

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Herms shares introspective look at fall/winter collection

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*Dancers rehearsing for the Herms fall/winter 2021 runway shows. Image credit: Herms*

By SARAH RAMIREZ

French fashion house Herms is reflecting on the value of creativity and design in a short film coinciding with the anniversary of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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"Triptych" gives a behind-the-scenes look at the development and production of the Herms women's fall/winter 2021 collection. With candid insights from Nadge Vanhe-Cybulski, artistic director of women's ready-to-wear, and Pierre-Alexis Dumas, artistic director of Herms, the film speaks to this unique and emotional moment in time.

"Herms' struggle during the pandemic mirrors its loyal client's story," said Chris Ramey, president of Affluent Insights, Palm Beach. "It demonstrates that thoughtfulness of creating the Herms woman while reinforcing values that attract its clients."

The Herms woman

Directed by Sbastien Lifshitz, the film takes its name from art that it is divided into three sections, typically a picture or relief carved on three panels and hinged together. It follows the buildup to the fall/winter collection performance, which took the form of a three-act performance in New York, Paris and Shanghai.

The film, which runs almost nine minutes, begins with Ms. Vanhe-Cybulsk returning to the maison to begin designing the collection during lockdown. In an interview, she describes creating a collection as a sacred ritual, but admits that she initially felt a creative void when tasked with designing during the shutdown.

*"Triptych" follows the production of the Herms women's fall/winter 2021 collection*

She soon realized that the situation gave her an opportunity to dive deeper into her imagination without any outside distractions or criticism. She describes her design philosophy as "resistance," focusing on individuality and comfort instead of the melancholy of the climate.

In addition to shots of Ms. Vanhe-Cybulsk in a sit-down interview, "Triptych" includes footage of her and her team fitting the models and photographing the collection. Lingering close-ups focus on the rich detail in the pieces, such as hand stitching and beadwork.

Mr. Dumas also speaks, sharing how Ms. Vanhe-Cybulsk and her work has shaped the contemporary Herms woman as someone who is independent and assertive.

He also explains the concept behind three different choreographed performances, done in succession in the three cities on March 6. The work of three choreographers, the performances were meant to function as a complete narrative.

"The idea came from the fact that men and women can't travel, so the collection will travel" Ms. Vanhe-Cybulsk says. "It feels very romantic."

[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by Herms (@hermes)

### *Gu Jiani choreographed the Shanghai performance*

The film also includes footage of the dancers rehearsing their New York-themed choreography, wearing masks and practicing on an open-air rooftop. They practiced in long pleated skirts from the collection, which helped inspire the movements of the performance.

Later scenes also show rehearsals in Beijing for the Shanghai performance, which combines elements from Chinese dance and ballroom dance.

The film has brief interviews with choreographers Madeline Hollander and Gu Jiani. It also includes a scene with Herms team members, including communications creative director Sophie Toporkoff and communications director Charlotte David, discussing the performance music with sound illustrator and composer Frdric Sanchez.

"The Herms woman, in the public mind, is a French woman," Ms. Vanhe-Cybulsk says at the film's closing. "But I believe it's also important for her to be universal."

### Brand strength

The fall/winter collection played up the strength of women, echoing a similar theme from a recent accessories campaign that focus on athleticism.

With the Herms Fit collection and campaign, the brand invites its consumers to be everyday athletes with elegance and agility. The film features a variety of accessories from the collection, from scarves to shoes to belts, in an energetic and dynamic narrative ([see story](#)).

The house has demonstrated adaptability and agility despite the health and economic crisis brought on by the

COVID-19 virus. In 2020, Herms saw especially remarkable performance in Asia, as well as within its leather and saddlery business line ([see story](#)).

In some ways, this resiliency is reflected in the newest collection.

"The film reinforces that the Herms brand choreographs one's life," Mr. Ramey said. "It's a part of you; far more than just a garment.

"It tells me there are real people behind the brand who are working diligently to ensure the brand reflects the breadth of my life; a sense of authenticity that's best communicated via film."

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