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November 21, 2013

# Mona Kim Unveils Uniqlo's Holiday Windows

By ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

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**IT'S A WRAP:** After months of managing three production teams on three different continents, Mona Kim, a visual artist and multidiscipline design consultant, unveiled Uniqlo's LED-heavy holiday store windows this past weekend. Her installations are powered up and synchronized to music from ex-Stereophonic drummer Javier Weyler in New York, London and Paris. Through the holidays, the brand's "Unwrap the Warmth" digital content will be played on 100 LED monitors in the Fifth Avenue flagship, as well as in the store's glass elevators and oversized West 53rd

Street windows.




The video was made with stop motion photography, essentially still shots that make a physically manipulated object appear to move on its own. The Uniqlo spot features fastmoving frames of such individual items as a packable down jacket or cable sweater folded like origami. "It's almost like an army of dancing sweaters," Kim said of the end result. (Video and images from the installation will be used for digital billboards, online, taxi cabs, print ads, in-store and movie theater promos.)

All of the digital content is controlled from the chain's Japanese headquarters as opposed to the individual stores. Founder Tadashi Yanai was intent on unifying the holiday campaign globally, and the aim was to zero in on the product. While that might not be an artist's dream, Kim said, "It's all about folding and unfolding, wrapping and unwrapping. Originally, I wanted to do something very Dada, almost like Seventies conceptual art. But the question became, 'How do you balance the commercial interest and the artistic one?'"

For Kim, who helped develop experiential media content for the Museum of Tomorrow, which will bow in Rio in 2015, that question was one to ponder. Working with the Japanese chain, Kim said she loves to play with the idea of "kawaii and kowaii," Japanese terms for cute and scary. As for her creative response to what she described as a welcomed challenge, Kim said, "That was almost like having 5,000 dancing cheerleaders. That was kind of my little trick. 'OK Uniqlo, you want to see product? You'll get it. There will be a small army on dancing sweaters.'"



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