

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Louis Vuitton transforms menswear classics with creative ornamentation

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Only a brand with top-tier creative direction could elevate a component as seemingly inopportune as a rubber outsole fortunately, Louis Vuitton has, and does, just that. Image credit: Louis Vuitton

By AMIRAH KEATON

French fashion house Louis Vuitton is embracing a flowery future, marrying new 3D details to its masculine footwear classics in fresh menswear campaign content.

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High-art and high-fashion come together for fall/winter 2022, as the brand introduces a raised baroque imprint fit for royalty. Louis Vuitton turns the art world's conventions inside out, using its shiny calf leather offering to place a fresh spin on classical practices, with a diverse cast to match.

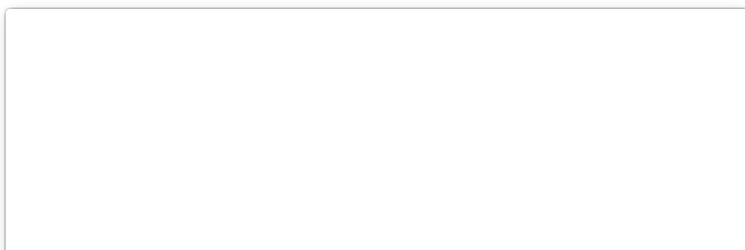
"It was not that long ago that major fashion houses were not doing videos for product launches, which this essentially is," said Josh Peskowitz, menswear editor and operating partner at **Untitled Group**, New York. "Maybe a fragrance and definitely for a seasonal short film or something."

"This is made for social, and all social platforms are gravitating towards video so it makes sense," he said. "Normally, I would expect some sort of narrative but this is essentially a living photoshoot which is thought-provoking for what it represents more than the actual content."

Mr. Peskowitz is not affiliated with Louis Vuitton, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Decorative dimension

Louis Vuitton's latest shoe collection comes alive in a digital video release, framed by an opening aerial shot of an expertly sunlit space.



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A post shared by Louis Vuitton (@louisvuitton)

An overhead view reveals indicators of a figure drawing session in progress easels are positioned in a circular formation surrounding a covered subject, as the campaign's cast approach their respective stools, cutting through a shadow-cast grid upon the floor of the apparent art studio.

Though formal in nature, content quickly takes a youthful turn. If jovial stoicism were to be entertained for the purposes at hand, the piecemeal description would serve this content's tone best.

As a branded clock ticks and school bell sonics fill the speaker, a branded silk print square scarf is lifted, and an uncanny subject is subsequently unveiled. Models playing the role of students peer inquisitively towards the center of the room, putting charcoal to canvas and beginning sketch efforts.

Viewers are finally allowed to get up close and personal with the session's subject, as the camera pans 360 degrees around the brand's unconventional invention.

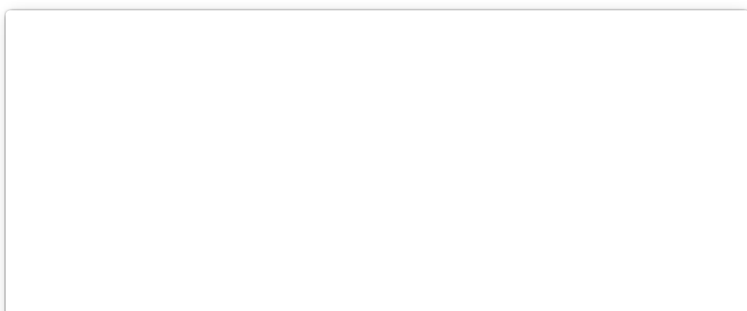
The panoramic visual of the LV Baroque Derby, first debuted on the men's fall/winter 2022 runway, proudly displays a new addition: baroque accents encircle the loafer's outsole, twisting around its perimeter like a vine to its chosen surface.

"The shoe is in line with many of the trends we have been seeing in men's, and all, footwear the last few fall seasons," Mr. Peskowitz said. "It is chunky, it is black and it is oversized."

"Think of the massive success Prada has had with its Monolith and cloudburst runners over the last few years. Versace as well to name a few. The LV shoe has a more romantic and artistic take on that same trend and I think that will appeal to fashion consumers who are looking for that trend as well as loyalists who are down for anything LV branded."

Innovatively angled and unorthodoxly stacked, silhouette variations like the LV Baroque Ranger Boot take center stage as the talents hone in on their illustrations. Eventually, models become the medium and a select few make their way to the drawing circle's center, posing alongside classical symbols reminiscent of the footwear detail's namesake era.

Streetwear still reigns king, though, and the formality of Louis Vuitton's baroque footwear carries the inherent risk of intimidation.



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"The boot references classical and baroque details and the clothing oozes craftsmanship and has a painterly vibe," he said. "Not sure if anybody is actually going to skate in those boots like in the video though."

Models attempt to bury doubts of the decorated footwear's functionality, stomping out the concern as intermediate footage of the men skateboarding in the style, taking motion with new shoes afoot, is displayed.

As the video comes to a close, so too does the Louis Vuitton-branded art studio. Dusk settles, light wavers and a larger-than-life foot statue has been erected, taking the place of the baroque styles once central to the circle.

Louis Vuitton showcases the beauty to be found in the details, as hybrid styles maintain a sole that treads the brand's Monogram Flower, in addition to the shoes' 3D floral engraving. LVMH's standout entity has gone live with content on social, and with the Italian-manufactured men's shoes on its site.

Styles are also available for purchase at select store locations.

"Virgil was here"

Louis Vuitton's latest menswear release proves that, at least for now, the department's artistic direction is in good hands.

The spirit of late creative director Virgil Abloh is still in tow. The French fashion house Louis Vuitton honored the titan who helped shape its legacy while encouraging the next generation of style with "Generation V", an original presentation of the men's fall-winter 2022 collection ([see story](#)).

The star's home company campaign has not been his sole salute.

German automaker Mercedes-Maybach captured remnants of one of its most prized creative projects, executed in collaboration with Mr. Abloh, having recently shared exclusive, documentary-style footage highlighting the minds behind Project MAYBACH ([see story](#)). U.S. department store Nordstrom also honored the fashion greats with the "Concept 018: Virgil Abloh Securities" pop-up, promoting pieces from the designer's brand Off-White and his creative studio Alaska Alaska ([see story](#)).

"[The new video's] styling is fun and it is very much in Virgil's spirit," Mr. Peskowitz said.

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