

JORDAN BRAND

AIR JORDAN XXX



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**MICHAEL  
JORDAN  
WAS A  
GALAXY  
ALL TO  
HIMSELF.**

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AIR JORDAN XXX

HE CREATED A NEW  
UNIVERSE FOR THE WAY HE  
PLAYED THE GAME.

THIS JORDAN UNIVERSE  
KEEPES EXPANDING.

IT GROWS WITH LIKE-MINDED  
INDIVIDUALS WHO DEMAND  
SPACE FOR THEMSELVES.

DESIGNED WITH THESE  
INDIVIDUALS IN MIND, THE  
AIR JORDAN XXX IS THE NEW  
INSTRUMENT OF FLIGHT.





THE AIR JORDAN XXX CREATION STORY - BEAVERTON, OREGON - 2015

# AIR JORDAN XXX: THE CREATION

PHOTOGRAPHY  
CHRIS HORNBECKER

TO DISSECT  
THE JOURNEY  
IS TO MISS  
THE FOREST  
FOR THE TREES  
TINKER HATFIELD

Exactly when the Air Jordan XXX design journey began is up for debate. Arguments could be made for February 17, 1963, Michael Jordan's birthday — or October 24, 1984, the day his Airness signed with Nike. There's also April 1, 1985, when his first signature shoe hit market and February 6, 1988, the date he soared solo in Chicago as he debuted the Air Jordan III. There's a litany of moments — game-winning shots, personal triumphs and titles — that form the Jordan legacy. But to dissect the journey is to miss the forest for the trees. The Air Jordan XXX is a unique synthesis of Jordan's evolution as a player and a design collaborator.

Each of the shoe's elements results from a key performance insight or design inspiration fundamental to the player and Jordan Brand's evolutions. The start of the design process tied to a significant, if lesser-known date: a bitterly cold weekend in February 2015, when — during a pre-birthday party dinner — Jordan asked long-time design collaborator Tinker Hatfield to spearhead the design of the anniversary-marking shoe. "The next morning I drew a shoe," Hatfield recalls, "because I knew I was in deep trouble. We had no time. Then I realized it wasn't good enough to sketch a shoe. I asked for that particular photo of Michael in the slam dunk contest and then I drew."

The photo in question, which featured MJ in the open lane, rising to the hoop, ball cocked behind his right ear and legs tucked under his body, activated Hatfield's memories of 1988. It spurred the designer to add his own illustrations to the familiar image. The resulting artwork, which recapped Jordan's history in unconventional ways, in turn inspired the shoe.

An "XXX", signifying 30, transformed into a basketball net. Stars symbolized the athlete's otherworldly talents, and planets orbiting the Jordan universe took on surfaces — elephant print or carbon fiber — related to innovations initiated by past Jordan models. Elaborating his drawing, with help of fellow designer Mark Smith, Hatfield broadened the Jordan narrative and formed the story of the Air Jordan XXX, one that references a storied yet timeless lineage with an eye towards the future.

THE APPROACH, HATFIELD NOTES, CREATED A "NICE SORT OF CIRCLE. IT'S ALL VERY INTERNAL, RATHER THAN THE EXTERNAL STORY OF BEING INFLUENCED BY A CAR OR ARCHITECTURE OR MUSIC. THOSE HAVE BEEN GOOD TOOLS, BUT THIS ONE WAS DIFFERENT. IT WAS JUST IN MY HEAD, SO TO SPEAK."

The results of this novel approach are represented by five of the Air Jordan XXX's key components:

## I. HEIGHT

"I remember thinking about how silhouettes are important in the world of basketball, not just for performance — whether it's a mid cut or high or low or something in-between — but as a hallmark of that year," explains Hatfield, recalling how changing the top line of a shoe from one Jordan model to another became a standard brand practice.

The asymmetrical topline of the Air Jordan XXX, reminiscent of the XII, is formed by a first-of-its-kind knit collar. It has an immediate Jordan feel, but is softer and slimmer than prior models — and reflects the values inherent to the material. "We kept marveling at how we were able to keep the dimensions down and make it look slick," says Hatfield. He also recalls that Jordan's singular demand was to "make it look fast," a request augmented by the "XXX" graphic that wraps the heel and extends through the forefoot.

## II. TOE

Another trademark of Jordan silhouettes is a smooth toe piece. "Michael has always been very infatuated with the toe-down look of a shoe," notes Hatfield. A prime example can be seen on the XI, where the patent extends up the vamp so gracefully that its protective properties appear almost as an afterthought.

That same seamless integration of form and function is found on the Air Jordan XXX, which features a new printing technique fashioned by Mark Smith: a dotted process that's durable and breathable, while still satisfying Jordan's preferences.



TINKER HATFIELD EXPLAINING THE CREATIVE PROCESS.

### III. TRACTION

Less apparent than the collar and toe, but nonetheless important, is the traction treatment. The FlightSpeed architecture of the Air Jordan XX9, Hatfield explains, is "probably the best performing Jordan chassis we'd ever done."

Still, Hatfield and Smith didn't just serve up a new herringbone pattern on the Air Jordan XXX. Instead, they drew a new traction system inspired by the Jordan quote:



THE "EXCELLENCE" QUOTE OUTSOLE PATTERN.  
"Excellence is never second place," which has been rendered in 3D to serve the needs of pinnacle athletes, like Russell Westbrook.

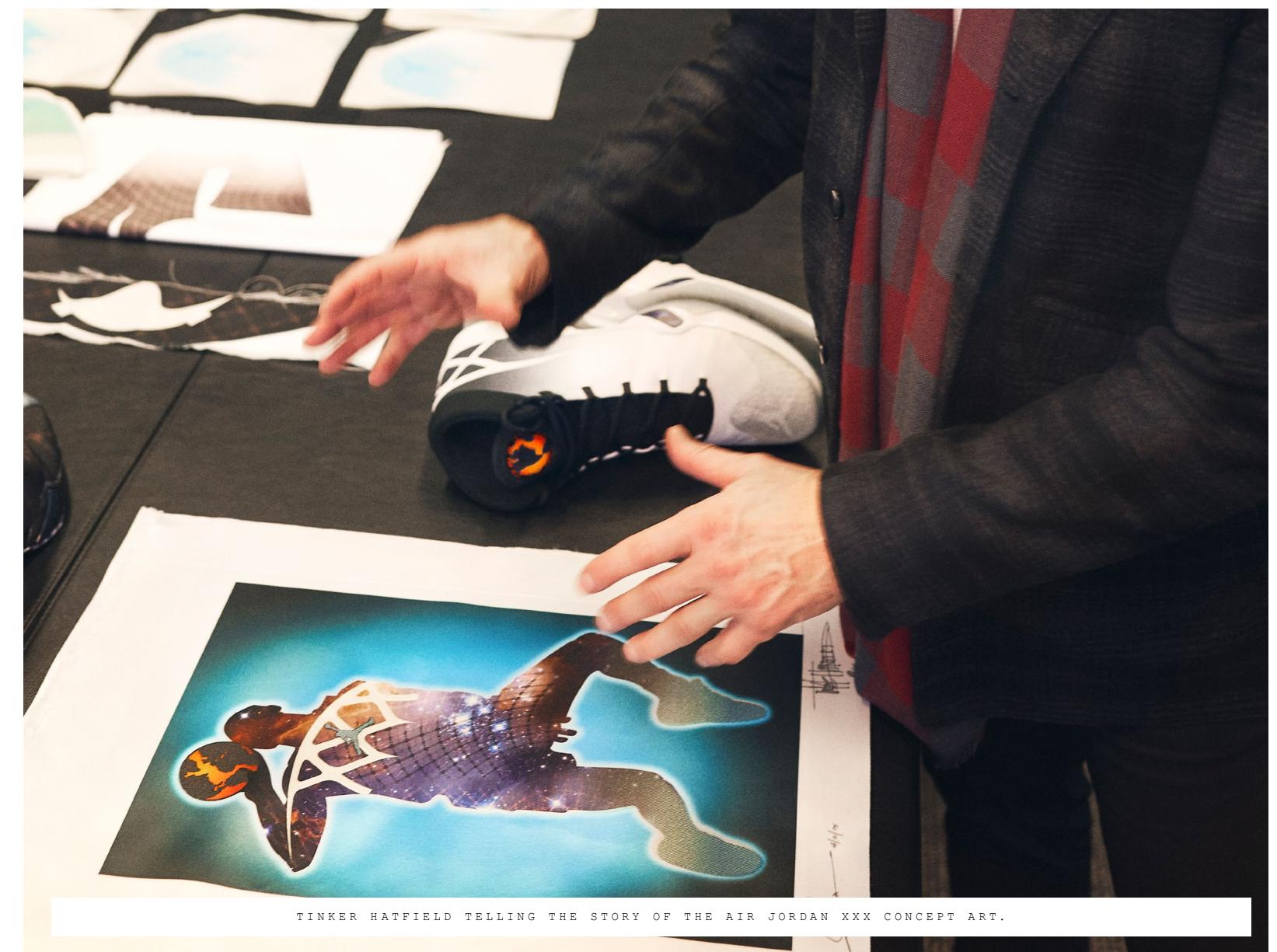
### IV. MATERIAL

Since the brand's inception, material interplay has also been critical to the success of the Jordan silhouettes. Likewise, a proprietary mix defines the upper composition of the XXX, which debuts an exclusive mix woven, knit and printed materials.

For Hatfield, it's about putting the right characteristic in the right place. The woven upper provides "strength," he explains, "and makes good sense for the body of the shoe, because you can bring in strength and graphic elements that are actually woven right in." At the ankle and through the interior, knit offers "softness and breathability."

### V. FIT

Knit also allowed the designers to consider the shoe's fit, from the inside out. "We go to great lengths to make sure that when you put on a shoe, your calcaneus, which is the bottom part of the heel of the bony part of the heel, is locked," says Hatfield. On the Air Jordan XXX, a knit cradle keeps the heel in place and at the same time reduces the amount of glue needed to make the shoe. "We should be gaining wisdom and learning from our mistakes and successes," confirms Hatfield. of glue needed to make the shoe. "We should be gaining wisdom and learning from our mistakes and successes," confirms Hatfield. 



TINKER HATFIELD TELLING THE STORY OF THE AIR JORDAN XXX CONCEPT ART.

THERE'S A LITANY OF MOMENTS - GAME-WINNING SHOTS, PERSONAL TRIUMPHS AND TITLES - THAT FORM THE JORDAN LEGACY. BUT TO DISSECT THE JOURNEY IS TO MISS THE FOREST FOR THE TREES. THE AIR JORDAN XXX IS A UNIQUE SYNTHESIS OF JORDAN'S EVOLUTION AS A PLAYER AND A DESIGN COLLABORATOR.

TINKER HATFIELD



AIR JORDAN XXX FOOTWEAR MATERIAL SAMPLES.



TINKER DISCUSSING KEY DETAILS OF THE AIR JORDAN XXX



EARLY AIR JORDAN XXX FOOTWEAR CONCEPT MOCKUPS.

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AIR JORDAN XXX

EXPLOSIVE RESPONSE FOR FLIGHT. FLYKNIT AND JACQUARD CONSTRUCTIONS COMBINE  
FOR SEAMLESS COMFORT. FLIGHTSPEED TECHNOLOGY DELIVERS AN EXPLOSIVE FIRST STEP.  
BREATHABLE, DURABLE TOECAP HIGHLIGHTS THE JUMPMAN LOGO.

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JORDAN BRAND  
AIR JORDAN XXX



RUSSELL WESTBROOK - NBA POINT GUARD

011

## BUILT WITH FLIGHTSPEED

THE FLIGHTSPEED SYSTEM INCORPORATES  
NIKE ZOOM AIR TECHNOLOGY COUPLED  
WITH A MODERATOR PLATE THAT  
PROVIDES AN EXPLOSIVE FIRST STEP.



## AIR JORDAN XXX: THE OUTSOLE PATTERN

HATFIELD AND SMITH DIDN'T JUST SERVE UP A NEW HERRINGBONE PATTERN ON THE AIR JORDAN XXX. INSTEAD, THEY DREW A NEW TRACTION SYSTEM INSPIRED BY THE JORDAN QUOTE: "EXCELLENCE IS NEVER SECOND PLACE," WHICH HAS BEEN RENDERED IN 3D TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF PINNACLE ATHLETES, LIKE RUSSELL WESTBROOK.

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**AIR JORDAN XXX: THE HEEL GRAPHIC**

THE HEEL, SIGNIFYING 30 IS TRANSFORMED INTO A BASKETBALL NET.  
MICHAEL'S SINGULAR DEMAND WAS TO "MAKE IT LOOK FAST," A REQUEST AUGMENTED BY THE  
"XXX" GRAPHIC THAT WRAPS THE HEEL AND EXTENDS THROUGH THE FOREFOOT.



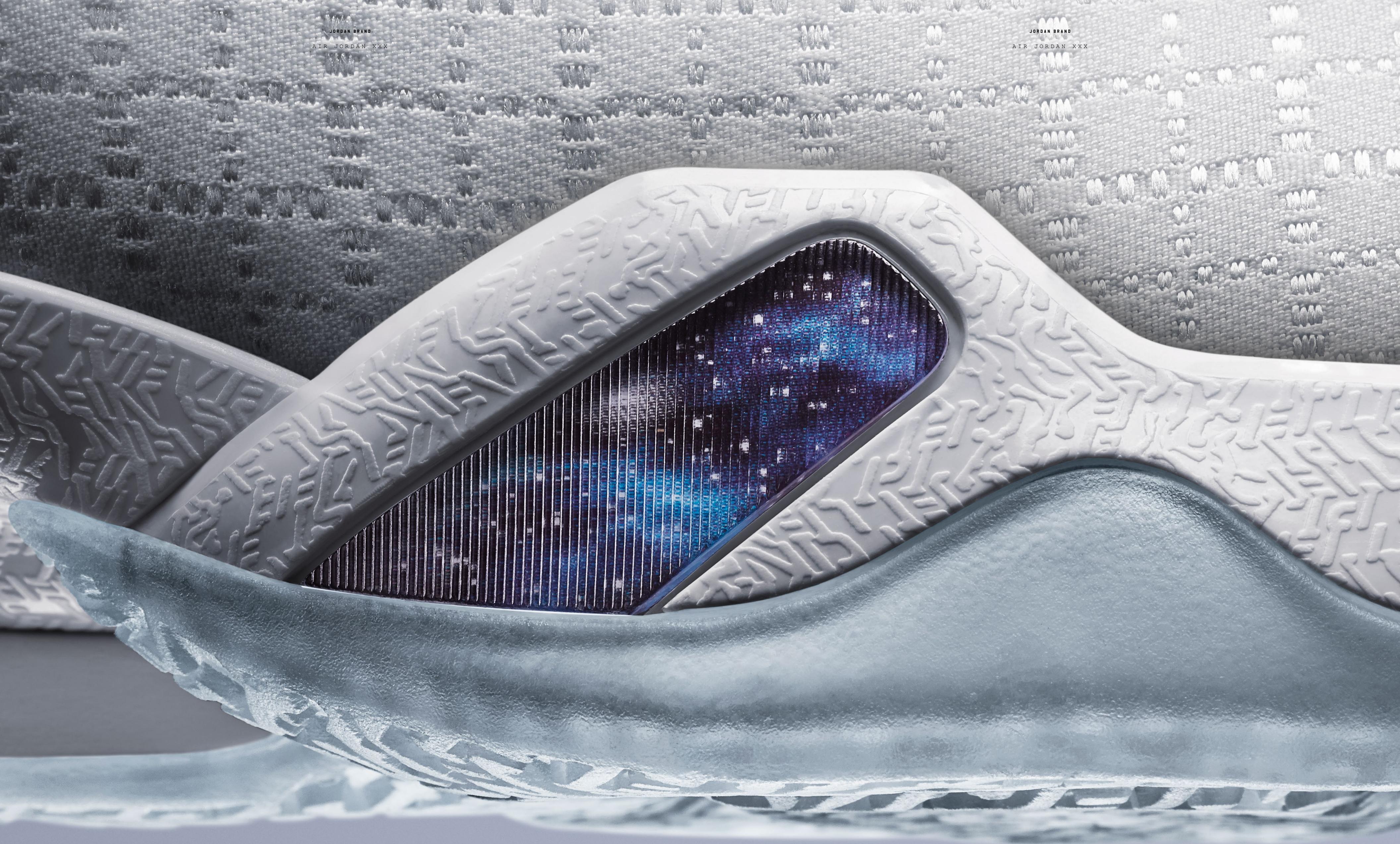






**AIR JORDAN XXX: THE WOVEN UPPER**

A PROPRIETARY MIX DEFINES THE UPPER COMPOSITION  
OF THE XXX, WHICH DEBUTS AN EXCLUSIVE MIX WOVEN, KNIT  
AND PRINTED MATERIALS.



**AIR JORDAN XXX: THE JORDAN UNIVERSE**

STARS SYMBOLIZED THE ATHLETE'S OTHERWORLDLY TALENTS, AND PLANETS ORBITING THE JORDAN UNIVERSE RELATE TO INNOVATIONS INITIATED BY PAST JORDAN MODELS.

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THE NEXT FRONTIER OF FLIGHT

RUSSELL WESTBROOK

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