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Pithers, Ellie: *Sarah Crowner's Hot Pink Frieze Lights Up The New Art-Filled Louis Vuitton Store*

23 October 2019



Sarah Crowner's work in situ at the Louis Vuitton store. Stephane Muratet

NEWS

## Sarah Crowner's Hot Pink Frieze Lights Up The New Art-Filled Louis Vuitton Store

The Brooklyn-based artist's energising canvases are revered in New York art circles; now, she's bringing her signature zing to Louis Vuitton's renovated flagship on London's New Bond Street.

BY ELLIE PITHERS

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Sarah Crowner is sitting at a window in Paris, surveying the City of Light. "I can see all these beautiful shades of grey," she says, laughing. "But I'm thinking, where is the pink? Where is the turquoise?!"

The Brooklyn-based, California-raised artist has an Angeleno's sense of colour. It dominates her work in glorious swathes to uniquely mood-boosting effect. Curiously constructed, her vast canvases comprise individually painted planes of sailcloth fabric sewn together on industrial Juki sewing machines. Often, they are scores of feet wide: her latest work is a seven-metre-long "frieze" of hot pinks, maroons and navy blues. Located in the newly renovated Louis Vuitton store on London's New Bond Street, it is one of nine pieces of art that the architect Peter Marino commissioned for the retailer's revamp.

“I really appreciate Louis Vuitton as a brand, because, for one thing, it’s about the craft that’s involved with the objects, the clothing - the attention to detail, the stitching,” says Crowner, whose painting looms large in the silk scarves and leather goods section. It will be unveiled to the public alongside works by James Turrell, Josh Sperling and Aaron Curry, as well as vintage pieces of furniture by Enzo Mari and Pierre Paulin when the store opens on October 23. “My paintings are not made in the traditional way of painting. They are cut and sewn, so each of those parts of the painting are... 50 or 60 different cells or sections of painted canvas which are stitched together to create a unified whole. I’m thinking about volume: they’re objects because they’re created sculpturally. So, I appreciate the technical side of Louis Vuitton.”



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The work for the London store came about after a conversation with Marino in New York. Scale was a priority, according to the architect. “We found that people react to impressive volumes by wanting to spend extended periods of time in these spaces,” he emails. “So, we removed slabs and created double volume spaces for women’s shoes and women’s ready-to-wear.”



A chequerboard floor in a Damier check pattern, made of Croix Huyart French limestone and Pierre Bleue du Hainaut marble, greets customers as they enter the store. To the right, a staircase made of cerused oak guides the eye towards Josh Sperling's unnamed work and Chris Martin's Golden Age (for Harry Smith). Courtesy of Louis Vuitton

There are three double-volume spaces in the New Bond Street Maison, which are approximately 25 feet each, and a triple volume over the staircase area of almost 40 feet.

“These volumes are only achievable when you work with a Maison that is so confident in design, that it can remove square footage from the store itself to give a feeling of wow and luxury to its visitors,” says Marino.



Four Cocoons by the Campana Brothers from the Objects Nomades collection hang from the ceiling, alongside Aaron Curry's Feliz (2012). Donald Moffett's Lot 050416 (Chartreuse) hangs above a selection of Nicolas Ghesquière's womenswear. Courtesy of Louis Vuitton

Crowner's colour palette will provide further wow factor. "I'm not afraid of colour, so this wasn't a stretch," she says, before admitting that the work comprises a debut for her most shocking pink yet. "I'm using a very hot, almost fluorescent pink for the first time," she laughs, almost bashful in the face of her own audacity. "It works really well with the burgundies and maroons - the colour really excites me. When you walk into a store, it's not like walking into a quiet, white gallery. There's a lot around the artwork - bags and shoes and clothing and noise - so I really wanted something that could stand up to that, rise to the occasion."