

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Balenciaga captures private, everyday moments in winter campaign

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Balenciaga featured real-life couples in its latest campaign. Image credit: Balenciaga

By SARAH RAMIREZ

French fashion label Balenciaga is continuing its playful balance of originality and accessibility by featuring real-life couples in its winter 2019 campaign.

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Presented through a series of snippets from surveillance cameras, the campaign film demonstrates how special moments can happen in ordinary settings. Hearing directly from the featured couples also helps the campaign resonate with younger consumers who crave authenticity.

"The Balenciaga brand is interesting in that I have always perceived it as a luxury brand that is within your lifestyle," said Kimmie Smith, cofounder, creative director and stylist at [Athleisure Mag](#). "Many brands are marketed in a way that you can identify concrete elements that make up the type of person or persons who would purchase the brand Balenciaga doesn't have that same feel."

Ms. Smith is not affiliated with [Balenciaga](#), but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Candid camera

Balenciaga's film begins in an unsuspecting place for a luxury fashion campaign: a barren, nondescript waiting room.

Through the perspective of a quartet of surveillance cameras, a young couple is seen sitting down in the room. Their names are displayed in the corner of the film, along with a time stamp and the campaign name.

Balenciaga's winter 2019 campaign plays with motifs of privacy and intimacy

As the man and woman caress each other's hands, they discuss their romantic feelings with each other through voiceovers.

"I felt cared for, like this is important," the woman named Matilde says. "I became very aware of how thankful I was for your company there."

The scene cuts to inside an elevator from the viewpoint of several security cameras. Two women wearing

Balenciaga suits enter and passionately kiss in the privacy of the elevator.

Again, voiceovers from the participants play over the scene, adding intimate insights without much context.

The elevator appears empty again when the young man and woman from the waiting room step inside. Tension between the couple is evident before Michael reaches out for his partner's hand.

Next is a series of footage showing another couple, Dorothy and Di Lan, wearing bright Balenciaga coats in a parking garage. In another realistic portrayal of a relationship, one of the women pouts at her partner.

"She doesn't get mad immediately, but she just like starts pouting," one of the women explains in their voiceover. "And then in five minutes it's literally like a single tear."

The next couple, Chloe and Bilal, are shown from the cameras in an apartment building hallway. A fifth couple, Pedro and Arina, are seen shopping together at the farmer's market.

"Just trying to get to know each other with like little steps," Arina says of their relationship in her narration. "I think it's also all about the small things, like maybe touching a hand or a quick quick look in the eyes."



The couples share relationship insights in their own words. Image credit: Balenciaga

The private glimpses at these relationships are a stark contrast to the elaborate love stories often presented in luxury marketing. With the addition of the unscripted commentary from the actual couples, Balenciaga's campaign is an authentic depiction of romantic connections many young people seek.

"Seeing this campaign of people living their lives in an elevator, room, grocery store, etc. and talking about the relationships where the brand is a silent but powerful character lends itself to this belief that this brand is made to work the way that you wish it to," Ms. Smith said. "The line doesn't feel like the star, which makes it different than other campaigns."

Marketing motifs

Recent efforts by Balenciaga have shown the wearability of high fashion through different techniques, including "normcore" and sci-fi-inspired films.

Balenciaga's spring/summer 2019 effort continued this tradition with a zany short complete with rollerblading, holograms, shoulder pads, cyborgs and secret missions ([see story](#)).

The brand also recently turned to a lo-fi technique to give its previous campaign film an aura of authenticity.

Mimicking user-generated content and social media videos, Balenciaga's film captures the everyday wearability of the brand's winter 2018 collection. To attract younger affluents, many luxury labels are choosing to emphasize relatability rather than exclusivity in their marketing ([see story](#)).

"I think fans of the brand enjoy seeing the iconic pieces that are consistent with the house of Balenciaga as well as enjoying seeing those that are in the forefront of the images as well as the background," Athleisure Mag's Ms. Smith said. "It's interesting to see these pieces worked into situational vignettes that make the campaign appear so casual and conversational."