

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Prada reinterprets sneaker through artistic lens

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The new collection includes packaging with Cassius Hirst's own brain scan to symbolize hope, knowledge and creativity. Image credit: Prada

By NORA HOWE

Italian fashion house Prada has teamed with artist Cassius Hirst, known as Cass, to reimagine its America's Cup sneaker through a customized capsule collection of four models in 22 color variations.

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To present the exclusive collection, a campaign of still images and film shot by Axel Morin showcases the bright sneakers against a nearly pristine backdrop. The Cass x Prada collection is limited to 3,000 pairs around the world, sold through a selection of Prada boutiques and via prada.com.

Prada x Cass

In a short film, Mr. Hirst is shown in his studio as he explains the design inspiration for each of the collection's models whose names are inspired by the musical term, envelope, or the life of a sound.

The attack, decay, sustain and release models, stylized as ATT4CK, D3CAY, SUST4IN and REL3ASE are intended to represent the stages of a sound's evolution, reflecting Prada's evolution with the new America's Cup sneaker.

"ATT4CK is an aggressive beginning to the series, D3CAY feels chaotic, SUST4IN is where the whole series is held and REL3ASE is much more subtle than the others," he explains.

Mr. Hirst describes the inspiration behind his project with Prada

Each pair of shoes is handmade in Italy by Prada and is completely unique with individually signed "CASS" labels. According to the brand, no two pairs are the same.

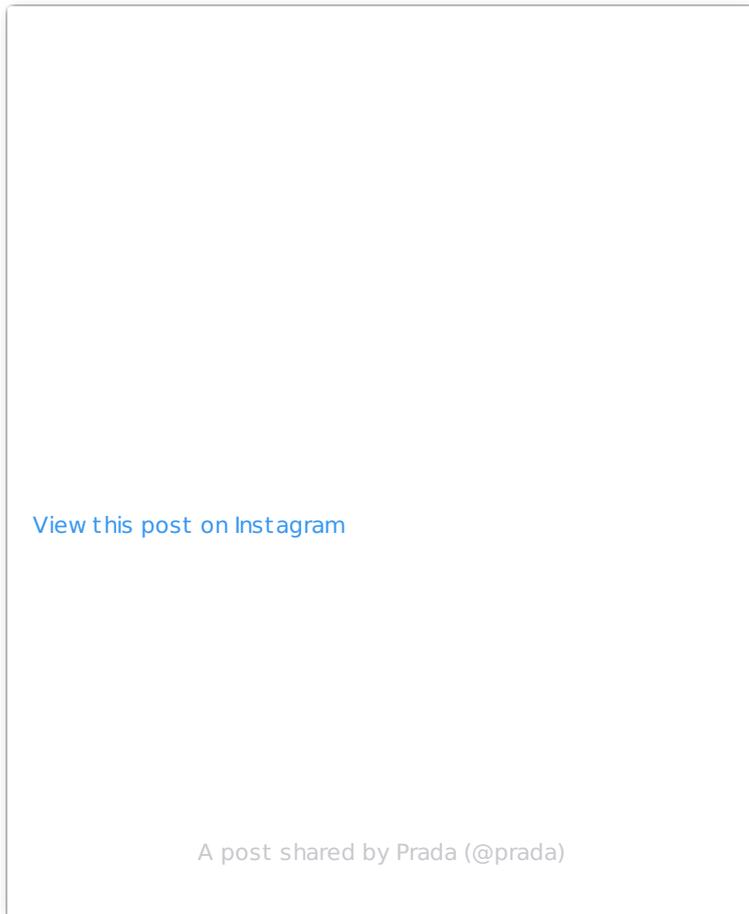
In addition to still images and the short video of the artist himself, the collection is presented through a stylistic, edgy film showing Cass x Prada sneaker models and personalized masks bringing anonymity to its characters.

The soundtrack for the film was also curated by Mr. Hirst, who produced the music specifically for this project.

The son of contemporary British artist Damien Hirst, the young creative first started using sneakers as a canvas in 2018, particularly Nike's Air Force 1s. Since then, he has developed his own creative voice and style.

In May 2019, Virgil Abloh invited him to sell his designs at the "Church and State" pop-up store at the Museum Of Contemporary Art in Chicago.

Today, he is based in London where he continues with his spray paint designs and has garnered a fanbase that includes notable figures like rappers A\$AP Rocky and 24Goldn and artist Samuel Ross.



In addition to the sneakers, the film showcases its characters wearing matching facemasks

The collection is available online and in 18 selected Prada stores and each pair retails for 1,400 euros, or \$1,476.17 at the current exchange rate.

Luxury as a canvas

As luxury is as much about aesthetic design as it is about functionality and craftsmanship, art plays a major role in product development and brand values across all sectors.

German automaker Porsche presented one of its vehicles as the ultimate canvas in a campaign launched in September starring acclaimed South African artist Nelson Makamo.

In a short film, Mr. Makamo discusses how his upbringing in his township has continuously influenced his art. The campaign shares the artist's previous work and inspirations before he ultimately puts a colorful twist on a Porsche 911 ([see story](#)).

French leather and accessories brand Longchamp highlighted its creative bonafides through a colorful collaboration with a Parisian graffiti artist last year.

Longchamp artistic director Sophie Delafontaine tapped Andr Saraiva for the project, in which he transforms Longchamp handbags into multiple variations of his Mr. A character. The campaign reflected Longchamp's artistic sensibilities while drawing attention to its sustainable offerings ([see story](#)).