Is Hypebeast streetwear still hype?

By Jay'Mi Vazquez
Managing Editor

Over the past decade, streetwear brands like Supreme, VLONE and A Bathing Ape, commonly known as BAPE, have reigned supreme as the epitome of cool, high-demand fashion. However, in recent years, these brands have begun to show signs of falling off.

Once heralded as symbols of exclusivity, creativity and cultural relevance, they have increasingly become victims of their own success and overexposure.

While the rise of streetwear was initially driven by authenticity, limited releases and a sense of belonging to a select subculture, the very factors that made these brands special are now contributing to their decline.

One of the biggest reasons these brands are falling off is the commodification of their identity.

Supreme, for instance, became a global sensation partly because it was seen as an underground, rebellious brand that catered to skaters, artists and subcultural movements.

Its limited drops, which generated frenzied lines and online raffles, were a large part of what made it so desirable.

However, as Supreme expanded into mass retail, collaborating with corporate giants like Louis Vuitton and Nike, it began to lose the very essence that made it unique.

The brand's logo, once a mark of exclusivity, became ubiquitous. Seeing Supreme stickers on everything from backpacks to skateboards to McDonald's packaging made the brand feel less like a coveted treasure and more like a mainstream commodity.

The magic of Supreme lay in its rarity, and once that was diluted, its appeal waned.

VLONE, another brand that skyrocketed in popularity in the mid-2010s, has also experienced a significant decline in relevance.

The brand was closely associated with A$AP Bari and the A$AP Mob, gaining a cult following thanks to its association with influential figures in hip-hop and street culture.

But much like Supreme, VLONE became a victim of its own hype.

The demand for the brand was partially built on its limited releases and tight connections to underground hip-hop culture.

However, the excessive collaborations and retail drops over time stripped VLONE of its mystique.

The brand's aesthetic, which initially felt fresh and daring, started to feel repetitive and derivative.

The overexposure caused by collaborations with every major artist and fashion figure eventually left the brand feeling like a cheap novelty rather than an exclusive cultural symbol.

BAPE is another example of a streetwear brand that has struggled to maintain its cultural cachet.

In the late 2000s, BAPE's camo patterns and ape logos were synonymous with streetwear cool. Collaborations with high-fashion brands and iconic figures like Kanye West elevated its status as well.

However, BAPE's wide-ranging collaborations — spanning from Pepsi to NBA jerseys — made the brand more accessible and less desirable.

The very collaborations that were meant to keep the brand relevant in a changing market also watered down its once-exclusive image.

Instead of maintaining its status as an aspirational brand for those in the know, BAPE became increasingly mass-market and detached from the subcultures that originally built it.

In recent years, the brand's offerings have felt stale, and its former edge has been blunted by a market saturated with its signature camo print.

The overarching issue with Supreme, VLONE and BAPE is that they all failed to evolve beyond their original formulas.

Streetwear is a fast-moving, trend-driven industry, and what's hot one year can quickly become irrelevant the next.

These brands did not necessarily age well because they did not reinvent themselves; instead, they leaned heavily on their past success, relying on the same designs and strategies that once made them great.

By flooding the market with too many releases, too many collaborations and too many products, they reduced the scarcity and exclusivity that made them special.

In addition, the new generation of consumers is savvy and more attuned to trends and brands that are perceived as authentic or on the cutting edge.

Labels like Fear of God, Off-White and A-COLD-WALL have capitalized on the desire for both exclusivity and social commentary, offering more innovative designs and making a stronger cultural impact.

These newer players have resonated with a youthful audience that values individuality and creativity over the brand name.

In the fast-paced world of streetwear, brands must continue to evolve, adapt and challenge conventions to maintain their relevance.

Unfortunately for these once-dominant brands, their reliance on the very principles that made them popular has led to their stagnation.

They may have been revolutionary in their time, but without innovation, their time at the top is no longer.



PHOTO | INSTAGRAM

Lines outside of the Supreme store in New York City in 2016.



A$AP Mob during the rollout for VLONE in 2016.

Cowboys need to start focusing

By Solé Scott
Editor-In-Chief

When Jerry Jones purchased the Dallas Cowboys from Harvey Roberts "Bum" Bright in 1989 for $140 million, I do not think he could have imagined the 90s glory days drying up for almost 30 years.

Now, it seems that the only lucrative money-maker for the Cowboys is their iconic cheerleaders.

Since 1972, America's Sweethearts have been a staple in American football. Arguably, they are the reason why the Dallas Cowboys are relevant nowadays.

Their classic white boots, tiny, white-belted shorts, blue tied shirt that falls right below the breasts, blue-and-white mid riff jacket and pom-poms are the real money makers for Dallas Cowboys.

The male gaze is keeping the franchise afloat, which should not be the case. The cheerleaders should be Robin while the football players are Batman.

Do not get me wrong, the Dallas Cowboys are the richest NFL team due to Jerry Jones and his resilient rampage of rebranding, yet the team does not see the same success in season.

However, I cannot help but feel sorry for these women because they get paid $75,000 yearly even though they are the main attraction.

On top of that, their merchandise has been selling like hot cakes for decades. They even had a show called "The Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders: Making the Team" that premiered from 2006-2021.

In the summer of 2024, Netflix released a docuseries on the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders: "America's Sweethearts: Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders." The series followed the 2023-24 season team.

At this point, the ladies should be pocketing million-dollar contracts instead of the men. Of course, that will not happen because of Charlotte Jones.

Charlotte Jones is the executive vice president and chief brand officer. She is no better than her father, exploiting these young women every season.

Jones is the classy female version of Hugh Hefner in my eyes, as she is at least more involved with the cheerleaders.

We as a society and the media have only been interested in Dallas Cowboys cheerleaders for the past two decades, as the football team vanished nearly into obscurity.

I may be overexaggerating, but I honestly feel this way. I still cannot fathom the steep decline that happened with America's Team.

This franchise is in the hole, and Jerry Jones is to blame for it.

It does not help that he is the owner, president and general manager. This may have worked last century, but now Jerry needs to relinquish the president and general manager titles to other people who are fit to do so.

The formula was perfect after Jones bought the team, winning three Superbowls in 1993, 94 and 96, yet the fire that sparked is puttering out.

The team needs another Michael Irvin, Troy Aikman and Emmitt Smith to bring them back to the glory days.

Look at what happened to Tony Romo in the 2000s. He set high expectations for himself without the results to back them up.

Dak Prescott is a phenomenal quarterback that needs more players on his team to lock in.

This statement held true when he was caught on TV trashing the team while he stood on the side lines facing the Atlanta Falcons.

"We f*****g suck," Prescott said.

Unfortunately, he was not lying because the team lost to the Falcons 27-21. Prescott, who signed a $240 million contract in September, has every right to express his disdain for the team.

This slip-up may have cost him, as he was out the majority of the game due to a hamstring injury that will sit him out for weeks or more.

They still have the glitzy stadium, yet the team's performance often felt like a mismatch for the grand spectacle surrounding them. The defense often folded under pressure, the offense stalled when it mattered most, and the roster, while filled with talent, seemed unable to gel.

"I really regret this for all of our Dallas Cowboy fans," Jones said after the third straight loss. "That room is full of guys that can get it done. I believe in 'em."

Maybe if Jones were not so hell-bent on being front and center of the team, he would produce better seasons.

We will see if they make a positive turn around this season, but I would not hold my breath, and neither should you.

The massive media contracts that once defined the Cowboys' are now declining, and the absence of real success when it mattered is the reason.

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Advisers: Cindy Simoneau, Frank Harris III

Contact information:
Email: scsu.southernct.news@gmail.com
Newsroom Phone: 203-392-6928
Fax: 203-392-6927

Mailing Address:
Southern Connecticut State University
Adanti Student Center Room 222
501 Crescent Street
New Haven, CT 06515

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