

Off-White™
2018
Hugo Rodriguez
(347)631-9571

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Off-White™ alongside NIKE Announces the presentation of its Spring/Summer collection 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New York, NY - Off-White™ is excited to announce the presentation of its **Spring/Summer 2019 collection**, taking place in Paris, France during Paris Fashion week, with collaboration from **NIKE**

Virgil Abloh is proud to bring his newest **Off-White™** collection to Paris. Alongside collaboration from **NIKE**. **Off-White™** and **NIKE** bring a flamboyant and very bright collection of white and neon ready to wear/ Track and field apparel. The bright contrast of neon and white is certainly an attention grabber, from ready to wear leisure pieces to fully athletic track and field apparel, Virgil Abloh is ready to make another fashion statement through his uncanny **Off-White™** brand, pushing the boundaries of not only his artistic abilities, but also fashion standards.

Off-White™

OFF-WHITE c/o VIRGIL ABLOH™ is a fashion label rooted in current culture at a taste-level particular to now. With a specific opinion and not necessarily same with vision seasonal men's and women's collections are offered.

There is a product offering of the brand also in the realm of furniture and ready made goods to further reinforce an approach to lifestyle.

All products are based in a concept that adapts from season to season. Manufacturing is based in Milan with a core value of the brand to be made from the best available and particular opinion regarding fabric, fit and fabrication.

The result is to be a young brand embracing the now in a sophisticated manner.

###

“VOGUE”

Accepting we had missed the Off-White show (due to a geographically impossible Paris schedule), we drove by Virgil Abloh's venue to see if could at least catch the finale. Outside, two men were seemingly body-locked in a wrestling hold, one in a suit and one in head-to-toe Off-White, a full street fight in process. “The taxi made him miss the show, so he wouldn't pay,” our driver said after some investigation. And there, we were reminded of the passion Abloh now elicits in the hearts of his followers, and the unbearable devastation and disappointment caused by missing one of his shows, each of which could be that paradigm-changing moment his debut collection for Louis Vuitton represented in June.

It's exhilarating to have a character like Abloh in this industry, who means that much to people, and we too were gutted to miss his Off-White show. Thank god for live streams, then, the Abloh version of which obviously comes impeccably produced, with gorgeous camera work and no signal cuts. The way life should be. After working with Nike on the Serena Williams collaboration Queen, Abloh was in the mood for two things: sportswear and ballgowns, two contrasting games mastered by the tennis player. The fusion of these worlds manifested itself in what you might call glam-letics: a nod to the marketeer category 'athleisure' that Off-White has made a sport out of, and glamour, the base note of the parfum of haute couture, which fuels Abloh's aspirations for Parisian confection.

Now that he has to walk a new supermodel down a red carpet at least a few times a season, Off-White actually needs a line of fully-fledged eveningwear. So that's what he did: white, neon green and black gowns, tiered and trained, constructed the bona fide dressmaker way but rooted in sportswear. That idea set the tone for the rest of the collection – much of which was modelled on real-life athletes – in body-conscious, super sporty cocktail dresses and tailoring, which constantly balanced on Abloh's elevated edge between active, day and eveningwear. Nothing describes his evolution as a designer – or a creator of ideals – better than that symbiosis, reflected in sky-high fashion ambition but a constant recognition of his starting point as a purveyor of sports and streetwear to an adoring audience no couture dreams will ever let down.

by ANDERS CHRISTIAN MADSEN

“WWD”

By Joelle Diderich on September 27, 2018

“Dress good to look good. Look good to feel good. And feel good to run fast!”

That quote from Olympic champion Florence Griffith Joyner holds particular resonance for Virgil Abloh, who after his collaboration with Nike and Serena Williams teamed up again with the sportswear giant for his spring Off-White ready-to-wear show. This time, he turned his attention to track and field, a theme that ran through his seasonal statement, from the racing bibs sent out as invitations to the stadium-themed set and the models themselves. The designer tapped eight female star athletes to walk in his show at the Garage Amelot in Paris.

Bella Hadid and Kendall Jenner opened the show in crisp white shirts and short skirts. Kaia Gerber was close behind, in a shirtdress with a tank top pieced together from Nike socks. With their metronomic clips, the models easily outpaced the athletes, overtaking some as they wound their way around the track, while a jumbotron flashed their names and countries of origin.

Some of the sports stars blended in effortlessly. Vashti Cunningham, a U.S. high jumper and the daughter of former NFL quarterback Randall Cunningham, flexed her 6-foot, 1-inch frame in a tiered cream tent dress, paired with white patchwork leggings and purple sneakers.

For Abloh, it harked back to his childhood heroes — athletes that looked as good off-duty as when they were competing. “Michael Jordan and Deion Sanders were my idols,” he told WWD in an interview the day before the show. “I was a fashion kid. Michael Jordan wearing a gold necklace his rookie year — and that’s, like, superillegal by any term — made me idolize him for his skill set, but he also had style and grace.”

That combination of style and strength felt relevant to Abloh in the #MeToo era, as a metaphor not only for the women’s rights movement, but also the growing relevance of sportswear. “Fashion shows are six months apart. Usually in that space, there’s something happening in the world, and that’s what I respond to,” he said.

“Off-White makes ‘streetwear’ in quotes, not streetwear without quotes, and that means it’s my own definition of what people are wearing in everyday life. My goal is to make

that look similar to what I'm presenting on the runway, so we're having a dialogue with naturally occurring fashion," he added.

The designer was holding court in a nondescript building in the 11th arrondissement of Paris, where a hive of staffers were making last-minute adjustments to the collection, which blended elements of performance wear with feminine staples like ballgowns and high heels. Four of the athletes signed to Nike were getting fitted for their runway turn: Caterine Ibargüen, a Colombian athlete competing in high

jump, long jump and triple jump; Cunningham; British sprinter Dina Asher-Smith, and British heptathlete Katarina Johnson-Thompson.

Abloh said casting the sports stars came naturally. "Because I'm new to fashion, you know, I didn't come through traditional means or a traditional system, it's actually less natural for me to think, hey, let me just get professional models to put on this idea, than get real people who embody that. It's an authenticity thing," he explained. "When I walk down the street and I see people with a cool style, a jacket or a bag, I might take a photo of what they're wearing because I like the proportion or something. They're not a model," he reasoned.

Likewise, the focus on sportswear was an organic evolution of the "Queen" collection he designed for Williams to wear at the U.S. Open, including a one-shouldered tutu dress. "She obviously has a stature that's commanding and she's a champion, but what people don't realize: she's equally superfeminine, loves ballet, loves to dance," he said. "That femininity came through here."

Hence the hybrid creations, like a black stiletto spliced with a vintage running shoe, or another pair of heels with a stretchy upper inspired by the Nike Studio Wrap. "These aren't heels to run in, but there's innovation that happens in a performance brand that I, as a fashion designer, should be able to flow," he noted.

"The idea of living an active lifestyle, going to and from the gym, this term 'ath-leisure,' it's culturally relevant. I see it when I'm at Whole Foods. So I was always intrigued by it and I wanted to twist it and bend it more toward 'fashion' fashion. Workout apparel is function. Fashion is fashion," he said.

Abloh toyed with logos, plastering the word "Offf" across the front of a sleeveless black tailored pantsuit that made the most of Johnson-Thompson's perfectly toned arms. Conversely, he buried the signature Off-White cross in tone-on-tone embroidery on a white cotton openwork jumpsuit.

Flo-Jo's asymmetric running suits were the inspiration behind the red-carpet portion of the show, which included a gown made of 200 meters of ruffled organza dipped in fluorescent yellow dye worn by Adut Akech. "We had to use a forklift to hold it up, to then spray paint the bottom this gradient neon," Abloh said.

The running tops and cycling shorts, made from ribbed socks that were unpicked and woven back together, echoed Martin Margiela's deconstructed sock sweaters from the early Nineties. It's the kind of concept that resonates for Cunningham, who has a habit of chopping up her own clothes.

"I'm really into designing myself. I always buy clothes and then completely change them from what they were," said the 20-year-old. "The majority of my clothes are from Goodwill or Buffalo Exchanges, and then I will just cut something and sew something else on it, or cut something and close it together with pins."

She first heard Abloh speak at the ComplexCon conference last year and recalled bursting into tears when she learned she would be walking in his show. "It's really important to me because fashion and style is such a big part of who I am and what I put my time into, but not everybody gets to see that," she explained. "It means a lot to me to come out here and just get seen for once doing something that I really have a true passion for."

The athlete believes that looking different also helps her perform better. "I do think that if you look good, you play better," she said. "It's always a plus to stand out from anybody that's surrounding you, especially in the track-and-field world, because you can just fall into not really being noticed or people not really recognizing your event, but if you have something that grabs people's attention and their eye, then it gives your event more exposure and it gives you more exposure."

Asher Smith agreed. "The idea of looking good and feeling good does resonate with me. Obviously, the most important thing is our training, the fact that we work hard six days a week to put our best foot forward with our performances, but when you want that little bit of extra confidence, that's when that comes into play," she said.

Having worked with Nike for several years on a range of best-selling sneakers, Abloh is ready to take the collaboration to the next level. "What I want to impose on Nike is that portion to make them look like and feel like they're their best. Nike can take care of the performance part, but the part that I can add to the equation is to make them feel like they have the coolest sneakers, that they have the coolest fit. You add a revolutionary new proportion to the way that they look, and then that little competitive edge, or little bit of confidence when they have to trigger their body to act, is going to be the difference [that leads to] success," he concluded.



“THE CREATOR”

“I am all about championing this new era of designers becoming the new rock stars,” wrote [Virgil Abloh](#) on the blog [The Brilliance](#) in 2007. Fast-forward a decade and Abloh is exactly that. The American designer has risen from a Chicago kid obsessed with fashion, art, design, and culture to the artistic director of [Louis Vuitton’s](#) menswear operation.

As Abloh prepares to take the reins at one of fashion’s most iconic brands, we’re looking back on his career trajectory, from onetime Fendi intern to Kanye West collaborator to Off-White founder and collaborator nonpareil.

1980

Abloh was born on September 30 outside of Chicago. He and his sister are raised in nearby Rockford, by Ghanaian immigrant parents. Abloh attends the Boylan Catholic High School—official colors green and white—and graduates in 1998. His mother is a seamstress and teaches him the tricks of her trade.

2002

Abloh completes his undergraduate degree in civil engineering at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. (In 2015, he would return to design commemorative tees for the university.) Rumor has it that on the day of his graduation, he skips his final critique to take a meeting with Kanye West’s then-manager John Monopoly. West and Abloh begin officially working together soon after.

2006

Abloh completes his master’s degree in architecture from the Illinois Institute of Technology. During his time at IIT, a Rem Koolhaas building is completed, which Abloh says, “piqued my interest and opened my gateway into fashion.”

2009

Abloh and West become interns at Fendi in Rome. Louis Vuitton CEO Michael Burke recently told *The New York Times*, “I was really impressed with how [Abloh and West] brought a whole new vibe to the studio and were disruptive in the best way. Virgil could create a metaphor and a new vocabulary to describe something as old-school as Fendi. I have been following his career ever since.”

2009

Abloh and West, along with a crew of famous friends, make the rounds at Paris Fashion Week, turning heads in the process. They’re photographed by [Tommy Ton for Style.com](#) outside of the Comme des Garçons show in what becomes a widely circulated pic. Abloh tells *W magazine*, “We were a generation that was interested in fashion and weren’t supposed to be there. We saw this as our chance to participate and make current culture. In a lot of ways, it felt like we were bringing more excitement than the industry was.”

2010

Abloh officially assumes the role of creative director at Donda, West’s creative agency.

2011

Abloh art directs the album *Watch the Throne* by Jay-Z and West, an achievement that earns him a Grammy nomination. The album cover is designed by Riccardo Tisci, then the creative director of Givenchy, a role Abloh was rumored to be up for after Tisci’s departure in 2017.

2012

Abloh launches his first brand, Pyrex Vision, in New York. He purchased deadstock Ralph Lauren flannel shirts for \$40 each, and screen printed them with the word *Pyrex* and the number 23, an homage to his childhood hero, Michael Jordan. They sell for \$550 each.

2013

Abloh shutter's Pyrex and founds Off-White, a multi-platform creative endeavor based in Milan. Its main medium is fashion. At Off-White, he combines ideas of streetwear, luxury, art, music, and travel, defining the brand simply as, "the gray area between black and white as the color Off-White." From the get-go, hovering quotation marks become Abloh's signature.

2014

Abloh launches womenswear for Off-White and begins showing his men's and women's collections during Paris Fashion Week.

2015

Abloh's womenswear operation gains steam when Beyoncé wears a palm-print sweatshirt with the word *Nebraska* on it, an homage to Raf Simons's Fall 2002 Virginia Creepers collection, in Nicki Minaj's video for "Feeling Myself." That same year, Off-White is named a finalist for the LVMH Prize. He loses the grand prize and special prize to Marques'Almeida and Jacquemus, respectively.

2016

Abloh opens his first concept store in the Aoyama area of Tokyo. The store features a watercooler with Off-White branded cups that visitors take for free and resell on the secondary market.

Abloh debuts his Grey Area furniture collection in Milan, his first furniture venture under the Off-White brand. It features iron grid chairs, benches, and tables with leather cushions and Carrara marble tops.

2017

Even with the announcement of a collaborative exhibition with Takashi Murakami opening at Gagosian; the release of his first song; the opening of his New York store; the British Fashion Award for Urban Luxe Brand; and collaborations with Warby Parker, Jacob the Jeweler, and Jimmy Choo, the biggest news for Abloh in 2017 is The Ten, his sneaker partnership with Nike. Abloh re-creates 10 of Nike's iconic silhouettes in a work-in-progress style, each adorned with a safety tag around the laces. The limited release leaves the sneaker market hungry for more, and Abloh hosts panels and workshops with Nike and additional releases throughout the year.

2018

Abloh is named the artistic director of Louis Vuitton's menswear collections, stepping into the role vacated by his friend and mentor Kim Jones. "It is an honor for me to accept this position. I find the heritage and creative integrity of the house are key inspirations and will look to reference them both while drawing parallels to modern times," he says in a statement.

This summer, he will perform at Lollapalooza.

2019

Virgil Abloh's artworks will be the subject of an exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, and his Ikea collaboration will be released through the brand's international stores.

Off-White™

“HISTORY”

Founded by American wunderkind Virgil Abloh, since 2013, the Milan-based label has opened showrooms in 15 locations around the world and retained a star-studded line-up of customers. With a master's degree in architecture, who would have thought Abloh's sharp turn to designing premium streetwear could bring in such success? Under the garments, the multi-hyphenates unique vision has always been the key.

Before Abloh branched out with his new label, he formerly built a streetwear kingdom under the name Pyrex Vision, which many celebrities had embraced with open arms. However, as he later faced controversy regarding reusing and reselling Ralph Lauren's flannels, at an astronomical price and after slapping the moniker of his own brand on them, he scrapped the company. Despite criticism, it wasn't long until he eventually came back with his new ambition, and the history of OFF-WHITE started.

Not only does he now own a brand, but the US entrepreneur is also involved in many other ventures, including founding the RSVP Gallery in Chicago and joining the #BEEN #TRILL crew. He is a DJ and a filmmaker who directed a music video for rapper Lil Uzi Vert last year. And most of all, he is famously known as the creative director of rapper Kanye West's company DONDA. Abloh is a major icon across the streetwear and music scene.

But what the artist does with OFF-WHITE plays a slightly different role than just defining what's hip on the streets and elsewhere. To be precise, he is cultivating a sort of avant-garde and cult apparel that merges streetwear culture with premium fashion, like reaching a common ground between the two extremes. The brand name itself has an echoing take – it is defined as the grey colour zone in between black and white. The creative is experimenting with getting a classic silhouette to a fresh direction, something that caters for the young millennial generation.





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