Stella McCartney summer campaign takes psychedelic turn

By Sandra Halliday - 24 March 2022

Stella McCartney’s summer 2022 campaign is a “psychedelic trip into nature, grounded in the notion that mushrooms connect us all”.

The designer has enlisted British mycologist and Entangled Life author Merlin Sheldrake to help “tell the interwoven story of mushrooms and humanity – bridging our species’ past and providing hope for our planet’s future”.

And fronting the campaign is model, activist and long-time McCartney collaborator Natalia Vodianova, with the images shot by Mert and Marcus at the Marqueyssac gardens in the South of France and at the Espace Niemeyer in Paris.

The creative piece is soundtracked by musician and composer Cosmo Sheldrake, creating “otherworldly synthesiser music from the tones of fungi growing”.

The concept comes as the season’s collection was inspired by fungi’s “transformative and transcendental qualities” as seen in the Fantastic Fungi documentary that explores “the limitless potential of these incredible organisms: as medicine to treat conditions from cancer to depression; helping to breakdown waste and oil spills; as a natural tool in the fight against climate change and much more”.

And of course, mushrooms are also making a big impact on the fashion sector at present as textile developers and designers seek to use their properties to create new fibres, particularly vegan leathers.

McCartney has been using Frayme Mylo – crafted from vegan mycelium, the underground root system of fungi, that she debuted at the summer 2022 runway show. Created in partnership with Bolt Threads, it led to the world’s first-ever commercial luxury bag made from the material, which will be on sale later this year in limited numbers.
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For now though, we’ll see a series of activations rolling out from this week, “creating an inter-connected network of fungi stories”.

Meanwhile, British heritage fabrics house Cole & Son is reinterpreting mushroom prints from the Summer 2022 collection on a luxury wallpaper.

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