

BUSINESS

Tisci Taps Gigi Hadid to Showcase New Burberry Monogram Collection

● “I’ve wanted to work with Gigi for such a long time, but knew I had to wait for the right moment and right project,” said Tisci.

BY SAMANTHA CONTI

LONDON — Gimme a T, and a B, and a Gigi.

Burberry has revealed its first Monogram collection, designed by chief creative officer Riccardo Tisci, and featuring Gigi Hadid, who is making her campaign debut for the brand.

The campaign and accompanying video were shot by Nick Knight, and the collection will drop in selected Burberry stores globally and online on May 22.

Hadid takes on a number of personae in the campaign, transforming into a boy, a gentleman, a girl and a lady, reflecting the brand’s aim to dress clients across different genders and generations. Tisci originally lifted the veil on the interlocking TB motif, designed with Peter Saville and named for company founder

Thomas Burberry, last summer.

In addition to Knight, Tisci tapped the stylist Katy England, art director Saville, makeup artist Isamaya Ffrench and hair stylist Gary Gill.

“I’ve wanted to work with Gigi for such a long time, but knew I had to wait for the right moment and right project,” said Tisci. “I have so much love and respect for her whole family, so it felt very familiar working on such a special first campaign.”

Tisci added that watching Hadid at work was “mesmerizing and magical. She put so much energy and passion into the project, and transformed from one character into the next with such seamless conviction. That’s what makes Gigi one of the few girls who define this decade, not only through her beauty, but also through her compassion, talent and sophisticated approach to her work. I can’t wait to work with her again.”

The new TB logo was big news when it was first released last summer, and has only appeared on some items, such as silk scarves, T-shirts and leather bags, until now.

Tisci said that when he first started at

Burberry, he clocked a lot of time in the archives, and was taken with the figure of Thomas Burberry, “not only as an inventor and innovator, but also who he was as a man, a husband and a father. When I saw an image of his initials, the design felt so special and actually very modern.”

With regard to the Monogram collection, Tisci said he wanted to “celebrate the breadth of who we speak to as a brand. Alongside some of the most talented creative icons of today and tomorrow, I am so proud of what we achieved together.”

Knight said the idea behind the shoot was to create imagery that allowed Hadid “to play out the four characters in a simple, stripped-back and honest studio environment.”

Hadid said the shoot was one of the most fun days she’s ever had, and that she was “honored and grateful” that Tisci trusted her with the project.

The Monogram collection covers ready-to-wear and accessories, with pieces that include an oversize T-shirt, silk trousers, a camera bag, socks and pumps, a hoodie, baseball cap, sneakers and a barrel bag.

Gigi Hadid in Burberry’s Monogram collection campaign.



There are also nylon car coats for men and women, sunglasses and even a non-slip yoga mat created in collaboration with Liforme.

The collection ranges in price from 50 pounds to 1,500 pounds.

BUSINESS

Will Germany’s Slowdown Impact Fashion Globally?

● The country, whose economic growth was downgraded again last week, is one of the world’s biggest markets for fashion.

BY CATHRIN SCHAEER

The most recent figures on German growth do not make for cheerful reading. The country has gone from an engine of economic growth for the whole of the European Union to a problematic market barely avoiding recession. Last week, as part of its official spring 2019 forecast for the EU, the European Commission predicted only 0.5 percent growth for Germany.

That is why the German market is so worrying, Claudio Marenzi, head of Italy’s Confindustria Moda, admitted at a press conference in Florence last week.

Marenzi’s federation represents around 67,000 Italian companies and he was there to introduce the next edition of Pitti Uomo, although he also presented Italian sector results for 2018. In Germany, there was a 0.7 percent fall, he said. Given that Germany is one of Italy’s biggest trading partners when it comes to textiles and apparel, with around 10 percent of related Italian exports going there, there is ongoing concern about that market, Marenzi said.

He is right to be concerned, François-Marie Grau, the managing director of the French Federation of Women’s Ready-to-Wear, told WWD. The French are worried, too, Grau added. “Germany is our third-largest customer in clothing products after Italy and Spain, and the fourth largest in women’s ready-to-wear.”

Of total French exports in the sector, about 9 percent go to Germany, or around 1.1 billion euros worth in 2018, Grau noted.

“So the slowdown of growth, and then probably of consumption, in Germany is not good news for French brands,” Grau said. “It depends on how German customers react, of course,” the director of the organization which acts as an advocate and adviser for several regional fashion associations,



Claudio Marenzi, head of Italy’s Confindustria Moda.

suggested. “We will see if this slowdown has an impact on our exports in the coming months. But this is usually the case.”

Over the past year or so, estimates for German growth have been adjusted more than once, with the number sliding from a somewhat rosy 2.5 percent increase, as predicted in December 2017, to 1.5 percent in mid-2018, to last week’s more worrying numbers. In 2018, Germany grew 1.5 percent, the slowest it had expanded since 2013. And all of this is in line with predictions by the likes of consultancy McKinsey, which warned the fashion industry earlier this year that global growth would plateau soon.

In the first quarter, Germany’s Federal Statistical Office noted, sales of textiles, clothing and shoes had fallen slightly (minus 0.3 percent) compared to the previous year. Another study also released last week by GfK, Germany’s largest market research institute, showed that brick-and-mortar, which makes up almost three-quarters of all of the country’s retail sales, was also underperforming compared to other European countries. Growth of

only 0.8 percent was predicted for 2019, the GfK’s research said.

Despite such disagreeable news, experts inside Germany are not quite as concerned, pointing out that, as an export-based economy, the country is having issues due to international trade tensions, including Brexit and the China-U.S. relationship. The domestic market, they said, remains strong.

“After 10 years of growth, the German economy is seeing a light fall,” Ulla Ertelt, managing director of Frankfurt-based apparel and textile sector specialist HML Modemarketing, told WWD. “But up until now, this fall has not had any significant impact on consumer behavior. And that is why I don’t share those concerns [of Marenzi and Grau].”

In fact, as Ertelt pointed out, the luxury fashion sector in Germany — much of the product comes from Italy and France — has been stable and growing for years. On the other hand, she said, the middle market has plenty of cause for concern.

Several brands approached by WWD said they did not want to comment on economic issues but it’s clear that midsector brands continue to find Germany a tough market. There’s been a rash of local insolvencies in that sector and during a press conference on quarterly results in March, British online retailer Asos described the German market as an ongoing challenge. Primark reported similar issues in Germany in January. Net sales in Germany for Swedish giant H&M fell 7 percent during the first quarter of 2019, although the company said the decline mostly had to do with a transition to online; in 2018, H&M’s total net sales in Germany fell 1 percent.

“This sector has been going backwards for several seasons now in Germany, due to a decrease in average prices,” Ertelt explained. “The increased tendency to shop online allows for better transparency on price and in times of uncertain economic development, the consumer

uses that more often [to get a better deal].”

Sebastian Boger, a partner and fashion industry analyst at the Boston Consulting Group, based in Frankfurt, agreed. “Germany is not a major market for luxury brands, so those brands will not suffer too much,” he noted. “I can’t see a big problem for the Italian fashion industry. The most affected brands in Germany are located in the midprice and value segment. Any [ongoing] slowdown would impact them much more,” he concluded.

As the EU’s Spring 2019 European Economic Forecast also pointed out, Germany still has good consumer demand, a budget surplus and a supportive labor market — in other words, a strong economic backbone exists. “The market is large and strong,” Boger continued, “and developments in Germany are in line with other countries.”

One way to overcome the German bump in the road is to look further afield, experts said. At the Florence press conference last week, Italy’s Marenzi said that the best business was being done in markets outside of Europe, like the U.S. and China.

“As advisers to French brands, we consider that there are better prospects outside the EU,” France’s Grau confirmed, before reeling off statistics for French fashion export growth in China (21 percent), South Korea and Russia (11 percent each) and the United Arab Emirates (18 percent). “But the EU markets are still very important and cannot be neglected.”

Consultants Boger and Ertelt both believe the biggest challenges in the German market currently come from online. Around 10 percent of all retail sales were online in Germany in 2018. But that is lower than the estimated global average of around 14 percent. So there is clearly room for growth in this area, as well as ongoing disruption.

“The most important thing is to focus on...fixing your operating model,” Boger advised. “Italian brands in particular could do much better with verticalization, e-commerce and digital marketing.”