

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Launching new initiative, Louis Vuitton finds synergy between music, fashion

August 11, 2023



Beyond Music takes the form of a four-minute short film, giving an inside look into the wardrobe design and performance processes of the artist. Image credit: Louis Vuitton

By ZACH JAMES

French fashion house Louis Vuitton is looking toward a friend of the brand for its latest experimental release.

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In collaboration with Congolese-Belgian singer-songwriter Marie-Pierra Kakoma, who goes by the stage name of Lous and the Yakuzas, the maison has launched "Beyond Music," a behind-the-scenes look at concerts featuring specialized apparel from the label. The venture expands Louis Vuitton's reach in popular culture while showcasing the "synergistic relationship" between music and fashion, according to the brand.

Synergy in motion

"Beyond Music" takes the form of a four-minute short film, giving an inside look into the wardrobe design and performance processes of the artist.

Ms. Kakoma narrates over the media, granting it a throughline and a personal resonance as she speaks through her love for live music as well as for the Louis Vuitton brand.

"Beyond Music" focuses on the musician's concert at the Paris Philharmonic last month

"Through music, I awaken my dreams," says Ms. Kakoma in the film.

"My style is eclectic, and my music [is] too, so I think that's where fashion and music meet, when they're as random as my personality," Ms. Kakoma says. "Every morning I wake up with some kind of feeling and I express it [in] fashion, and it's the same way I express myself with music."

In this synergistic pursuit, she and Louis Vuitton came to a partnership, where the maison's women's creative director, Nicolas Ghesquière, would create an outfit for her show at the Paris Philharmonic. The artist states that many designs were considered, but in the end, despite liking all of her options, Ms. Kakoma chose to wear a completely custom-made, 1970s-inspired orange bralette, collared shirt and shorts combo.

Crafting a physical interpretation of the musician's artistic vision, @TWNGhesquiere designed a custom 70s inspired orange bralette and shorts for Friend of the Maison #LousAndTheYakuza. Watch the full video at <https://t.co/JVacOh1wwB>

#LVBeyondMusic pic.twitter.com/e50K7O0v88

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"I was a fan of each single sketch, like all of them," says Ms. Kakoma in the film.

"I love to feel long; fashion tells who you are and I think it's a very important tool to express yourself. "

The outfit's elongated sleeves with puffed shoulders and exaggerated collar look straight out of the late rock musician David Bowie's closet, fit for his flamboyant and iconic persona of Ziggy Stardust, but applied to the French-language rapper's tenets of design.

Ms. Kakoma took the stage on July 4, 2023, with the accompanying film released just over a month later on August 5. In the performance, the artist embraced her eccentricities to an adoring crowd; it was just one stop in her tour that concluded on July 29, 2023.

"My journey towards a dream in music is not about reaching a destination, it's about embracing the process, staying true to one's unique voice and daring to shape a legacy," Ms. Kakoma says to close the film.

Cultural cornerstone

Louis Vuitton's collaboration with Lous and the Yakuza comes at a time of further adoption for the sonic medium in the luxury world, across sectors.

German fashion house Hugo Boss released a look at its upcoming fall/winter 2023 collection, which featured musicians and influencers in its campaign (see story). The cultural impact the brand hopes to receive through this push is certainly enormous, as the stars combine for well over 100 million followers on various social media networks.

Music took center stage in promoting the soon-to-release line, as pop star Bella Poarch was the main figurehead of the advertisement.

"I really hope my music can bring some kind of joy" #LousAndTheYakuza. #LouisVuitton follows the Friend of the Maison behind the scenes of her Paris Philharmonic performance. Watch the full video at <https://t.co/JVacOh0YH3>

#LVBeyondMusic pic.twitter.com/yf169zyeRr

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LVMH-owned beauty retailer Sephora has also joined in on the embrace of the medium, launching "Sephora Sounds" last week. The program seeks to uplift BIPOC female artists through continuous features in the company's social media posts via an ever-expanding collective (see story).

In late June, Swiss watchmaker Audemars Piguet extended their partnership with British American DJ, songwriter and record producer Mark Ronson in the continuation of the "Syncing Sounds" live performance platform, which, similar to "Beyond Music," draws parallels between musicians and their peers in the luxury space (see story)

The summer months are the perfect time to launch initiatives such as these, as the music industry is booming with the vast selection of tours, concerts and performances spanning the globe, with Taylor Swift and Beyonc's work seeing the majority of the spotlight. The latter of whom is a mainstay in the world of luxury (see story) and has worked with Louis Vuitton for her current Renaissance Tour.

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