

Hout: the bag with its own soundtrack

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Hout is the super new fashion brand created by **Davide Piscitelli and Andrea Melillo**, two young students from the Academy of Brera, who, in December, enthusiastically presented their first line of bags and accessories, and within a few weeks, had caught the attention of Italian and foreign fashion magazines and blogs.

Despite their different backgrounds (Davide went to an art high school, and Andrea, one that specialised in music), the two young men from Samarate had that **dash of folly** common to those who believe strongly in their own ideas, decided to begin their business at a time of serious economic crisis, and presented much more than a fashion accessory; Hout is a project that combines design, handicraft and fashion.

How did Hout come about?

The project began in the early months of 2012. It became real in September, and finally, in December, we launched the first collection of Hout bags.

What does Hout mean?

It's the Dutch word for "wood". When choosing a name for our project we wanted a word that was associated with a strong, real material, like wood, which we translated into a language chosen randomly in Google Translate. Fate chose Dutch, and it seemed just right to us. It's got a musicality that's similar to English. It's a sound that lingers on your mind and is quite common in our everyday language. Then, the word provided the inspiration for our motto, "If you want to be out, be Hout!".

What kinds of objects do you produce?

Right now, bags, backpacks and Ipad sleeves. We put together our experiences to present not only an object, but a cultural framework and movement, a small concrete ideal. We don't want to create only a commercial item, but our search starts from the design of the object and from the elegance of the materials. Our bags have inserts that are not strictly connected to the fashion world. For example, the winter collection called Undergrowth has wooden inserts handmade by a carpenter. And for the next collections, we're thinking about cement and

plastic inserts.

Their debut was on the Web, promoting their bags on their Facebook page and through the online shop. The success led to their having a “genuine” sales outlet, in Gallarate’s Quarter Shop, the trendiest shop in the town, with a street-wear fashion collection that is so popular among the very young. Hout is one of the few Italian brands, because most of the brands are from foreign designers.

How did the brand’s launch go?

We’re very happy; we’ve just started, and we’ve already received requests from Italy, and Russia and China, as well. We’re negotiating with a retailer in New York, and it is very important to enter the overseas market.

Is it difficult to be young and creative in the fashion field?

We really believe in our project. It isn’t easy, especially when you present yourself as a young designer, but we’ve seen results and that gives us the strength to go forward.

And what is the next project?

We’re working on the Spring Collection, which is going to be presented, for the first time, with one item, on 10 March, at the event organised in Corso Buenos Aires, by the students of the New Academy of Fine Arts, NABA, in Milan. The new bags will have transparent inserts. As contamination of the arts is one of our features, we’d like to associate the collection with a soundtrack, to create pieces of music that can be downloaded from the Web, that complete the project.

Your first advertising campaign goes against the market?

Our endorsement is from Pietro Tenconi, a great, 88-year-old designer, who gladly agreed to demonstrate how our products can be used by everybody. His contribution was also very important for our work; he gave us useful tips. The campaign was created by Luca Giani, who deals with everything to do with images, photos and videos.

We’re sure we’ll continue to hear a lot about Hout, a project that combines the ideals and passions of two young designers.

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