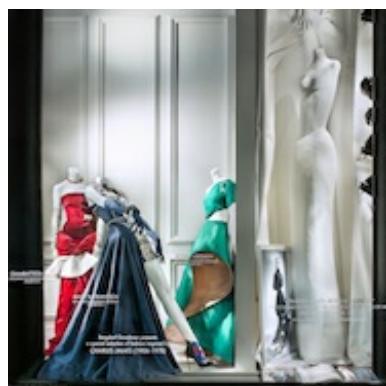


IN-STORE

Bergdorf Goodman creates public art with Costume Institute-inspired store windows

May 8, 2014



Bergdorf Goodman windows inspired by Charles James

By SARAH JONES

New York-based department store Bergdorf Goodman is celebrating the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute exhibit on British fashion designer Charles James with a window display.

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Bergdorf Goodman asked a number of contemporary designers to interpret the work of Mr. James into one-of-a-kind pieces. For the first time, consumers will be able to purchase the designs directly from the window, allowing consumers the opportunity to collect and own a piece of the display.

"It has become a tradition at Bergdorf Goodman to celebrate the big yearly Costume Institute exhibit with a major set of windows," said David Hoey, senior director, visual presentation at **Bergdorf Goodman**, New York. "This is our tenth year.

"We curate and design our windows independently from the Costume Institute, but we do have their cooperation," he said. "We usually examine the subject of their show from a different angle. We also look for a link from the subject of the show to current fashion. In

these ways, we provide a sort of complementary exhibit to the Met's show.

"For example, this year the museum is showing actual dresses designed by Charles James, with a particular focus on the construction of these garments in an almost scientific way. Meanwhile we are showing looks by contemporary designers inspired by Charles James, with an atmosphere evoking a 1940s dress salon."

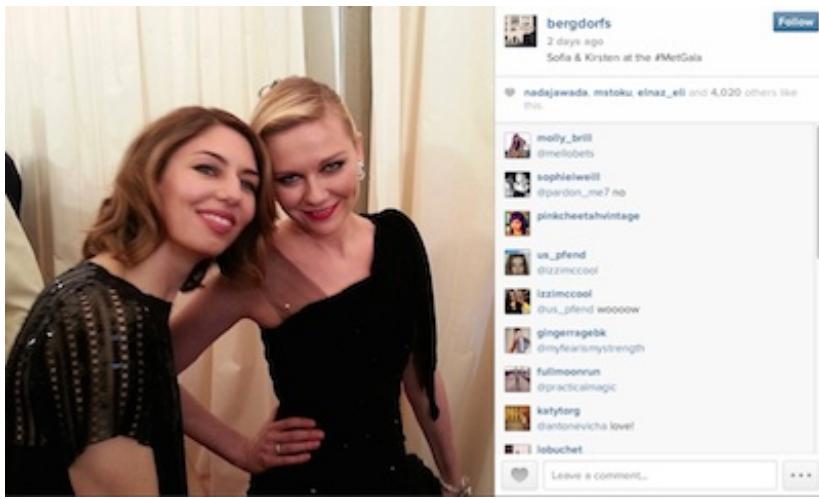
History meets contemporary

Bergdorf Goodman unveiled its windows on May 5, the same day of that the Met Gala, the party Vogue magazine hosts to launch the exhibit, was held. The windows will be up through May 19.



Bergdorf Goodman windows

To kick off the display, Bergdorf had Rodarte designers Kate and Laura Mulleavy take over its Instagram account during the Met Gala. The sisters posted images of their invitations, table and fashionable faces, including Kirsten Dunst and Sofia Coppola.



Instagram post on @Bergdorfs from Rodarte

Rodarte also tweeted from its account about the Instagram takeover, including an image of its dress for the window.

Retweeted by Bergdorf Goodman

RODARTE @OfficialRodarte · May 5
2nite we takeover **@Bergdorfs'** Instagram to cover the MET Gala! Our gown is
in their window in honor of Charles James! pic.twitter.com/1drulicqa2

A tweet from the official Rodarte Twitter account (@OfficialRodarte) retweeted by Bergdorf Goodman (@BergdorfGoodman). The tweet announces that Rodarte is taking over Bergdorf Goodman's Instagram account to cover the Met Gala. It includes a photo of a window display featuring a mannequin in a white, ruffled gown. The window display has a quote from Charles James: "Dresses...look as if the body were ambulatory than a mermaid's yet permit large reckless movement."

Tweet from Rodarte retweeted by Bergdorf Goodman

The windows show mannequins wearing designs from designers including Mary Katrantzou, Ralph Rucci, Libertine, Naeem Khan, Rosie Assoulin, Giambattista Valli and Rodarte. Surrounding the mannequins are larger-than-life scissors, chairs and dress forms.



Bergdorf Goodman windows

The windows also delve into Mr. James' history, with vintage photographs and books of his work.

Bergdorf's windows also promote the exhibit, telling the dates that it will be up at The Met. To introduce an online audience to the windows, Bergdorf posted on Facebook, linking to a blog post on 5th/58th.

In the blog post, Bergdorf gives a phone number to call to inquire about buying one of the dresses.

"By featuring designs by Charles James in their Fifth Avenue windows, Bergdorf is positioning itself as a seamless connection between the art and fashion worlds," said Ashley Chin, account executive at [The O Group](#), New York. "With the popularity of the Met Gala and the Costume Institute, the fashion and art worlds are closer than ever for the luxury consumer, and the Bergdorf's windows celebrate that synergy."

"The fashion world moves quickly, so the two week duration of the display seems sufficient to bookend the related events," she said. "To date I think they've been successful in not only generating buzz for the Met Gala this past, but for the Charles James exhibition at the Costume Institute as well."

Art alliance

Bergdorf Goodman has previously used well-timed windows to benefit from added foot

traffic.

The retailer unveiled a series of in-store art installations during Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week to draw attention and foot traffic from fashion show attendees staying in the city.

Bergdorf's "Art Matters!" project was the result of a partnership with duo Grey Area, who, with the help of artists, transformed the retailer's windows and store interior. These installations around the store likely attracted art and fashion lovers alike, who then spread the word to their networks ([see story](#)).

Museum exhibits give retailers an opportunity to highlight their connections to the fashion and art worlds.

British ecommerce site Net-A-Porter has partnered with the Victoria & Albert museum in London on an exclusive capsule collection of jewelry by Italian designers.

The collection is tied into the V&A's upcoming exhibit "The Glamour of Italian Fashion 1945-2015," April 5 through July 27, and will be sold on Net-A-Porter as well as in the museum's shop and ecommerce site. By carrying this exhibit-inspired line, Net-A-Porter will be able to showcase its ties to the art world as well as benefit from the attention surrounding the display ([see story](#)).

Bergdorf Goodman uses its windows as art outreach, showcasing the connection between the retailer, art and fashion.

"We are proud of the many window displays we have done over the years in partnerships with major cultural institutions and museums in New York," Mr. Hoey said. "Our display windows are an exciting venue to us, where we can create an alliance between fashion and art.

"Our windows are a commercial space but we like to think of them also as a form of public art."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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