

# From Shakespeare to Now: Mini Objects and their Romantic connotations

Tiny purses are the spring summer 19 trend which resurfaced directly from the Elizabethan period.

The exhibition Elizabethan Treasures: Miniatures by Hilliard & Oliver, launched in February 2019 at the National Portrait Gallery, is the first notable retrospective of miniatures for a generation. Two of the most acclaimed artists of portrait miniatures or as they were known at the time limnings, were Nicholas Hilliard and Isaac Oliver. They worked in England in the late 16th early 17th century, and represented the culture and identity of the time through their portrayal of citizens, monarchs and aristocrats. Hilliard and Oliver endeavours inspired the spring summer 19 trend of the petite purses, carried out by designers such as Jacquemus, Brandon Maxwell and Dries Van Noten. Hands hold the little bags with care, in the ultimate tender gesture.

Mini bags at the Simon Porte Jacquemus spring summer 19 ready to wear catwalk show, were not only a trend, but rather also the absolute protagonists, as they appeared in over 20 looks. Jacquemus tiny purses are a true delight in all the colours of the rainbow: yellow, green,



orange, blue and magenta, along with some black and white. The designer's take on mini bags, in addition, also came in a myriad of exuberant shapes, all geometric, which recalled the interior aesthetic. The Jacquemus golden logo and chain ornamented the little dark blue cylinder bag, while a rectangular magenta purse was embellished with a gloss finish. Trapezoid bags, on the other hand, were adorned with polka dots patterns and mega fringes with a gypsy attitude. The light as a feather bags, were the perfect accessory for the ethereal collection of Jacquemus, actually designed to be worn on cloud 9.

Brandon Maxwell, despite having less tiny bags looks, really took the trend to the extremes with extra small sizes, still big enough to display his initial. Maxwell bags might resemble microscopic chests, but don't be fooled, their twinkling finish will certainly capture the attention, especially when paired with a total pink outfit.

The mini bag, only made a cameo at the Dries Van Noten spring summer 19 show, yet one to remember. The black purse, with a red white and black rope string detail, was slightly bigger in size than the Jacquemus and Maxwell



versions. The piece, nonetheless, made a statement when paired with colourful maxi rings in mint green, blue, and yellow.

Tiny objects are made to be carried, hence they are extremely romantic. In the Jacobean period, this aspect was enhanced even more in the miniatures, which were known for their hidden love messages. The artifices were inspired by the Italian device called Impresa, which used to combine an image with a motto to express a meaning personal to its owner. Nicholas Hilliard's unknown young man among a background of flames is an example of this, as it is crawling with symbolism; not only are the flames in the background a sign of burning passion, but the necklace which he holds and wears also contain a hidden significance for his lover.

Mini objects through the centuries, therefore, maintained their aura of mystery. In 2019, through the tiny purse trend, we still consider them as something to treasure, something that is dear to us and for this reason, they are the perfect means to transmit our most precious thoughts. Small bags might thus not be able to contain all our possession, but maybe they are not meant to, as they were conceived only to contain our most cherished ones. Who knows... maybe this fashion trend will also encourage us to abandon the smart-phones, at least temporarily, for more intriguing hand written notes.



Jacquemus Spring Summer 19



Jacquemus Spring Summer 19



Brandon Maxwell Spring Summer 19



Dries Van Noten Spring Summer 19