

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Zegna unveils new installment of #WhatMakesAMan campaign

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He loves me, he loves me not: Oscar-winning actor Mahershala Ali ponders the notion of masculinity in Zegna's latest installment of the #WhatMakesAMan campaign. Image credit: Zegna

By STAFF REPORTS

Ermenegildo Zegna has launched its fall-winter 2019-20 campaign themed #WhatMakesAMan featuring two celebrities who question traditional stereotypes of the relationship between men and their clothes.

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The Italian fashion label has turned to Oscar-winning actor Mahershala Ali and artist Nicholas Tse to offer up their interpretation of manhood as Zegna brand ambassadors.

"Zegna's desire to facilitate this conversation is the major purpose behind our new brand campaign," the company said in a statement.

"This campaign is a platform for discussion and perhaps some provocation," it said. "We recognize that it takes courage to express a new type of masculinity a masculinity that is, perhaps, different from the idealized versions of masculinity that have existed for so long."



Zegna's manifesto on masculinity and men's apparel, distilling a 110-year-old philosophy. Image credit: Zegna

Zegna is one of the oldest suppliers of fine wool fabric to leading fashion houses and London's Savile Row, but has also carved a name for its sharply styled suits and shirts both items worn by fewer men at work and play situations. Hence the pivot to embracing a more casual, fluid interpretation of styling and design to accommodate more contemporary tastes of successful men.



Playing his own tune: Artist Nicholas Tse on manliness and clothes in Zegna's new iteration of #WhatMakesAMan for its fall-winter 2019-20. Image credit: Zegna

Men lovin' it

Backed by a social campaign and videos, the campaign sets out to position Zegna as a brand that sways with contemporary notions of manliness and also willing to knock sacred cows.

The video of Mr. Ali is almost metaphorical in its message, with the brooding actor looking away from the camera most of the time as he plucks petals from a flower and, in so many words, associates tenderness with manliness. He looks in just as the video wraps, making his case that love makes a man.

Mahershala Ali says love makes a man in a spot for Zegna's #WhatMakesAMan campaign

Mr. Tse similarly swings for individuality, stressing that masculinity is a state of mind and not a set of given rules. His 30-second video a tad shorter than Mr. Ali's 42 seconds has a clear message: it is OK for men to embrace fragility and failure.

In both cases, Zegna, as with other male-oriented luxury brands, are adapting to more with-it interpretations of masculinity, veering toward a metrosexual adaptation with a softer lines in fabric, style and marketing.

Zegna's #WhatMakesAMan campaign: Artist Nicholas Tse says masculinity is a state of mind, not set of rules

In keeping with fashion tradition, Zegna has designed a #WhatMakesAMan T-shirt for sale in its stores worldwide, with proceeds donated to a global charity supporting an education program to build a better future.

THE BRAND said education means openness, which in turn means freedom. This nicely dovetails with the theme of the campaign.

"With a deep respect for this courage, Zegna, a brand rooted in tailoring and fine craftsmanship, is also embracing an idea of masculinity that is fluid, sensitive, and unequivocal," the brand said in a statement.

"We believe courage is an essential part of masculinity today. The courage to shatter conventions, but also the courage to embrace risks, accepting that failure may be the result."

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