

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Louis Vuitton's cultural strategy behind its spin-off show in Aranya

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*Aranya, considered an artistic community, shares Virgil Abloh's vision of creating varied expressions of tomorrow. Photo courtesy of Louis Vuitton*

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On September 16, **Louis Vuitton** created one of the biggest social media moments this year with the physical presentation of its Men's Spring 2023 spin-off show. A 320-meter catwalk was unfurled in a sandscape on a beach in Aranya, a coastal city in Qinghuangdao. Alongside the collection shown in Paris this June, the house bought 10 new looks specifically designed for local audiences.

The show's livestream was accessible on eight local platforms, including the brand's official site, Weibo, WeChat, Douyin, Kuaishou, Smart TV open page, Tencent, and Dewu. The Aranya community as well as its partners such as Manner Coffee and local universities also recruited audience members for the broadcast. For the first time, the house livestreamed on Gen Z's go-to social media and e-commerce platform Dewu. The online viewership across all channels amounted to record 329 million as of September 18 a monumental moment for not only the house but also the wider luxury industry.

The Jing Take: Accessing **Dewu (also known as Poizon)** marked a smart digital move for Louis Vuitton, the first luxury brand to livestream on the platform. Founded in 2015 as a content-sharing community with an emphasis on streetwear, Dewu is now a fully-fledged social commerce and trend indicator app, with Gen Zers accounting for nearly 90 percent of its users. KOLs who are vocal on the platform were invited to attend the show, which organically engaged a demographic of young men.

In addition, a cinematic prelude titled "Mirage" co-created by Chinese directors Jia Zhangke and Wei Shujun was released on Weibo. The film portrayed themes of childhood, discovery and community, all of which were highlighted in Louis Vuitton's final celebration of **Virgil Abloh**.

Meanwhile, the house also presented Libraries phmres in Aranya, two book kiosks in high-visibility locations that are stocked with the complete collection of Louis Vuitton Travel Editions and the newly launched publication, "Louis Vuitton: Virgil Abloh." Key landmarks of the community are painted with creative visuals from the house. From collaborating with Chinese creative talents to rolling out pop-up projects and takeovers, this ongoing dialogue

between Louis Vuitton and local communities has cemented the maison's cultural integrity among domestic consumers.

Launching a physical spin-off show in China is a challenging, yet encouraging initiative in 2022. The Aranya spectacular not only consolidated Louis Vuitton's commitment to China but also showcased the powerhouse's pioneering vision through influencing a broader audience and underlining its inclusivity.

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