



Thanks to Givenchy and the house's ascendant creative director Riccardo Tisci, HAUTE COUTURE is no longer the preserve of women.

Bursting with confidence and buoyed by a new freedom of expression, Riccardo Tisci has sent a clear message down his men's runways of late: resist stereotypes at all costs. Hence Givenchy's foray into men's "couture", led by an amazingly unique sweatshirt – perhaps not the most obvious garment to sell his moneyed concept, but a standout piece all the same.

Collaborating with young British artist Benjamin Shine, Givenchy's take on this staple item demands closer inspection. Shine is a talent in his own right, best known for his remarkable tulle portraits, which bring faces to life by use of an intricately laboured process of folding and sewing this delicate fabric. Taking the iconic motif of Madonna (the holy one) featured heavily in Givenchy's Spring/Summer 2013 men's collection, he assembles the portraits with this highly specialised technique – which can take up to 100 hours to complete – directly on to a sweatshirt of superlative, made-to-order quality.

Mirroring and matching the artisan brilliance of Givenchy's atelier, this is haute couture, sportswear and art in one wonderfully realised package. TEXT Paul Tierney PHOTOGRAPHY Richard Foster STYLING Nick Grossmark