

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

## Gucci celebrates creativity, self-expression through immersive digital film fest

November 18, 2020



#GucciFest is scheduled to run Nov. 16-22. Image courtesy of Gucci

By NORA HOWE

Italian fashion house Gucci is showcasing its own collection and highlighting the work of emerging designers through a digital film festival as brands continue to experiment with more conceptual marketing.

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From Nov. 16 through Nov. 22, #GucciFest has released several short films featuring new designers as well as the label's seven-part miniseries ([see story](#)). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, fashion brands were forced to think outside of the box in terms of marketing strategies and keeping their consumers engaged with their brands.

"With the reduction of in-person events where fashion is at the forefront such as Fashion Week, Coachella and the Met Gala, new opportunities must be created for current and aspirational customers to continue to be engaged with luxury brands," said Lauren Klostermann, senior vice president of client services at [Blue Moon Digital](#), Denver. "Brands will have to continue to evolve to sell the feeling and story of their brand with something like #GucciFest, and give a reason to wear their higher end products, or modify products to better fit the new reality we are all facing."

#GucciFest

Gucci creative director Alessandro Michele announced in May that the brand would veer from the five-runway-shows-per-year schedule and instead host two co-ed season-less shows. Now, with effects of the pandemic still looming, Gucci appears to be hosting its own Fashion Week in the form of a digital film festival.

Episodes of Gucci's *Overture of Something That Never Ended* have premiered daily during #GucciFest, and follow an eccentric character through her day-to-day life in Rome.

The first episode of Gucci's *Overture Of Something That Never Ended* premiered on Nov. 16 and follows Silvia Calderoni an actress, performer, writer, thespian, dancer and the protagonist of the mini-series.

Directed by award-winning director Gus Van Sant and Alessandro Michele, the series premiere follows Ms. Calderoni through her morning routine in her eclectic home in Rome. With a 20-minute run time, it sets the tone for an elaborate episodic project.

*Silvia Calderoni stars in an Overture Of Something That Never Ended*

In a memorable scene, Silvia walks to her balcony and throws a dress into the air a dress that Mr. Michele designed for his first Gucci women's collection, fall/winter 2015. The dress will be sold with other looks from the same collection as part of *Ouverture*.

As the dress slowly falls to the street, Billie Eilish's newest single "Therefore I Am" plays.

Ms. Calderoni is seen sifting through her mail, which reveals colorful Gucci show invitations, as well as a mysterious flyer. She then becomes lost in a television lecture performed by writer and philosopher Paul B Preciado, until the arrival of an unexpected visitor, while a band in another room of the flat rehearses.

In the second episode of the *Ouverture* series, which premiered Nov. 17, the viewer follows Ms. Calderoni to the neighborhood caf, where she has a series of surreal encounters.

Her friend leaves to explore the city while Ms. Calderoni stays at the cafe and notices a mysterious note on the floor arguably the same note that is seen in the mail in the first episode setting in motion a journey inside a world where nothing is what it seems.

The first emerging designer to be highlighted in #GucciFest is Priya Ahluwalia, a London-based designer who pays tribute to her Nigerian and Indian heritage through vibrant and forward-looking menswear.

Her designs are featured in Samona Olanipekun's five-minute film *Joy*, which celebrates the everyday beauty and strength of Black existence through a kaleidoscopic love story.

The second up-and-coming label to be highlighted is Collina Strada, a New York-based label founded by American designer Hillary Taymour who focuses her womenswear brand on climate change and environmental awareness.

Charlie Engman's *Collina Land* featured Ms. Taymour's designs in a film using 3D-scanning techniques where models become video-game avatars and plant trees while exploring their environment.



*Collina Land* | *Collina Strada* | *GucciFest Emerging Designer Fashion Film*. Image credit: Gucci

The third label to be featured in the festival is Rui, founded by Chinese designer Rui Zhou Chinese designer Rui Zhou, a ready-to-wear brand for men and women that amplifies and reveals the body. The three-minute film *Emerald* by Haonan Shen features designs by Rui in a poetic fable telling the story of a rabbit with a green gem for an eye.

In Harry Freehard's *Til Death Do Us Ride*, designer Gui Rosa's pieces are worn by models who appear and reappear throughout a fractured storyline of quick cinematic scenes in parking garages, gas stations and industrial locations of east London.



*Emerald / Rui / GucciFest Emerging Designer Fashion Film. Image credit: Gucci*

Eleven more independent young designers are expected to be featured through Nov. 22: Bianca Saunders, Mowalola, Rave Review, Cormio, Stefan Cooke, JordanLuca, Shanel Campbell, Boramy Viguier, Yueqi Qi, Gareth Wrighton and Charles de Vilmorin.

A full schedule of episodes and fashion films is available on [GucciFest.com](https://www.guccifest.com).

#### The fashion of film

The union of art and fashion is far from a new concept as is the utilization of film. In past years and this year especially fashion brands have turned to film as a medium for expression and discovering emerging artists.

French fashion house Dior revealed the historical and present culture of the southeastern Italian region of Puglia through a fascinating immersive documentary, offering insight into the development of the brand's cruise 2021 collection.

Earlier this year, Dior presented the cruise 2021 collection at the Piazza del Duomo in Lecce, a city in the Puglia region, where it blended the brand's heritage with the region's traditions and craftsmanship. The documentary deeply examines the inspiration drawn for the collection and explores a place held close to the heart of Dior creative director Maria Grazia Chiuri ([see story](#)).

Italian footwear maker Salvatore Ferragamo also debuted its own film series this year. The four short films in "Rising in Hollywood" highlighted the insights, emotions and ambitions of a new crop of women creative personalities and entrepreneurs.

The campaign featured Sinead Bovell, Bonnie Chen, Cuba Tornado Scott and Gillian Zinser who all share a gravitation to Hollywood and its potential to realize dreams something that resonates with Ferragamo, given that its eponymous founder got his start as a shoemaker for movie stars ([see story](#)).

"With the fight for visibility in the ever increasing clutter on platforms like Facebook and Instagram, featuring up and coming filmmakers is a great way to draw in new audiences that may not be current fans and followers of a brand like Gucci," Ms. Klostermann said.