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WWD

This Sustainable Fashion Brand Merges Art With the ‘French Closet’

Sustainable fashion brand Dame and artist Kim McCarty partnered for a limited-edition capsule collection.

By Tracey Greenstein on March 12, 2020



A look from the Dame x Kim McCarty capsule collection. Ashley Randall Photography

Haunting bruise-inspired palettes of acid yellows, greens and browns don't typically evoke images of quirky and cool sustainable fashion — but that's exactly how Los Angeles-based artist Kim McCarty describes her shadowy yet ethereal watercolor imagery that appears in the latest capsule collection by Dame.

Dame is a female-founded, Made in L.A., sustainable fashion brand that designs wearable “elevated” essentials, with select vintage pieces and retro denim peppered in, all intended to coalesce together as the ultimate French closet. For its limited-edition collection with McCarty, the brand created two simple styles: a sweatshirt that comes in three colorways (gray, black and white) and an oversize white T-shirt. Each style is available with graphic images of two distinct art prints by McCarty.

For Dame, which was cofounded by Alexx Jae Monkarsh and Molly Fishkin Levin, a celebrity stylist, those elevated essentials point to minimalist staples, such as a requisite gray or black sweatsuit or enviable vintage denim. The brand said the majority of its pieces are made from deadstock fabrics it repurposes, in addition to the incorporation of sustainable labels and reusable packaging.

Monkarsh told WWD, “Working with Kim is a natural collaboration because of her aesthetic. It is an extension of our pieces by adding a color twist to our timeless sweatshirts and T-shirts.”

“At Dame, our whole collection is based on building your wardrobe sustainably. We are constantly thinking of timeless pieces that you could wear to anything and everything. We had started to discuss making a graphic T-shirt and sweatshirt and when thinking about what we wanted to put on them, we immediately thought about Kim's art.”

Monkarsh said everything at Dame has a “sustainable undertone,” adding that the inspiration behind the brand is that its shoppers can “feel strong, beautiful and powerful, also knowing that you are sustainable and making a mark on our environment. Also, because this is a limited-edition collection, we didn't make a mass amount of them, which also continues the sustainable mission of the brand.”

Monkarsh told WWD that she is a longtime fan of McCarty's work, which served as the inspiration behind the collaboration. “The whole team at Dame has been huge fans of Kim's forever. My husband and I have one of Kim's limited-edition paintings in our home. It's my favorite piece of art to stare at. Her ability to capture a deep story from women's eyes is so inspiring. We had been discussing 2020 plans and what we wanted to focus on. [We were] talking about art and how we wanted to emulate a limited art

buying experience. We immediately thought of Kim as a potential partner, and reached out.”

And when Monkarsh met with McCarty to speak about the idea, “it felt so perfect, and she was very respectful from the start,” she said. “This limited-edition collection has been a collaboration from start to finish, and Kim has been heavily involved in the process — Kim is our ultimate Dame.