

MILK

DIY Gucci: A 7-Step Guide to Making Your Very Own Gucci Wardrobe

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Do you hear that? It's the sweet, whispering smell of two fully bloomed snapdragons, baking beneath the Milanese sun. Oh, dear modern-day artist, trained synesthete, do you not hear that? That floral essence flitting about? It's everywhere and yet nowhere. It's brewing in hot water. It's tickling your décolleté. It's—well, it's **Gucci**.

Ever since Alessandro Michele took over as Gucci's creative director in January 2015, the brand has held the fashion world fully rapt. And the overall aesthetic, if I may try and summarize, is like highly curated eclecticism—as if Tavi Gevinson never grew out of her bespectacled, fashion phase, but instead just got older, had sex with a Japanese rock star, and then gave birth to an army of very tired models.



Exhibit A: a shot from Gucci's pre-fall 2016 campaign.

There's something very antique, slightly medieval and Victorian, yet simultaneously modern, about his take on Gucci. It is the incompatible, made compatible; the vintage, yet not vintage (as he once described it). It is your Nana, knitting on her settee, pushing 95, yet simultaneously a virginal fawn. It is literary and yet constantly, perpetually, on its way to the library. It is clashing looks, colors, and styles, piled on top of more clashing looks, styles, and colors. It is everything—and yet nothing—all at once. And then commodified.

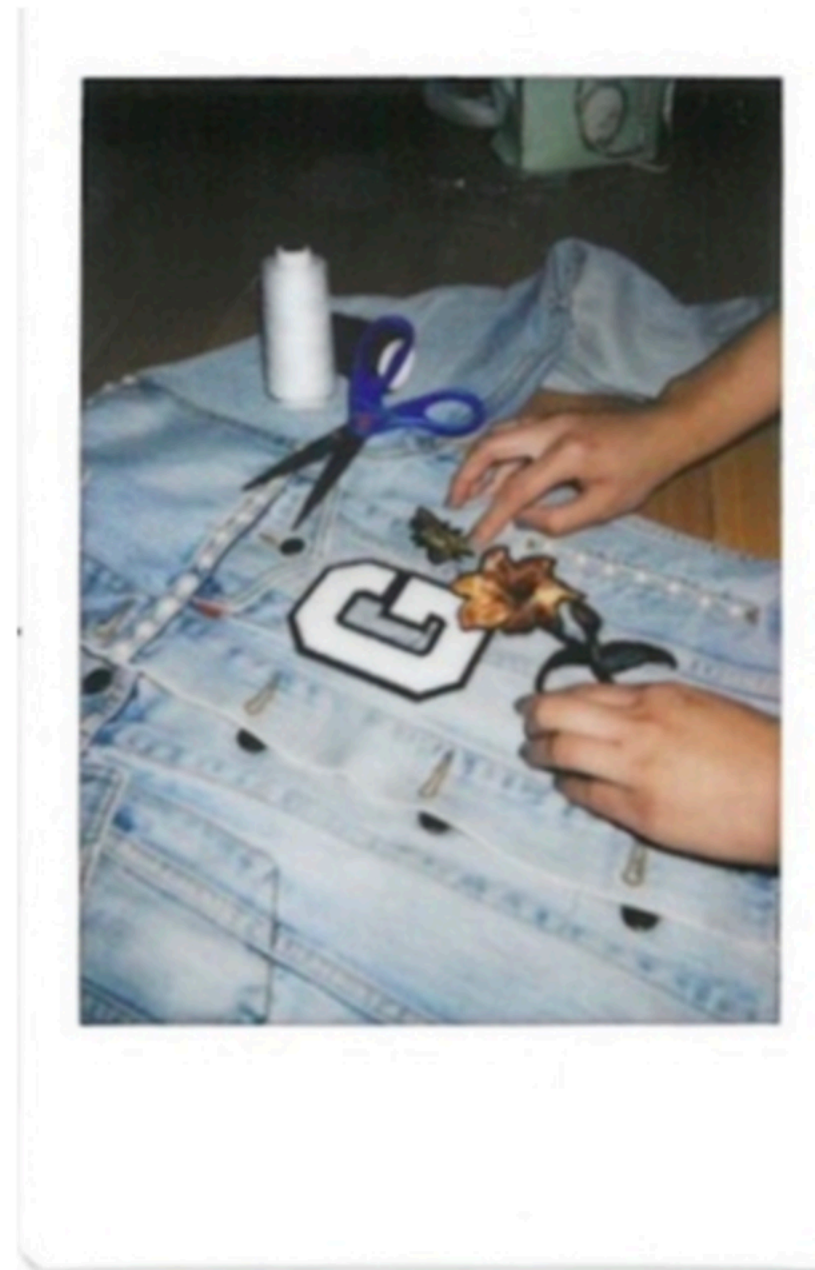
And we can't get enough.

Which brings me to the story at hand. While seemingly everywhere, Gucci is also nowhere—or rather, not in my closet. And likely not in the closets of anyone else who doesn't have access to a trust fund either. And so, I, along with my friend Julia, sought to right this unforgivable wrong by making our own Gucci clothes. Bargain Gucci, if you will. And now, I impart my findings to you.

But before we start: a sartorial cleanse. To get you in the mood, walk straight into your over-congested closet, sit underneath everything you own, and let it all fall on you. Now, dear pupil, you are ready to begin.

Step 1: Find a Friend Who Can Sew

As the saying goes, why hire a flock of Italian, highly skilled design specialists when you could easily find an equally talented Parsons graduate with too much time on her hands? My Parsons graduate is Julia, she has experience doing embroidery and design at Marchesa, and she has a much better eye than I do. Go out and find your Julia. And then tell her you will be able to pay her nothing.



Onto a denim jacket, Julia sewed a Varsity letter, a flower patch, pearl domes, and more.

Step 2: Thrift

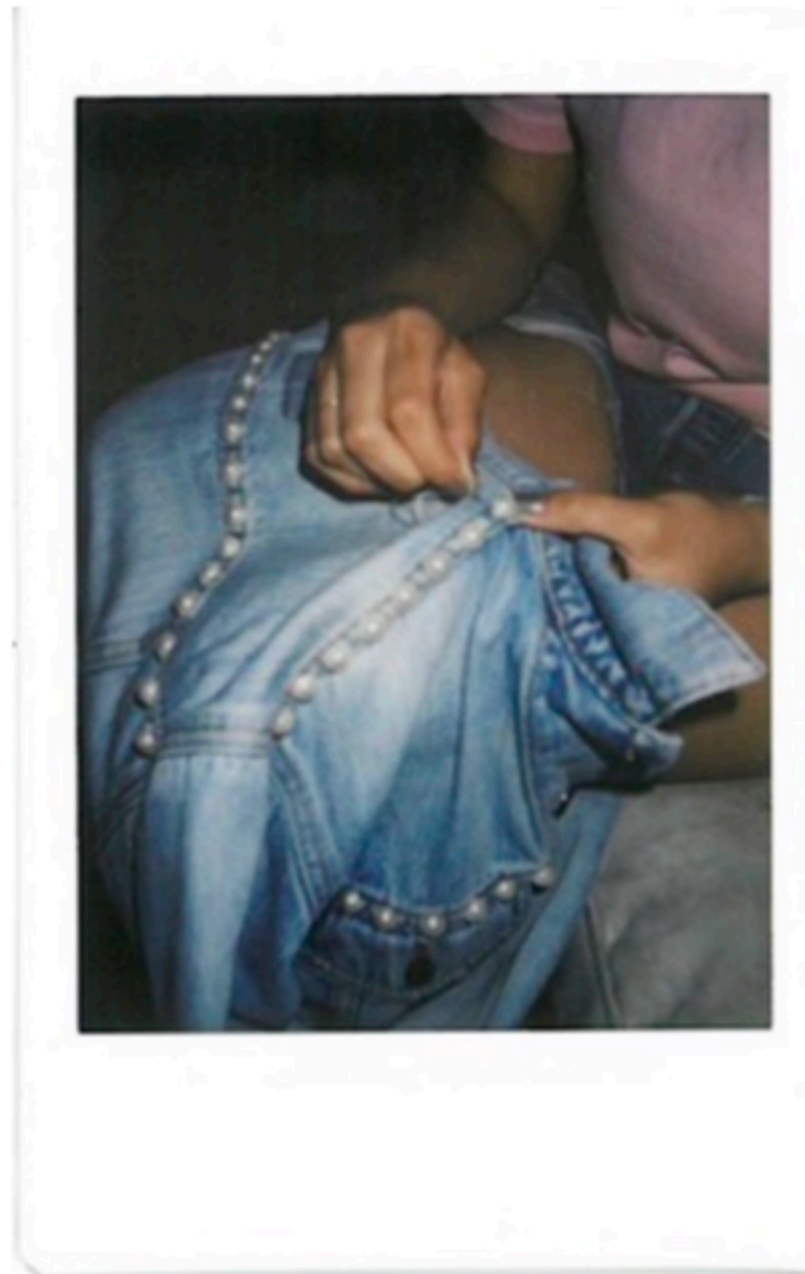
As a brand built on endless contradictions, Gucci has been a huge crusader of what I like to call “expensively thrift.” Much of their designs are, at their very core, things you can find while thrift shopping. Which is why it’s crucial that you hit up a thrift store, and try to amass as many materials as possible. We went to Beacon’s Closet, and were able to find baggy vintage Levi’s; an oversized, distressed denim jacket; big granny glasses; a red cowboy hat; a red beret; and Converse sneakers.



And here we have a Gucci striped ribbon in lieu of track pants.

Step 3: Embellish

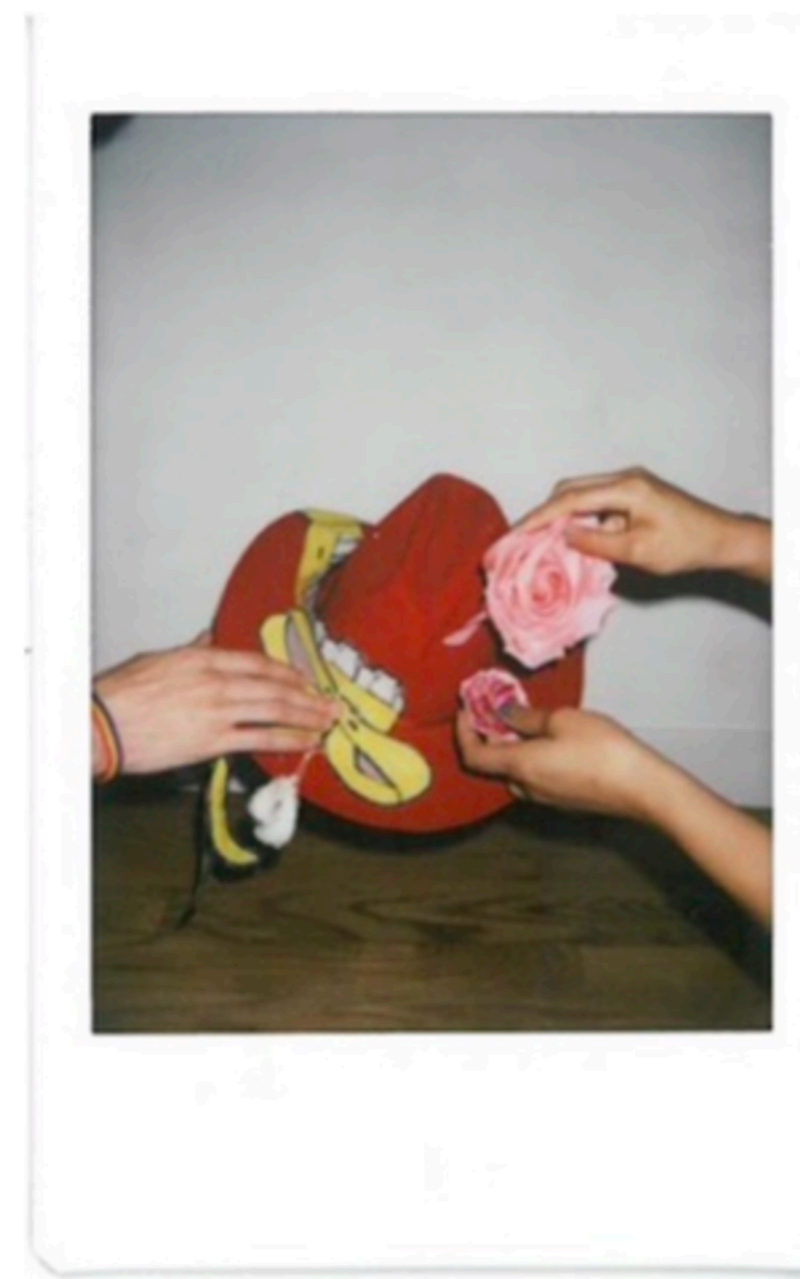
In order to avoid making clothes that look straight out of a fable, Michele coats much of his pieces in trimmings. Everything from Asiatic embroidered patches (think tigers, dragons, snakes) and butterfly, bee, and flower patches to metal spikes, sequins, and studs made of pearls and bullet casings. For this part, we turned to Etsy, where we found flower patches and Varsity letter patches, bee patches and pearl domes, all of which Julia sewed onto the denim jacket. Etsy is also where we found flower brooches made of fabric and ceramic; a rhinestone encrusted Gucci horsebit; and a red and green Gucci-looking ribbon, which we taped down the side of the Levi's. And finally, Etsy is where we found a Gucci inspired (re: copy) sequin trompe l'oeil collar appliqué in addition to a snake embroidered appliqué—which Julia sewed onto the front of a black Opening Ceremony lace dress that I bought back in 2012.



I thought I wanted to learn how to sew; then I watched Julia sew an endless number of pearl domes onto this denim jacket and decided I didn't.

Step 4: Pussy Bow That Blouse

Michele's Gucci would be nothing more than a colorful hoarder without a wide variety of pussy bow blouses to choose from. The look needs to be Victorian yet salacious. Lady Sybil, caught naked, by her au pair. For this, we used the most Victorian-looking thing I own—a white, ruffled collar, Comme des Garçons blouse, to which Julia sewed on the sequin collar and bow, and then topped it off with a ceramic flower brooch.



"Trompe l'oeil appliqués look good on a cowboy hat." - Alessandro Michele, to Jared Leto, some day soon.

Step 5: Footwear

One of the most coveted pieces to come out of Michele's Gucci collections are the shoes. And especially the furry slippers. One pair in particular happens to look like a Yorkshire Terrier that was flattened and then stepped on, and can actually be acquired rather easily. All you'll need are two wigs of your choice, spray adhesive, and two Gucci-looking horsebits. Simply loop the bits through the wigs, and then use an incredible amount of spray adhesive (sprayed directly onto feet) to attach the wigs to your feet.

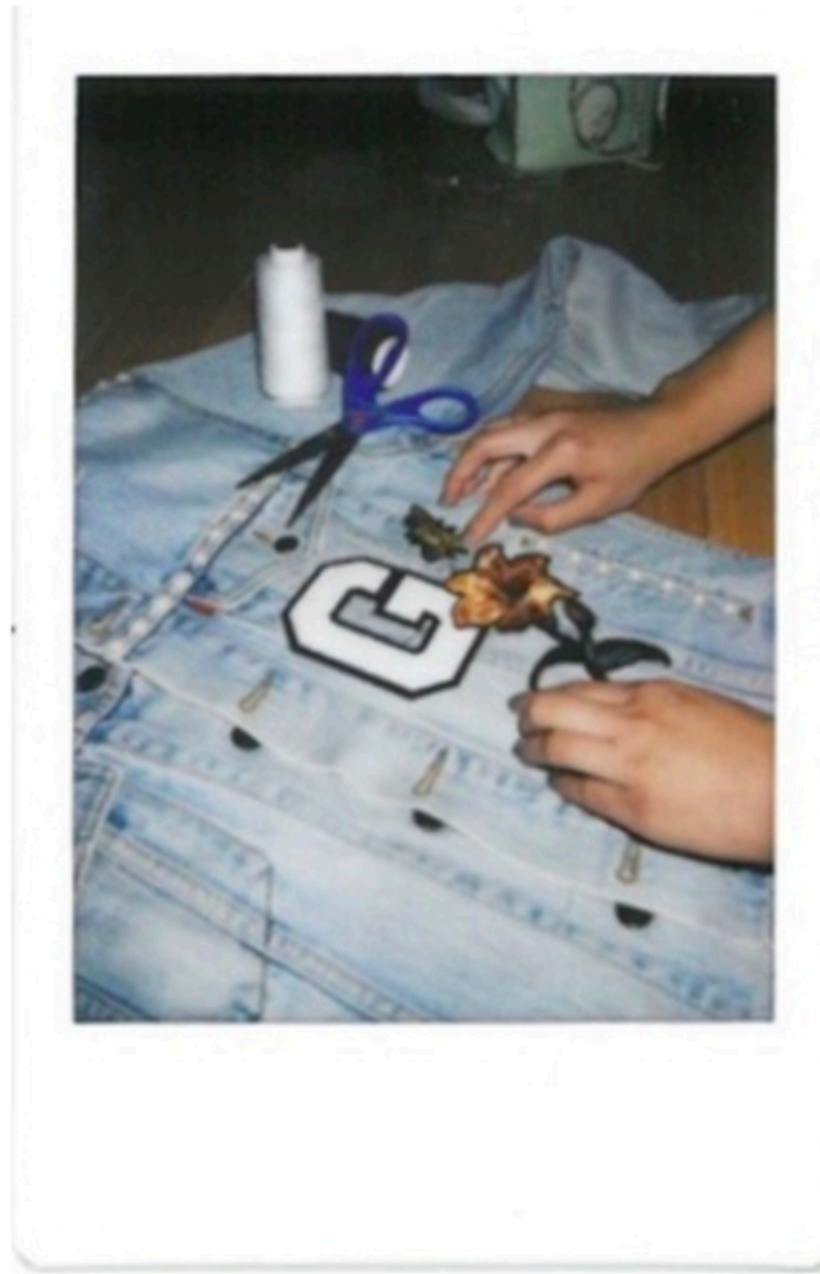


We tried out the horsebit both on top of my bare foot and on the wig. Tbh, looked good both ways. Foot, model's own.

Step 6: Go Grandma

I've said it before, and I'll say it again: grandmas are in. And the more authentic you can get with this, the better. For instance, we honored a granny square afghan blanket that my great grandmother knitted for me by taking it out into the sweltering NYC summer heat, wrapping it around my naked body, pinning it together with a fabric flower brooch, and then dragging it around Bryant Park. Reading glasses—which we happened to find while thrifting—could easily be borrowed from (re: stolen from) a grandma too. And while you're at it, don't forget jewelry.

For maximum efficiency, you'll want to call up every grandma you know and have them dump all of their almost-discarded rings into a pile. You're looking for rings that are just the right amount of ugly—the ones you haven't yet thrown out, but still aren't pretty enough that they weren't whittling away in a long-forgotten jewelry box, under a bed, next to a dusty dildo, for at least two years. Once you have all of the rings in your possession, you'll want to smack on a pair of gloves, and then pile on as many as your fingers can hold.



The jacket is still alive and wearable. Not so sure about Julia.



Step 7: Then Go to a Library

Finally, you'll want to find your way to a library. Doesn't matter which—doesn't matter how—just make it happen.

Et voilà! You are a cold librarian. You are Gucci.

All photos taken exclusively for Milk by Rebekah Seok

Styling by Julia Saeri and Rachel Hodin

Creative direction by Julia Saeri