

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Fendi honors resilience, creativity in jazz collaboration

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Jazz musicians from The Juilliard School dressed in pieces from the Fendi FW20/21 collection. Image courtesy of Fendi

By NORA HOWE

LVMH-owned Italian fashion house **Fendi** is celebrating the soul of culture and music with an original jazz performance featuring students of **The Juilliard School**.

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With the newest episode of its ongoing Anima Mundi series, Fendi aims to enable young performance artists to recognize their potential within the worlds of music, dance and drama. In accordance with its history of supporting emerging artists from the design and visual arts disciplines, the brand has also started a donation program with Juilliard towards student scholarships in the spirit of supporting creativity at every level.

"Beyond our admiration for the dedication of the students to have reached the level of achievement having been accepted to the esteemed Juilliard School in their respective disciplines, our shared obsession with craft and the importance that arts play in giving back to society is the reason we at Fendi chose to make a meaningful donation to Juilliard," said Serge Brunschwig, chairman and chief executive of Fendi, in a statement.

Anima Mundi

For the fifth episode of its series, Fendi chose to highlight the talents of young jazz musicians in New York City, showcasing how jazz cultivates community and connection. The composition and performance intend to honor resilience, renewal and renaissance.

Six students from Juilliard's Jazz Studies Program were chosen to participate in this performance, and began rehearsing an original score composed and arranged by master's student Aaron Matson "Rollerblading in Harlem" upon returning to campus for in-person class in November.

"When we think of the arts' our attention goes to theatre, dance, music, and art," said Rebecca Miller, founder/CEO at **ARTful Communication**, New York. "Fendi understands that it reaches far beyond those traditional constraints to all acts of creative design and expression.

"It is only natural that music and fashion are a credible fit," she said. "Further, the artists creating this beauty are inspired by broadening their horizons which will broaden their value."

Fendi Renaissance Anima Mundi: New York City feat. The Juilliard School

Filmed in December, the students performed together for the first time since COVID-19 lockdowns began in mid-March 2020. The shoot followed strict protocols in regards to social distancing and the use of face masks, and utilized specially designed PPE for all instruments.

As seen in the film, the musicians are dressed in self-selected attire from Fendi's women's and men's fall/winter 2020-2021 collections.

The Appel Room at Jazz at Lincoln Center serves as the backdrop of the ensemble, overlooking Central Park. Student solos were filmed in various locations throughout Lincoln Center and Juilliard's various performing arts venues.



Juilliard jazz ensemble pianist Tyler Henderson. Image courtesy of Fendi

Led by Juilliard alumnus and Pulitzer and Grammy Award-winning trumpeter and composer Wynton Marsalis, Juilliard Jazz combines education in the history and traditions of jazz with professional performance opportunities designed to integrate students into a thriving jazz environment.

"Through its program Anita Mundi, Fendi has done an exceptional job of demonstrating a 360-degree purview of how a luxury brand should fund and participate in new media marketing," Ms. Miller said. "They support their audiences from inception to fruition, beginning with the emerging artists they support as they earn their scholarships to attend Juilliard through their talent and discipline to being selected to perform an original piece of jazz music composed for the event to honoring the individual performers by inviting them to compose their wardrobe ensembles shown in the video.

"This rare inclusive contribution honors each participant, providing a platform by which each contributor, or artist, is given the appropriate level of support to be seen as an individual and as part of an ensemble bringing the World Soul' inspiration to life, authentically, much like how the soul connects to the human body."

Previous Anima Mundi videos featured classical collaborations in Rome, Shanghai, Tokyo and Seoul.

Fashion celebrates art and culture

Luxury brands have increasingly launched collaborations celebrating the union of art, creativity and fashion.

Throughout 2019, LVMH amplified initiatives that supported art and culture to coincide with its values of savoir-faire, excellence and creativity. From its \$221 million donation to Paris' Notre Dame Cathedral, which was partially destroyed from a fire that year, to its "Courtauld Collection" and "Charlotte Perriand" exhibitions at the Fondation Louis Vuitton.

Additionally, Fendi paid tribute to the late Karl Lagerfeld through its "Dawn of Romanity" haute couture show, which displayed 54 silhouettes representing Mr. Lagerfeld's 54 years at Fendi ([see story](#)).

Early last year, Italian fashion brand Gucci unveiled plans for a multi-layered project "No Space, Just A Place" to support the culture and contemporary art scene in the South Korean capital of Seoul.

Taking cues from the complex history of independent and alternative art spaces in Seoul and Gucci's reflections on *eterotopia*, the exhibition in Seoul's Daelim Museum suggested a new definition of what an "other space" might be: a place to build a different, desirable future with new ways for humans to relate to each other and to their surroundings ([see story](#)).

"We see more luxury brands collaborating with established and emerging talent," ArtfulCommunication's Ms. Miller

said. "The critical aspect to Fendi's success, and a note worth taking, is how they put the customer first, over their own desires to sell.

"They are beginning to engage with their audiences, building the path to a relationship and then, and only then, may they ask or expect a return."

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