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This Sotheby's x Loewe collab is the future of brand partnerships

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By positioning their artisan-crafted collaboration alongside masterpieces, have Sotheby's and Loewe discovered a new way to market crossover luxury to culture-hungry Chinese consumers? Image courtesy of Sotheby's

By [Jing Daily](#)

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Two of the world's most sophisticated names in luxury and culture, LVMH-owned Spanish brand [Loewe](#) and auction powerhouse [Sotheby's](#), recently teamed up for a collaboration that has offered a glimpse into the future of brand partnerships.

In advance of its marquee May auctions of [Impressionist, Modern, and Contemporary Art](#) in New York, Sotheby's and Loewe have co-released a collection of artisan-crafted clay chestnut roasters based on traditional roasters from the Galicia region of northwest Spain and customized by three artists from around the world.

Designed by Japanese artist ARKO, China's Min Chen of China, and Laia Arqueros from Spain, the roaster collaboration follows other recent Loewe [upcycling initiatives](#), such as its Eye Loewe Nature collection, where artists used leftover materials from previous collections to put unique spins on the clay roasters.

Sotheby's wove the roasters in with the May 12 auction items, displaying the objects in its galleries alongside artworks by Claude Monet, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Paul Cezanne, Willem de Kooning, Roy Lichtenstein and others.

But by merging vibrant and global contemporary artists with some of the greatest artworks from the past century, can Sotheby's shining a new light on associations between art, commerce and luxury the three markets that have become increasingly important to culture-hungry consumers worldwide?

As the Sotheby's global head of partnerships, Elonore Dethier, said of the Loewe collaboration: "It's no secret that fashion and art have always been inextricably linked, and this partnership throws a novel spotlight on that relationship, building on our combined 450 year-long appreciation for craftsmanship, culture, and ingenuity within an ever-changing luxury landscape."

Yet Sotheby's took this collaboration to the next level hinting at a new depth of brand collaborations that we could see in the luxury and culture industries in the future by making seven of the Loewe chestnut roasters available for direct purchase on its [Buy Now online marketplace](#).

It is a move that marks the first exclusive consignment on the leading luxury house's platform since it launched last September.

Instead of gunning for widespread consumer awareness and online buzz, this Sotheby's x Loewe collaboration smartly aimed to flex the luxury, design, art and cultural credentials of both companies while optimizing commerce for the objects.

Introducing its Buy Now marketplace was also a smart move for Sotheby's, as it gave the auction house access to a new generation of buyers who spend **far more on luxury ecommerce** and authenticated **second-hand luxury goods** and collectibles, in particular.

With direct control of the supply chain and a proven track record in authentication and sourcing, Sotheby's may very well see its Buy Now marketplace become a major global revenue generator and a magnet for a new generation of auction buyers not to mention luxury brands eager to associate themselves with the Sotheby's brand.

But, perhaps most importantly, the collaboration between Loewe and Sotheby's gives each brand more attention from young consumers in China a market that has just begun growing a massive demand for cultural collectibles, luxury ecommerce, and **luxury resale**.

Traditionally, luxury brands have kept the resale market at arm's length, tacitly allowing platforms such as The RealReal and Vestiaire Collective to battle it out for a leading position in the space.

But the COVID-19 pandemic along with a sea change in consumer attitudes is enticing brands that long resisted resale to begin incorporating it into their broader retail strategies. And the Sotheby's Buy Now marketplace could very well become luxury's go-to platform for luxury brand-supported resale but also special one-off collections and collaborations.

For Chinese consumers fixated on **product authenticity**, limited-edition items, ease of purchase and name recognition, Sotheby's is a known and trusted entity.

With many if not most major luxury brands turning to content-based commercial marketing strategies over the past year to reach consumers who are more receptive to luxury ecommerce, this partnership hints at what could be around the corner for both Loewe and Sotheby's.

Since they share the same target customer, Loewe's focus on craft and the arts particularly via its **Fundacin Loewe** and the auction house's ongoing push to penetrate a fast-growing luxury and resale ecommerce sphere via its decades of high-end sales and authentication credentials indicate that this recent partnership could lead to many more in the months and years ahead.

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