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## Artsy x Gucci explores gender dynamics in the art world



Performance art collective FlucT will be performing at Artsy Projects Miami. (WWD)

Gender equality has long remained a hot-button issue. It all starts with gender dynamics, the interactions between boys and girls, and men and women. When cultural stereotypes are reinforced, the relationships become skewed, straining the balance of power. How to change things?

Anthony Spinello, a gallerist and curator, talks about what must be done in a film produced by Artsy x [Gucci](#). “And this is how to start,” he said. “We must raise our daughters differently. We must also raise our sons differently.”

The partnership between Artsy, a global platform for discovering and collecting art, and [Gucci](#), focuses on the unequal distribution of power that’s long existed in the art world. Only 30 percent of artists represented by commercial galleries are women, and women hold just 30 percent of directorships of large museums, according to the National Museum for Women in the Arts. The scope of the Artsy x [Gucci](#) partnership includes three short films that explore the paternalistic nature of the art world, airing on Artsy’s social media channels; Artsy Projects Miami during [Art Basel](#), a multiartist immersive installation at the historic Bath Club in Miami Beach, featuring works by Samara Golden, Jillian Mayer, Maria Nepomuceno and FlucT, and an invitation-only party during the art fair featuring Devonté Hynes performing on solo piano.

“The topic of gender equality has always been urgent and timely, and now it’s getting the much-

needed attention that it deserves,” said Susan Chokachi, president and chief executive officer of Gucci America. “Gucci has been promoting gender equality for many years. In 2013, we founded a campaign called Chime for Change to bring together the voices speaking out for girls and women around the world. Since then, the campaign has reached hundreds of thousands of girls and women, funding more than 420 projects in 88 countries.”

Female voices from the art world, including Marilyn Minter, Miranda July, Petra Cortright, Faith Ringgold and Joan Semmel, discuss the role of women in the male-dominated field in the films, “The Recent Past,” “Present” and “Future,” with the artists sharing stories about the impact of gender dynamics on their psyches and careers.

“Sexism and discrimination is so embedded in the fabric of our society that it’s not always apparent,” said the masked artist who goes by the name Narcissister in the third film. “The art world is just a reflection of the society around us.” Cut to a slide that reminds us of the high price women have to pay in order to be artists. “Women working across arts professions make almost \$20,000 per year less than men.”

It’s encouraging that some of the older artists in the films, who experienced the most severe gender bias, sound hopeful for the future. “The glass ceiling is still there,” Semmel said, adding, “the glass wall, there’s a door through it.”

However, Petra Collins, said, “I really don’t feel any change. I feel the change right now is tokenism.”

Artsy and Gucci launched their partnership last December during [Art Basel](#) Miami when Artsy collaborated with SoundCloud on a project. The hook-up continued this year with the launch of films and an exhibition in Miami. “All of our content development, both in digital and in real life, is led by Artsy, but we work in a highly collaborative way with Gucci,” said Nina Lawrence, Arty’s chief revenue officer, content business.

Chokachi said Gucci’s fight for equality is far-reaching through longtime work with partners such as Equality Now, which focuses on legislation reform, and UNICEF, which supports education for girls. Gucci has also fostered long-standing relationships with artists and organizations such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Film Foundation, [Frieze](#) Masters and the [Tribeca](#) Film Institute.

“The Gucci [Tribeca](#) Documentary Fund looks for film projects that explore critical issues impacting women, and highlight the extraordinary ways women are overcoming the challenges,” Chokachi said. “Of the 71 grants given since the fund’s inception in 2008, 68 percent have been awarded to female filmmakers.

“Artsy has been highlighting gender issues through its platforms, so it was natural to partner with them to bring to life the gender equality struggle in the art world through this video series,” Chokachi said. “We strongly believe that no matter what the field, every voice matters and we’ll continue to champion the work of individuals and organizations who fight with us to effect change.”

“Gucci is a company that has a genuine passion for visual culture and art, and a dedication to communicating that passion authentically,” said Lawrence. “Throughout our relationship, Gucci has empowered Artsy to create authentic and engaging content, from our powerful videos that address gender equality in the art world, to this year’s Artsy Project in Miami, which will let visitors experience thought-provoking installations by exciting young artists.”