

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Alaa x Picasso odes art and ateliers in capsule content

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The maison presents Alaa x Picasso, a limited-edition dress capsule inspired by Picasso's "Tanagra" ceramic series, in a new campaign video. Image credit: Alaa

By AMIRAH KEATON

French couture house Alaa is bringing an artist's work to the runway in a crossover collaboration of epic proportions.

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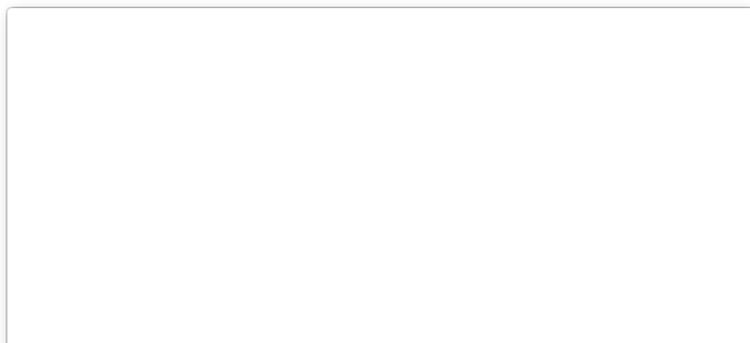
The Richemont-backed maison has gone live with a limited-edition dress capsule inspired by the ceramic work of one of art's most notorious names. A vision of creative director Pieter Mulier, the brand's luxury team worked closely with the Picasso Administration to realize the in-motion works of art.

Alaa x Picasso

The house's newest collaboration has roots in its rich French history as it turns out, couturier and sculptor Azzedine Alaa was an early collector of Pablo Picasso's creations and maintained a friendly relationship with the artist. Now, the founder's Belgian successor honors an art-laden legacy with new designs.

The limited-edition modules, having debuted as part of Alaa's larger collection during Paris' Fall Fashion Week executed at the top of this year, become the focal point of a new video out from the brand that expertly highlights the capsule's construction.

A lively workshop becomes ground zero for Mr. Mulier's innovative undertaking.



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Packed end-to-end with body-hugging pieces, a clothing rack rolling against the space's floor serve as a grassroots soundtrack, before the takeover of omnipresent orchestral sonics.

Throughout Alaa's video, the collection slowly and carefully comes together with a measured brilliance. Content negates the outdated view of work of this nature, as offline and online techniques mix and mannequin placements are utilized alongside digital dress blueprints, all at the hands of trained artisans.



Inspiration and innovation, side-by-side. Image credit: Alaa

What could easily turn into a pretentious showing of man versus machine instead embraces technology, working alongside the atelier apparatuses that aid in expert execution. Masters are shown hard at work: churning, cutting, picking, prodding, steaming, scurrying, threading and arranging.

Reminiscent of Picasso's own painting style, the collection livens the basic silhouette of a turtlenecked sweater dress ornamented with abstract brush strokes and potent pops of color.

Made apparent by way of prerelease listings to be found on Gagolian's shop site the art dealer paired three exclusive pieces with accessories and books about the artist in an earlier summer activation one standout look is comprised of an exclusive linen and stretch viscose composition.

The house's skill set is made crystal clear through the design, submerged in detail and derived from Picasso's "Tanagra" ceramic series.



Alaa's art fusion makes its way down the runway. Image credit: Alaa

The atelier's lights are turned off about midway through the video, the team's only apparent signal of rest. Alaa's artisans are unrivaled in an acute expression of their craft.

Then, in a seemingly-magical transition, what appears in the segment's first frame upon a model in progress pops up on the runway, fully complete, its assembly now deeply embedded in the viewer's brain.

Atelier pride

Amid a luxury fashion landscape riddled with bright branding and celebrity fanfare, France's crown jewel exemplifies a luxury house doing things differently, reveling in its own well-defined lane and doubling down on opportunities for its atelier to shine.

Many household names seem to be switching up branding efforts with new Barbiecore aesthetics ([see story](#)) and bright red Pantone presentations ([see story](#)) while Alaa goes against the grain, in a display that showcases the best of luxury marketing's breadth.

Take Salvatore Ferragamo's recent refresh, for example.

Founded in 1927, technically predating Alaa's 1964 originating year, Ferragamo recently unveiled updated motifs, opting for a mononymic title in the face of a new creative director. Clearly looking to revive the house and return revenue with splashy executions, Ferragamo's fresh mantra extended to an all-red Milan runway for its spring/summer 2023 showing.

Luxury's current fixation with using the medium, or the vessel through which its content is carried a stage build-out, a flashy social campaign, an elaborate out-of-home ad push as the message, is quite loud.

Conversely, the powers that be at the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture member house seem very much aware of the fact that few fashion brands can go up against the caliber of craftsmanship it brings to luxury's table.

Thus, Mr. Mulier has taken a different route, emphasizing Alaa's heritage with behind-the-scenes storytelling efforts that resonate deeply and extend beyond the window of social media's short attention span.

Last month, the maison went live with "Le Savior-Faire Alaa," a set of campaign videos that provided an up-close-and-personal view of the high-level luxury treatments behind its latest collection ([see story](#)).

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Make no mistake though: unlike other luxury entities, Alaa is not a victim of its elevated image when it comes to the company's bottom lines. The brand recently partnered with Superga on a luxury sneaker, in a strategic bid for wider appeal.

Capturing the best of both worlds while maintaining similar values of classic wearability, the collaboration anchored in streetwear touted a much more accessible price point ([see story](#)).

In-store exclusive Alaa x Picasso is available for purchase only via select brand boutiques worldwide.

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