

Wallpaper*

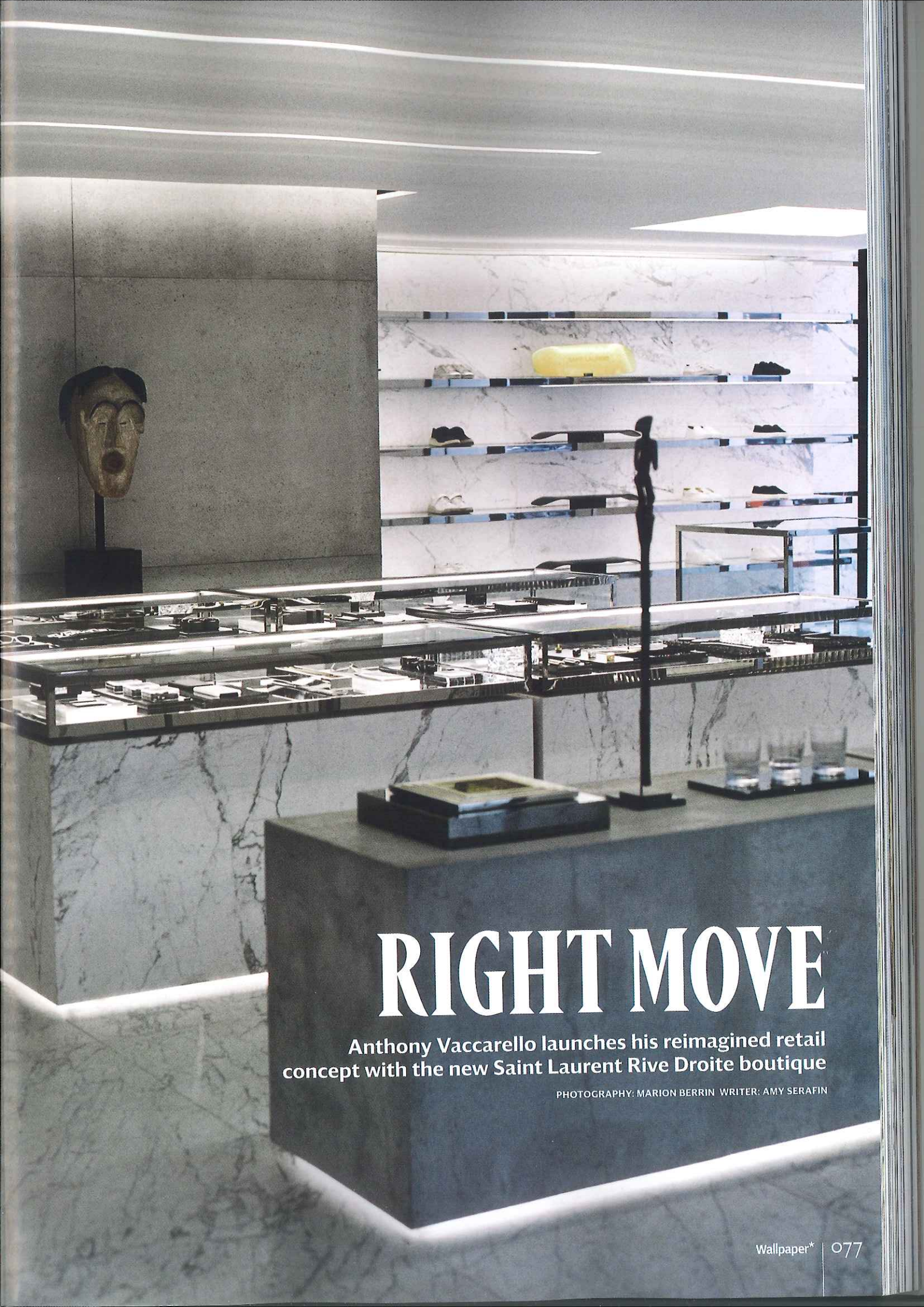
NOVEMBER 2019

*THE STUFF THAT REFINES YOU

UK £10.00
US \$16.99
AUS \$16.99
CDN \$17.99
DKK 129.95
FR €14.50
DE €14.90
ITA €14.50
JPN ¥2000
SGP \$28.50
ES €14.00
CHF 18.90
AED 85.00



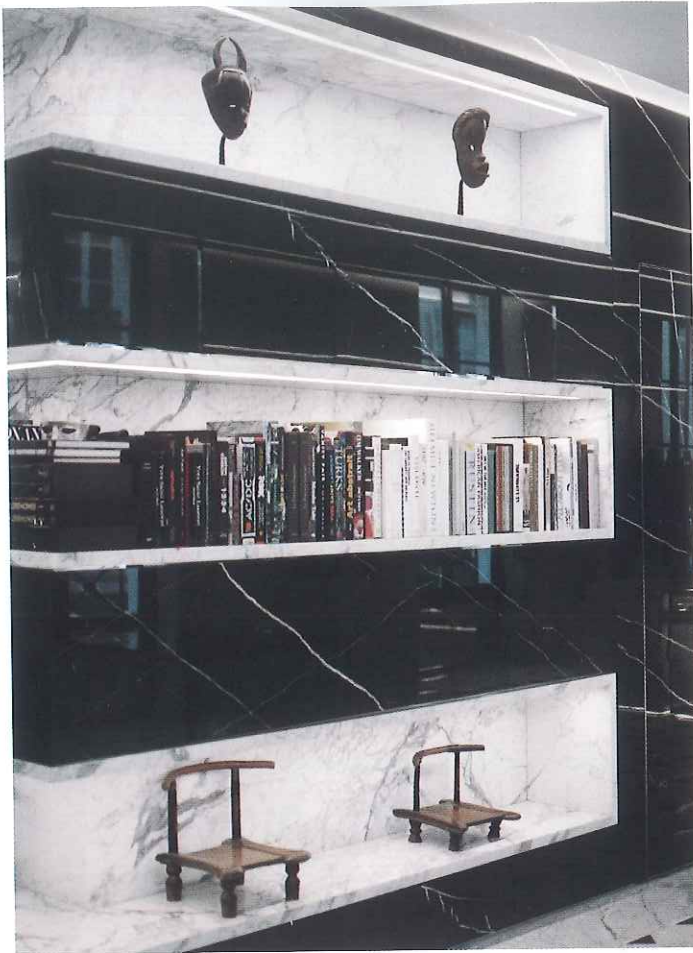
LIMITED EDITION COVER
BY DOUG AITKEN



RIGHT MOVE

Anthony Vaccarello launches his reimagined retail concept with the new Saint Laurent Rive Droite boutique

PHOTOGRAPHY: MARION BERRIN WRITER: AMY SERAFIN



Saint Laurent has always been a revolutionary brand. The original Saint Laurent Rive Gauche boutique, opened on the Left Bank in 1966, was the first ready-to-wear store in a couturier's own name. Last spring, the brand's current creative director, Anthony Vaccarello, unveiled another groundbreaking boutique on the Right Bank (with a sister store on Los Angeles' Rodeo Drive opening the same day). Naturally, this one is named Saint Laurent Rive Droite.

The new boutique sprang to life after iconic concept store Colette announced its closure after 20 years, giving Saint Laurent first dibs on its three-storey space on Rue Saint-Honoré. The relationship was close: Colette's final collaboration was with Saint Laurent, and it was the first store to carry Vaccarello's own line, back in 2009. 'I didn't want to lose the spirit of curiosity that was at Colette, a place where people went to see what was new and happening,' Vaccarello explains, seated in Saint Laurent's magnificent new Left Bank HQ. 'I wanted to show something else beyond the typical four collections per year.'

Rive Droite is a reflection of its funkier, more accessible location, and its large glass windows invite passers-by to pop in, no matter the colour of their credit cards. Its interior is airy and light-filled, fitted out in black and white marble, concrete and glass.

The hand-picked staff is welcoming, but also knowledgeable about the eclectic and ever-changing inventory, from primitive sculptures to gilded skateboards. Customers are invited to browse and touch the wares. 'I don't want it to be a museum,' Vaccarello emphasises. 'We already have younger customers, and the idea is to make products that are attractive for them. Saint Laurent was a very

youthful brand in the 1960s and 1970s. It shouldn't become something sacred and untouchable.'

The store contains numerous references to the house's legendary founder. Some are obvious, such as a book of his haute couture collections. Others are less so, like the metal stacking trays made in collaboration with the studio of Willy Rizzo, who photographed Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Cardin in 1965. But perhaps Rive Droite pays its greatest homage to Saint Laurent by embracing a certain democratisation of fashion. You can come here to buy a beaded evening jacket or a €25 corkscrew. In essence, Vaccarello is expanding the definition of what a fashion brand is all about. Clothing, shoes, bags, yes – but beyond that, anything goes. Rive Droite offers cameras, yoga mats, rare art, old comic books, condoms... It is a grab bag of Saint Laurent-produced goods, branded collaborations and a few items (art, furniture, books and vintage objects) that are not by Saint Laurent. It even sells espresso from a black marble café counter just behind the store. Each takeaway mug bears a QR code you can use to hear the weekly Saint Laurent playlist.

The store's basement level is modular, and can be quickly transformed into an event or concert space. Last May, it was used to host three public screenings of *Lux Aeterna*, a Saint Laurent-produced experimental film directed by Gaspar Noé and featuring Béatrice Dalle and Charlotte Gainsbourg. The lucky few will find their way behind a mirrored wall in this room, where a 'secret' nightclub is hidden.

Vaccarello has set no limits on what he will do with Rive Droite, guided by his personal taste and desires. When he decided run-of-the-mill barbells (he used»

ABOVE LEFT, AS WELL AS AFRICAN MASKS AND OTHER ARTEFACTS, THE BOUTIQUE SELLS RARE BOOKS

ABOVE RIGHT, PRESTIGIOUS DESIGN GALLERIES ARE SUPPLYING RIVE DROITE WITH VINTAGE FURNITURE TO SELL, INCLUDING THIS PIERRE JEANNERET SOFA FROM GALERIE PATRICK SEGUIN

OPPOSITE, FROM TOP, AN AFRICAN MASK FROM THE GALERIE LUCAS RATTON COLLECTION; ITEMS SPAN DAVID BOWIE MEMORABILIA AND AN ALREADY SOLD-OUT €2,500 NEO LEGEND RETRO ARCADE MACHINE, LOADED WITH 680 GAMES AND ADORNED WITH A ZEBRA PATTERN BY THE SAINT LAURENT TEAM; ACCESSORIES INCLUDE BRASS PENCIL CASES, METAL STRAWS AND LIMITED-EDITION BACCARAT GLASSES





'I just want to keep it in the moment – Rive Droite is really about l'air du temps'

mauve plastic ones at home) were ugly, he created his own version in white marble. Nostalgic for the boomboxes of his teen years, he had his people track down a selection of old ones (not an easy task) and upgrade them to support Bluetooth. There is talk of a pop-up food truck serving his favourite snacks. 'My choices are all very instinctive,' he says. 'I don't want to intellectualise it too much. Just keep it in the moment – Rive Droite is really about *l'air du temps*.'

Vaccarello curates everything in the store, while a dedicated team of specialists feeds him daily with ideas and options. They scour markets around the world for vintage books, magazines, vinyl records and the like, unearthing treasures such as a signed Andy Warhol book (which found a buyer on opening day). And 'I'm rather proud of all the old David Bowie albums we found,' Vaccarello says.

Rive Droite also collaborates with the best names in each field: Baccarat for crystal drinking glasses,

ABOVE, SAINT LAURENT CREATIVE DIRECTOR ANTHONY VACCARELLO, PHOTOGRAPHED BY COLLIER SCHORR

Bang & Olufsen for speakers, or Everlast, which is making boxing shorts and gloves exactly like those worn by Jean-Michel Basquiat in a Warhol photo. There are book collaborations too – for example, an limited-edition photography collection based on Juergen Teller campaigns for Saint Laurent.

A number of high-end art galleries are lending the store pieces to exhibit and sell. (Vaccarello points out that one advantage of belonging to the Kering luxury group is that its founder, François Pinault, has an extraordinary art collection that can also serve as a source.) The selection will change regularly, often mirroring the cultural calendar in Paris.

This autumn, the Galerie Lucas Ratton provided Rive Droite with a stunning collection of African sculptures. A large sculpture of a Senoufo bird peered out at Rue Saint-Honoré from the store's front window – this was the first African art object that Yves Saint Laurent acquired, from Ratton's great-uncle Charles.

Of course, Rive Droite sells clothing, too. Vaccarello personally oversees the selection for women and men, which hews closely to each season's lookbook. The stores carry the runway looks, the more 'couture' pieces (with a fabulous VIP room to match), and some exclusive items, including T-shirts printed with Saint Laurent Rive Droite Paris (or Los Angeles).

Vaccarello emphasises that this project was not born of market research or long-term strategic thinking, just his own passions and intuition. So far, so good: both stores have seen serious foot traffic and sales to match. Vaccarello expected the least expensive items to be Rive Droite's bestsellers, but was surprised to see that customers are snapping up bigger objects too.

Nonetheless, it was a risk giving up precious floor space to an experiment – especially as the classic Saint Laurent stores have been posting double-digit growth. 'Maybe that is why we were able to attempt this caprice,' Vaccarello says with a grin. After all, there is no luxury quite like doing whatever you want. ✱

213 Rue Saint-Honoré, Paris 1er, ysl.com