

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Valentino steps on stage with limited-edition sneaker

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*The limited-edition one-stud "xing" sneaker has taken a fresh perspective on the brand's classic shoe. Image credit: Valentino*

By NORA HOWE

Italian fashion house Valentino is celebrating brand ambassador and singer Lay Zhang's birthday with an inspiring campaign showcasing its newest limited-edition sneaker.

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A reiteration of Valentino Garavani's classic one-stud sneaker, the "Xing" Purple One Stud shoes were inspired by the Chinese rapper and singer. In a new film campaign for the shoes, Valentino unveils the steps Mr. Zhang takes to achieve his dreams.

Take the step

The new vignette takes viewers on a journey through craft, passion and success.

It opens on a close-up of Mr. Zhang as the sounds of an excited crowd chant his name. The singer, eyes closed, takes a moment to reflect before, presumably, going onto the stage.

"The stage is what I want," he says in a voiceover. "Behind the stage, it is about practice, sweat and stress."

Shots of Mr. Zhang practicing dance routines in an empty studio are intertwined with clips of the singer playing the keyboard and rehearsing lyrics.

*Mr. Zhang is part of musical group Exo*

"Many people think effort is my label, but effort is my direction and passion to [my] goals," he says.

A short clip of birthday candles sits between footage of the singer's rehearsal, intended to commemorate Mr. Zhang's 30th birthday on Oct. 7.

Sounds of the chanting crowd become louder and anticipation mounts as the audience nears the moment when Mr. Zhang will appear on stage.

"Facing the new starting point in life is like facing a new stage," he says as he ties his purple one-stud "xing" sneakers. "When I go onto the stage, I just need to take every step as a xing' step."

Mr. Zhang jogs down a narrow hallway toward a countdown timer that is about to reach zero, and enters a brightly lit, energetic stage.

Mr. Zhang has risen to musical success primarily as a member of the South Korean-Chinese musical group Exo.

Valentino debuted the new campaign globally on its Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube accounts on Oct. 7.



*The sneaker was inspired by the pop artist, and features purple subtleties. Image credit: Valentino*

The limited-edition one-stud sneaker is available at Valentino boutiques and on its ecommerce site. It currently retails for 6,400 Chinese yuan, or \$992 at current exchange rate.

The women's model of the sneaker has already sold out.

#### Strengthening relations in Asia

Luxury fashion houses have been looking to strengthen their presence and customer relationships within the Asia-Pacific market through ambassadorships.

Earlier this week, French fashion house Louis Vuitton recruited Korean model and actress HoYeon Jung as its newest global brand ambassador.

Ms. Jung's relationship with the fashion label dates back to 2016, when she walked in Louis Vuitton's spring/summer 2017 runway show for the first time. Most recently, she made her acting debut as Kang Sae-byeok in the action-thriller Netflix original series "Squid Game."

Louis Vuitton tapped Ms. Jung at an opportune moment as she rises to the forefront of global entertainment ([see story](#)).

Mr. Zhang previously appeared in Valentino's Qixi campaign this summer, as did Tang Yan and Luo Yizhou.

The maison's capsule collection for Chinese Valentine's Day features classic Valentino pieces, including studded handbags, in a red-and-white color palette and heart-print accents. In three separate vignettes, the Chinese brand ambassadors appears to be on a date speaking directly to the camera as if addressing their partner in a home movie ([see story](#)).

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