

GUCCI

GUCCI LAUNCHES *GUCCI SNEAKER GARAGE*, THE DIGITAL PLATFORM DEDICATED TO THE SNEAKERS OF THE HOUSE

October 30, 2020. Gucci is pleased to present *Gucci Sneaker Garage*, the highly anticipated section of its App conceived as a platform entirely dedicated to the House's eclectic sneakers and their digital counterparts.

The section channels the spirit of garages as the hotbed for talent and ideas, the seeding grounds of alternative ways to imagine and accelerate possible futures. It brings together a mix of storytelling, gaming and user-generated content, and is home to the first virtual sneakers ever imagined and designed by Creative Director Alessandro Michele: the *Gucci Virtual 25*. These hyper-real sneakers, whose design combines technical and more imaginative details, 80s' inspired and ultra-contemporary aesthetics, can only be purchased virtually, for users to try them on and dialogue with their digital personas in the augmented reality and in virtual environments. Fostering the unexpected bond Gucci developed with gamers' communities, the *Gucci Virtual 25* will in fact also be available on Aglet, where they will launch together with the full spectrum of the House's sneakers, and are wearable on the popular immersive platforms Roblox and VRChat through game patches included in the purchase, along with additional customized contents.

The platform also gives to gamers an access to the ultimate tool to experiment within the distinctive world of the Gucci sneakers by creating their own model, tweaking, hybridizing and combining elements from the existing designs or from visionary new takes on them. The project embraces the brand's creative vision opening an array of fresh possibilities to explore, through hybrids overcoming constrictions and finding their definitions in a field of liberty. Through this interactive and trailblazer entertainment, Gucci involves its enthusiasts in a new dimension with the products and codes of the House, allowing users to bring their self-expression to post-physical and unexplored territories.

Leading the way of the practice is a group of artists, including Helen Kirkum, Michael Cutini, Mattias Gollin, Rudy Lim, Bodega Rose, Haram With Sugar, Ghica Popa, Jemma Mason, Christopher Chan, Pix Sellers, Delphine Dénéreaz, and long-time Friend of the House Trevor Andrew. They were invited by Gucci to use the eclectic sneakers of the House as a blank canvas, an inspiring starting point to express their creativity, resulting in artworks displayed in a virtual gallery. Using multiple mediums, each of the artists addressed the materiality of the shoes, overcoming their functionality to reflect on their cultural and symbolic significance.

Overall, the project keeps pushing one-step further the relationship between the world of fashion and that of gaming and digital environments, pioneered through Gucci Arcade: the ever-growing section of the Gucci App launched in July 2019 dedicated to games, inspired by the retro video games made famous in amusement arcades of the 1970s and 1980s - furtherly closing the gap between the GG logo and the "Good Gaming" sign in gamers' vocabulary. The brand also pursued this direction with its two-chapter Instagram project #24HourAce, where a collective of multimedia artists reflected on the rise of stimulating ASMR and on the way in which the digital landscape has evolved over the years, as well as partnering with Snap Inc. on Try-On Snapchat Lenses, with the global e-sports entertainment organization Fnatic, and with the world's favourite mobile tennis game: Tennis Clash.

Once again, the brand seeks to combine the past with the present, using contemporary and avant-garde codes to tell stories that speak of the future.