

Words Kyla Zhao

In the 2002 French dark comedy *Huit Femmes*, the only major male character is found dead in his bedroom early on, and it is the women—eight of them, to be precise—who make up the bones of the film. Is it any wonder that a film that puts females front and centre caught the eye of Saint Laurent's creative director Anthony Vaccarello? After all, since its founding in 1961, the French maison has revolutionised female dressing by celebrating women's sexuality and empowerment through its collections.

Presiding over this motley crew of eight women is Gaby (played by Saint Laurent muse Catherine Deneuve), the matriarch of the household who boasts a head of well-coiffed blonde hair, expertly painted brows and lips, and a penchant for figure-hugging dresses and luxurious mink stoles. Her words come out in slow, clipped tones, but when Gaby speaks, everyone listens. Such is the charisma of this *femme fatale*—one Vaccarello has paid homage to by naming Saint Laurent's new monogram envelope satchel after her.

With contrasting edges and a structured envelope flap, the Gaby satchel emblematises the concept of 'power dressing'. It's big enough to carry all your daily belongings and can be easily transformed into a clutch thanks to a removable long strap. In an all-black colour palette, its daytime-to-evening versatility makes it perfect for the woman who has places to be and people to meet.

The buttery soft lambskin leather and quilted coating help soften the bag's geometric construction, while the vintage-style strap adds a unique touch to the ultra-modern silhouette. The Gaby is sleek, feminine and unapologetically so—much like the wearer it is intended for.

And if there's one thing Vaccarello knows about the Saint Laurent woman, it is that she is constantly on the move, which means she needs accessories that do not have to be coddled. Enter Seau, the newest addition to the brand's Le Monogramme line. It features a striped patchwork of alternating signature monogram canvas and vegetal leather—two contrasting materials that each epitomises Saint Laurent's savoir faire in its own way, but combine to create something even more striking than the sum of its parts.

Saint Laurent's monogram is laser-printed on the canvas stripes to produce a clear-cut pattern; its depth of detail balanced by the simplicity of the vegetal leather. But those in the know understand just how deceptive said simplicity is, for behind the smooth tanned hide rests Saint Laurent's long and proud tradition of craftsmanship, carried on by a team of the world's top leather artisans.

The rich chestnut leather, brown monogrammed canvas and bronze-toned hardware come together to create a retro appeal. Stylish as it is, what sets Seau apart from its contemporaries is its incredible functionality. This is a carry-on designed to be put to good use, without requiring any indulgent fanfare. The coated canvas is water-repellent and durable, while the leather has been treated to be light-resistant and age well with time. Its supple build and adjustable long strap also make this bucket bag a fuss-free option to tote around—the ideal accessory for the 21st-century woman who knows what she wants and isn't afraid to go after it. •

As the world strives to open up at last, these new bags from Saint Laurent's autumn 2021 collection are perfect for the woman who is ready to get out and about again.



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The Seau is an eye-catching study in contrasts, melding sleek, rich leather with canvas in a retro monogram print.



The Gaby, inspired by the Parisian *femme fatale* of the same name in the dark comedy *Huit Femmes*, offers an unapologetically feminine take on 'power dressing'.

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