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## Stars are the new stripes: why fashion is turning to the spiky side

On Snapchat, a large gold one means popularity (someone has replayed your snap in the past 24 hours), while a cluster<sup>1</sup> stands for friendship (you are in a group chat). A marble and brass<sup>2</sup> one on Hollywood Boulevard stands for celebrity. A red one is communism, but on the US flag a white one stands for one of the 50 states. Stars mean many things, and there have never been more of them to look at.

Star-and-moon printed dresses by Rixo, the London brand founded by Henrietta Rix and Orlagh McCloskey, are this party season's most-wanted on Net-a-Porter. Earlier this year, Dior's fairytale star-motif "l'étoile" sweater, teamed with a star-print tulle skirt, was one of the most high-profile images of the spring catwalk season.

Stars exploded on the high street in September with the Marks & Spencer Constellation dress, which sold out almost instantly; when it was restocked at the end of October, it sold at a rate of one every 90 seconds. Right now, the search platform Lyst reports searches for "star jewellery" have increased by 39%. Topshop has no fewer than 50 star-print pieces right now, from a one-shoulder body and a glitter slip dress to a star-studded denim skirt.

Star-themed pieces have always accounted for about 5% of sales at jewelers Astley Clarke, but that figure is rising and the symbol has been given a more scientific slant<sup>3</sup> with the arrival of creative director Dominic Jones, who explained: "When I was spending time getting to know the brand, there was a recurring theme of astrology and space. My reaction was to create a collection that had a more scientific point of view, looking to astronomy and our solar system."

In the New York fashion galaxy, stars have a more political charge. They can sometimes be a cheery, all-American thumbs-up of a motif – see the colourful star-embroidered ankle boots on Tommy Hilfiger's catwalk back in the innocent days of spring 2015 – but when a brand as iconically American as Calvin Klein opens one fashion show with David Bowie's This Is Not America and spatters its second catwalk with a blood-stain print, in a year when the country is fractured as never before, the star begins to feel controversial.

Jess Cartner-Morley (370 mots)

<sup>1</sup> amas

<sup>2</sup> laiton

<sup>3</sup> tendance