

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Gucci spreads friendly greeting for upcoming capsule collection

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Large inflatable teddy bears were the focus of Kai x Gucci art installation. Image credit: Kai

By NORA HOWE

Italian fashion house Gucci is celebrating the upcoming launch of a collection with a K-pop star through massive art installations across Seoul.

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For the exhibition, the brand commissioned Korean pop artist Im Jibin, who designed massive teddy bear balloons featuring the word 'HELLO' across their faces. Following Jibin's "Everywhere" project with Gucci, the bear balloons appear in the brand's Cheongdam flagship store and in front of the Hyundai Card Music Library in Hannam.

Kai x Gucci

Earlier this week, Gucci and K-pop boy band EXO member Kai announced their Kai x Gucci capsule collaboration in the March issue of *Esquire Korea*. The bear motif is prominently featured in various pieces throughout the collection.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by KAI (@zkdlin)

While Kai became a Gucci brand ambassador in 2018 and has been involved in advertising campaigns for the brand, this is the first time Gucci has collaborated with a Korean celebrity for a collection. The Kai x Gucci collection will officially launch April 15.

In continuing with the bear theme, Gucci asked Im Jibin to design a larger-than-life preview campaign. The Seoul-based artist designed and installed massive orange inflatable teddy bears throughout the city.

"When I saw the sketch of Gucci's new collection, I liked its bold texture and colors," he said. "I focused on mirroring these features in the Kai x Gucci collection patterns, with the blue bow tie.

"With the word HELLO,' we wanted to say hi to people exhausted from their daily lives and cheer them up."

Im Jibin is a sculptor and installation artist, and has worked with Gucci in the past to turn ordinary places, where people live their everyday lives, into temporary museums with ephemeral exhibitions.

To further market the launch of Kai x Gucci, the brand released an inside look at the making of the giant Gucci Balloons displayed around Seoul.

"Every time I create an artwork, I try to tell people that it is easy to enjoy art and everyone can do it," Im Jibin says in the video. "I believe Gucci is a classic brand that is not afraid of change."

Reaching Asia

Recently, Gucci has been leveraging the "clever collaboration" trend and ecommerce in efforts to strengthen its connection with young affluents in Asian markets.

Last month, the brand unveiled a Doraemon collaboration to celebrate Lunar New Year. The cat-type robot sent from the 22nd century to help a young boy named Nobita Nobi is an immensely popular manga and anime character, and the capsule collection intended to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the character ([see story](#)).

Gucci has also been expanding its digital focus in China through its recent partnership with luxury ecommerce platform Alibaba's Tmall Luxury Pavilion. The brand has opened two digital stores on Tmall's Luxury Pavilion, selling its fashion collections in a digital flagship starting Dec. 21 and its beauty collection Feb. 4 in a bid to expand its online footprint and reach Alibaba's 750 million consumers ([see story](#)).