

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Gucci celebrates artistry, creativity in collaborative digital project

April 13, 2022



A balloon version of the Gucci Bamboo 1947 by Masayoshi Matsumoto. Image courtesy of Gucci

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Italian fashion house Gucci is embracing its artistic side in a collaborative effort centered on two classic handbags.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Several artists and photographers were tasked with reinterpreting the Gucci Bamboo 1947 and Gucci Diana handbags in videos, images and illustrations that reflect their own personal aesthetics. The project is an extension of the Gucci Bamboo 1947 campaign, launched after creative director Alessandro Michele refreshed the handbag design and added it to the signature Gucci Beloved line.

"This campaign speaks to several audiences using art as the vehicle for communication," said Rebecca Miller, founder/CEO of [ARTful Communication](#), New York.

"The classic, beloved Gucci handbags have been invited to be the focal point of each artist's expression," she said. "They are shown, no shared, in environments that are unexpected, using techniques that encourage the viewer to see the handbags in new dimensions.

"What makes this campaign unique in the subject matter in which each artist celebrates what the handbags represent to them an accessory, a piece of sculpture, a fantasy, an illusion, a symbol or perhaps a toy."

Ms. Miller is not affiliated with [Gucci](#), but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Works of art

Creatives from around the world were enlisted for the [digital project](#), and their artistic techniques are just as diverse.

Those who looked to the Gucci Bamboo 1947 include Masayoshi Matsumoto, Lorenzo Vitturi, Juan Francisco Bertoni, Lou Escobar, Suzanne Saroff, Cho Gi-Seok, Nico Ito, Maddalena Arcelloni, Samson Bakare, Everett Glenn, Theo Liu Xiangyu and Katja Mayer.

[@gucci](#) Balloon art to the max.

[@isopresso_balloon2](#) [#GucciBamboo1947](#)

#GucciBeloved #AlessandroMichele #Gucci
#FashionForYou suono originale - Gucci

Balloon artist Masayoshi Matsumot creates a Gucci 1947 Bamboo

For the Aria collection, Mr. Michele reimagined the house's archival handbag with detachable leather and web straps to complement the bamboo top handle and distinct curve shape. The extensive range of colorways and exotic skins gave the artists plenty of fodder for their pieces.

For instance, Japanese balloon artist Mr. Matsumoto created a sculpture with blue balloons nearly identical to the azure leather and brown balloons to resemble the bamboo handle and closure.

Known for his temporal, mixed media sculptures, London-based Mr. Vitturi delicately balanced a green leather Gucci Bamboo 1947 between an abstract yellow object and a piece of fruit for his colorful creation. Korean photographer Mr. Cho features a mini Gucci Bamboo 1947 in pink in a surrealist portrait with his trademark floral motifs.



Korean photographer Cho GiSeok found inspiration in the pink Gucci Bamboo 1947. Image courtesy of Gucci

Meanwhile, the Gucci Diana was reimagined by Hailun Ma, Cinthia Mulanga and Nicole McLaughlin.

The handbag, which combines a bamboo handle with a tote silhouette, was first introduced in 1991. Like the Gucci Bamboo 1947, it was recently revived by Mr. Michele and is now available in three different sizes with removable, neon leather belts around the handles.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

A Gucci Diana made from volleyballs

For the project, Chinese photographer Ms. Ma elegantly presents a mini Gucci Diana in the arms of a young woman, relying on a soft and feminine color palette.

Ms. Mulanga, an artist who hails from the Democratic Republic of Congo, featured the Gucci Diana in a vibrant portrait of two women. Ms. McLaughlin, who specializes in upcycling, created her own Gucci Diana by repurposing volleyballs.

"What stands out in this campaign is the range of artists selected to manifest their viewpoints and the range of messages they collectively expressed," Ms. Miller said. "We see inclusion, controversy, humor, uncertainty, respect, care and empathy.

"The brand's trademark quality of their products and the art world is distinct."



Cinthia Mulanga for Gucci Diana. Image courtesy of Gucci

Creative collaborations

Gucci is not the first luxury house to team with artists on colorful handbag campaigns, as French fashion labels Dior and Louis Vuitton have ongoing art projects centered around their Lady Dior and Capucines handbags, respectively.

First introduced in 2016, the annual "Dior Lady Art" project celebrates creativity and individuality, two core tenants of the house ([see story](#)).

Louis Vuitton launched its Artycapucines campaign in 2019, tasking artists to use the classic Capucines as a blank canvas for limited-edition releases ([see story](#)).

For its part, Gucci takes a slightly different approach to its artist collaborations while still honoring the emphasis on craftsmanship seen in an earlier Gucci Bamboo 1947 campaign ([see story](#)).

"This effort, different than what other luxury houses have done, has asked the artists not to redesign the handbags per se using their own aesthetics, but to integrate the original designs into their own mediums," Ms. Miller said. "This expands the viewer's curatorial lens of vision and emotion exactly the personal role art is intended to play in our lives.

"It allows us as consumers to grow and incorporate what we value," she said. "It helps to build emotional attachment to Gucci through the art of suggestion, of giving, not selling."