of capturing and explaining, through art, this double life, these conflicting ideas. This kind of power of the mind. What the mind sees, the mind is capable of creating in reality.

"For these characters, for the lead, he is seeing something that isn't there," she said. "Something that is strictly in the construct of his mind.

"YSL has always had a boundary-pushing aesthetic. This short, the way that it is shot, and the partnership with Easton Ellis, speak to the brand acknowledging itself, acknowledging that there are layers to the brand."

Ms. Bates is not affiliated with Saint Laurent, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. **Saint Laurent** was reached for comment.

Love triangle

Mr. Easton Ellis is best known for his novels "Less Than Zero" and "American Psycho."

For Saint Laurent, the author turned director, going behind the lens for a look at the darker side of love. The film incorporates no dialogue, instead using the actor's emotions and a soundtrack to convey a story.

Actors Hopper Penn, Tes Linnenkoper and Dakota Lindvall portray a trio moving around a house.

The film opens as Ms. Linnenkoper is seen swimming in a backyard pool as Mr. Lindvall stares out a window.

Mr. Penn arrives at the house and enters the backyard to find the other two in conversation. He stares over, seemingly hurt, before joining them.

Other scenes show moments where Mr. Lindvall looks at the other roommates with a pained expression.

The film eventually escalates as Mr. Penn gets into a fight with Ms. Linnenkoper. A final shot finds Mr. Lindvall whispering in his rival's ear, as Mr. Penn looks across at his love interest with another man.

Saint Laurent's The Arrangement

Along with Mr. Easton Ellis, the film was curated by creative director Anthony Vaccarello.

"The narrative is relatable," Ms. Bates said. "I think that everyone has had jealousy in a relationship. There can be this little voice that lies to you, that constructs something that isn't there. Then your mind runs away with these made-up versions of the truth.

"Most of us have been there and consumers want to connect to a brand," she said. "To feel like they can relate somehow.

"The brand is connecting through these characters' relationship, the ins and outs of a relationship and the insecurities that can come with being human. That's relatable. That connects with an audience and can build the brand's appeal within their current demographic as well as expand it."

On camera

Beyond its partnership on *The Arrangement*, Saint Laurent has recently turned to more conceptual films.

Saint Laurent teamed up with rapper Travis Scott to put its brand in front of millions of consumers and modernize its image.

The Kering-owned brand produced and designed the wardrobe for the musician's "Can't Say" music video, earning the label prime placement on YouTube as the film was released. Saint Laurent's partnership is indicative of the increasing convergence of streetwear and luxury fashion, allowing the brand to reach out to the next generation of buyers through pop culture ([see story](#)).

Saint Laurent also played with themes of sensuality and rebellion in a dramatic film for its spring 2019 campaign.

Instead of the dark, urban environments that often dominate Saint Laurent's campaigns, the film is primarily set in a desert maze and jumps to different scenes. The glamorous pieces, which adorn a large group of models, speak for themselves ([see story](#)).

"The beauty about shorts and about art in general is that it can mean different things to different people," Ms. Bates said. "People will see view Anthony Vaccarello's through their frame of reference. And if someone doesn't have a connection to the brand, it is possible to miss the nuances that reflect the brand.

"To me, [*The Arrangement*] is an exploration of concept," she said. "Yves Saint Laurent is a vision, it is a creation that is fluid, that changes over time based on influences from the fashion director, influences from the constructs of the creative designers, basically the influence of the mind."