

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Balenciaga continues on a global musical journey

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Aya Nakamura is featured as Balenciaga's newest musical curator. Image credit: Balenciaga

By NORA HOWE

Kering-owned fashion house Balenciaga is touting its appreciation for music through an ongoing project in which creative director Demna Gvasalia selects artists to curate musical playlists.

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Launched in September 2020 exclusively through Apple Music, Balenciaga Music invites influential artists from around the world to provide insight into their creative worlds and share their favorite music. The newest artist featured by Balenciaga is Aya Nakamura, who joins Rupaul, Rammstein and Mr. Gvasalia himself.

Specially curated

Born Aya Danioko, Ms. Nakamura is a multi-platinum French-Malian singer who primarily mixes Afrobeat and R&B musical styles.

She moved from West Africa to Paris as a child, where she later launched into music with the name Nakamura, after a character in the NBC series "Heroes."

For Balenciaga, she selected a list of songs that have inspired, influenced and captivated her throughout her life. Some of the artists featured on her playlist include A\$AP Rocky, Roddy Ricch, DJ Khaled, Drake, Young Thug, Jorja Smith and more.

Aya for Balenciaga playlist

Since its 2018 debut, Ms. Nakamura's single "Djadja" has been certified diamond, selling more than 10 million records. Her self-titled album, "Nakamura," has gained nearly two billion streams since being released.

Many outlets and music platforms have deemed Ms. Nakamura one of the most-watched and most important French singers in Europe today.

The "Aya for Balenciaga Music" playlist is accompanied by a limited-edition collection of apparel and accessories, designed like concert merchandise. The collection ranges from \$575-\$2,450.

To promote the playlist and collection, Balenciaga unveiled a campaign of videos and still imagery depicting fans

wearing the apparel and holding signs while waiting in line for autographs.

In typical Balenciaga fashion, the brand cleared its Twitter and Instagram accounts of previous content before promoting the newest project, with the exception of its Ukraine relief program.

Aya Nakamura for Balenciaga Music

Original Playlist on Apple Music

Out Now <https://t.co/xEzbn4nAkH> pic.twitter.com/N0HrZrWXHB

Balenciaga (@BALENCIAGA) [March 17, 2022](#)

Ms. Nakamura's playlist collaboration follows past Balenciaga Music projects with iconic drag queen RuPaul and German rock band Rammstein.

RuPaul's playlist, which included artists such as ABBA, Destiny's Child, Britney Spears and Nicki Minaj, was also accompanied by a merch-style apparel collection. Rammstein's playlist featured the likes of the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Nine Inch Nails, Arctic Monkeys and Slipknot.

In tune, in style

Perhaps due to their similar artistic processes or creative natures, music and fashion have seamlessly intertwined throughout history, and a number of fashion houses have tapped into the power of rhythm and sound to complement their designs.

Following its spring/summer 2021 Paris runway presentation, French fashion house Balmain teamed up with Apple Music to launch a unique playlist, Signature, curated by creative director Olivier Rousteign and Apple Music editors.

Updated with new tracks throughout the year, Signature aims to reflect Balmain's values of boldness and maximalism, encouraging inclusion and empowerment.

Prior to launching the Signature playlist, however, Mr. Rousteign created his own soundtrack for summer 2018, "Addicted to You," to reflect Balmain's anticipation of the perfect holiday ([see story](#)).

In early 2019, Italian fashion house Prada took on the role of a DJ with an official channel on Spotify, where fans can immerse themselves in the label's musical lifestyle ([see story](#)).

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