

## **BENETTON DEBUTS THE VARSITY JACKET, DESIGNED BY GHALI**

*The American college-style jacket - to be launched on 24 June in a limited edition - features symbols that recall the artist's life story.*

As part of the launch of the limited-edition apparel collection created by Italian musician Ghali, United Colors of Benetton previews an embroidered varsity jacket decorated with patches symbolizing the artist's world. The jacket – from the United Colors of Ghali capsule – comes with contrasting colors that blend American college style with references to streetwear and Ghali's origins.

First worn in 1865 by the Harvard baseball team, throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century the varsity jacket was a symbol of prestige, upon which American college and high school students stitched letter patches testifying to their sporting or academic prowess. It crossed into the mainstream when Michael Jackson famously wore one for his *Thriller* music video, and has more recently been adopted by hip-hop culture, which has reinterpreted it with a street vibe.

Ghali's G Varsity Jacket is irreverent, courageous and witty. From the wording "Welcome to the Grand Boulevard" embroidered on the front, to the "Boulevard Story" banner on the back, each decoration on the jacket recalls an element of his biography, which the artist has promised to reveal to his fans via social media.

Also on the back are the character Mister G, the words Sto Records and four platinum discs embroidered in lurex thread, while the sleeves feature patches with the number 22 and the letter G. Positioned over the heart is a logo that unites the iconic Benetton knit stitch, the G for Ghali and the artist's name written in Arabic.

The G Varsity Jacket puts a clear imprint on the United Colors of Ghali capsule collection, designed by Ghali for United Colors of Benetton and inspired by the values of integration and multiculturalism. As he has already done with his music, Ghali's vision blends two languages and two cultures - Arabic and Italian - in a unique mash-up, which renders them accessible and connected.

UNITED COLORS  
OF BENETTON.

The G Varsity Jacket will be worn by Ghali for the launch of his new music video single, scheduled for June 22; from 24 June the jacket will be available online in a limited edition of only twenty-two pieces, each signed by Ghali himself.

The capsule, which also includes t-shirts, joggers and sweatshirts - with and without hoods and accessories - will be on sale online and in selected United Colors of Benetton stores from September.

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