

EVENTS/CAUSES

Luxury players approach Pride with inclusivity in mind

June 6, 2023



High-end brands hailing from a number of countries are stepping up to acknowledge Pride Month with a range of activations. Image credit: Stella McCartney

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

Luxury names across apparel, beauty and more are platforming a monthlong, inclusivity-focused observance.

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High-end brands hailing from a number of countries are stepping up to acknowledge Pride Month with a range of activations. As brands round out the rainbow-themed drops of yesteryear with mindful donations and LGBTQIA+ partnerships, June's 30-day celebration continues to spark conversation on themes of intersectionality and queer liberation, in a notable progression from previous rounds.

"To support the queer community, luxury brands can practice values that respect the human dignity of all people," said Marcie Bianco, LGBTQ+ journalist and author of *Breaking Free: The Lie of Equality and the Feminist Fight for Freedom*, San Francisco.

"Such business practices would redress the effects of historical systemic discrimination directed at LGBTQ+ people and include: a livable wage, health-care coverage that encompasses gender-affirming and reproductive care, employee benefits devised outside of a heteronormative paradigm of who is regarded as 'family' and covered in said benefits, and labor regulations that respect the health and dignity of the worker and the planet," she said. "These practices would have a far greater impact on the lives of people within my community, who are being increasingly attacked by state governments across the nation, than vapid rainbow products."

Spotlight on LGBTQIA+

British fashion house Stella McCartney is among the luxury names celebrating Pride.

Thwarting a practice that has almost become a tradition among retailers during the month, the company is straying from a simple product drop, sprinkling products throughout a queer-led narrative.

STELLABRATION OF ALL: "Stella is such an icon, but she is so humble and loves to have a good laugh just like I do." Mina Galan

Please consider donating to [@NotAPhaseOrg](#) this [#PrideMonth](#).

Discover more at <https://t.co/KHxLwY0G0p>. [#StellaMcCartney](#) [#Pride](#)
pic.twitter.com/MRwrDTQZiW

Stella McCartney (@StellaMcCartney) [June 5, 2023](#)

For "Stellabration of All," the brand teamed up with stylists Morena Salas and Mina Galan, allowing the duo to take over Stella McCartney's digital channels. Bringing attention to the transgender community, the two styled and photographed each other wearing the designer's creations at the London flagship store.

Given complete control to tell their story, not only is photography being shared on social media, but the brand has installed a dedicated [landing page](#) for Ms. Salas and Ms. Galan, inclusive of an interview conducted on their respective transitioning journeys, and the role that fashion has held throughout.

"We were looking to capture the connection of our friendship," said Ms. Salas, in a statement.

"We love to get dolled up and take pictures of each other every time we go out, so we thought the shoot could be an intimate moment to portray ourselves dressing up with the fab Stella looks and taking pictures of each other around the beautiful 23 Old Bond Street store," she said. "The pieces scream our names.

"We would literally wear that every time we would go out."



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Clothing items worn for photo shoots include Stella McCartney's [Asymmetric Cape Hem Mini Dress](#) and [Crystal Chain Sleeve Top](#). Each retail for \$1,790 and \$2,700, respectively.

"When it comes to my transition, fashion has helped in shaping my identity as a trans woman," said Ms. Galan, in a statement.

"Fashion is language it's the first statement we communicate before we open our mouths and talk," she said. "When you first start transitioning, clothes play such a big part of it."

Glossy assets aside, the partners are additionally driving followers and fans to donate to [Not a Phase](#), a United Kingdom-based nonprofit dedicated to uplifting transgender adults. A number of other luxury brands are joining the female founder in pivoting away from solely product-focused approaches to Pride, allowing community voices to take centerstage in their efforts.

Luxury plugs product

Italian fashion label Versace held off on any new releases, instead announcing that 15 percent of all sales generated from the [Greca Goddess mini bag](#) in powder blush pink priced at \$1,625 will be given to the Elton John AIDS Foundation throughout the month.

The nonprofit works to provide education, and fund infection prevention and treatment through local and governmental collaboration.



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A post shared by Versace (@versace)

Equally unlikely to be their last, this is not the house's first stint with philanthropy involving the LGBTQ+ population ([see story](#)).

The same goes for LVMH-owned beauty retailer Sephora, which highlighted the work of U.K.-based artist Lucy Kirk on social media in honor of the observance.

Its parent company has launched related programming.

Entitled Walk the Talk," the series sees LVMH employees participating in Pride Walks across Tokyo, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Miami, New York, London and Paris. Last month, the conglomerate affirmed its standing commitments to the LGBTQIA+ community in honor of "IDAHOT" or International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia ([see story](#)).

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A post shared by Sephora (@sephora)

A few luxury brands such as U.S. jeweler David Yurman are moving forward with rainbow releases to mark their support for Pride, tying earnings back to a charitable cause.

In partnership with The Trevor Project, a nonprofit that provides mental health resources for members of the LGBTQIA+ community, the brand is pledging a modest portion of net profits from select bracelets to the organization ([see story](#)), as criticism mounts over initiatives that lead with product, the awareness of "rainbow washing" increasing among consumers.

Many are calling for more continuous resources to circulate throughout the year. However, time will tell if luxury brands will keep the sentiment in mind.

For now, consumers seem to be categorizing companies by those seemingly showing support to pad profits, and those acting during the month of June to make a difference year-round.

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