

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Louis Vuitton explores preconceived notions in fall campaign

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Louis Vuitton brings a chess game to life in the fall/winter 2021 campaign. Image credit: Louis Vuitton

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French fashion label Louis Vuitton is playing games for its campaign for the fall/winter 2021 men's collection.

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In the campaign, the models pose as chess pieces wearing the designs from men's creative director Virgil Abloh. According to the Louis Vuitton, chess a recurring theme in Mr. Abloh's work at the French fashion house is used as an avenue to explore unconscious biases in the film.

Checkmate

Louis Vuitton enlisted British fashion photographer Tim Walker to shoot the campaign in North Wales.

The film opens with life-size chess pieces in the foreground. Several pieces, such as the bishops, are adorned with house motifs.

Louis Vuitton brings a mysterious chess game to life

Male models are also on the game board, seemingly in place of the pawns. The game board and life-size pieces are in unexpected, marbled shades of teal and sand, which are contrasted against the emerald countryside.

An aerial shot reveals the game already in progress, with one team already on the attack.

As the men begin making their moves on the board, wardrobe details illustrate that rather than having a uniform look, each player is an individual. For instance, while one model dons a pair of sneakers and a skateboard, another is dressed in an oversized jacket with toy airplanes as the buttons.

The chess game continues, with some of the remaining players appearing in costumes of different cities.

In the vignette's final sequence, two men make slow, deliberate moves on the board as they are surrounded by the intimidating chess pieces.



The chess pieces make references to Louis Vuitton designs and motifs. Image credit: Louis Vuitton

Mr. Abloh also makes references to chess in his spring/summer 2022 presentation. During the middle of the presentation, American rapper GZA of the Wu-Tang Clan plays chess against artist Kandis Williams.

Editorial imagery accompanying the fall/winter campaign show the models further posing alongside the chess pieces holding flags as if the game was a real conflict or riding the knight as if horseback riding.

House collaborators

This inventive campaign is not the first collaboration between Mr. Walker and Mr. Abloh.

In a recent effort, the photographer shot an installment for the creative director's "Message in a Bottle" series as part of the men's spring/summer 2021 collection. The short film featured models dancing and traversing through a brightly-colored set complete with balloons, New York City taxicabs, props and puppets in a setting where child-like imagination meets high fashion ([see story](#)).

Ahead of the fall/winter campaign launch, Louis Vuitton and Mr. Abloh tapped Korean pop icons and house ambassadors BTS to present the menswear fall/winter 2021 collection in Seoul.

The fashion show took place at Bucheon Art Bunker B39, an industrial building that was preserved and refurbished in 2018 to become an art and culture space. Throughout the collection, garments, accessories, motifs and techniques play on themes of illusion replicating the familiar through the deceptive lenses of trompe l'oeil and filirage ([see story](#)).

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