

EVENTS/CAUSES

Vacheron Constantin promotes Swiss craftsmanship with Milan Expo exhibition

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Vacheron's exhibition featured a set of ceramic bowls made by student craftsmen

By KAYSORIN

Richemont-owned Vacheron Constantin is supporting Swiss craftsmanship and creativity by presenting an exhibition highlighting students' work in the Swiss Pavilion of the Milan World Expo 2015.

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The exhibition is the result of a joint project between Vacheron, ECAL—a prestigious Swiss university of art and design based in Lausanne, Switzerland—and the Fondazione Cologni dei Mestieri d'Arte, an institution that promotes the sustainability of crafts. This collaboration allows Vacheron to highlight its commitment to education as well as its heritage as a premier Swiss brand.

"The advantages to hosting an exhibition during a major trade show serves a brand well by increasing visibility for the brand, promoting consumer engagement, creating content generation and engagement outside of the event itself and having the advantage of a partner's consumer reach, leading up to and afterwards," said Rebecca Miller, CEO of [Miller & Company](#), New York. "This type of event marketing is a powerful outreach

technique especially when demonstrating collaboration, innovation, creativity, and respect for young talent.

"Consumers are drawn to what they are passionate about, what aligns with their values and what they have determined is of value to them personally. When a brand expands their areas of interest through meaningful collaborations, they have the opportunity to appeal to a broader audience allowing the brand to be exposed to and connect with more prospective consumers.

"Exhibitions allow education to occur through a sense of heightened energy by those attending expecting 'new and now'."

Ms. Miller is not affiliated with Vacheron Constantin, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Vacheron Constantin was unable to comment directly.

Object lessons

The exhibit is titled "Arts & Crafts & Design: Time according to ECAL and Swiss Craftsmen" and will be installed at the Swiss Pavilion of the Milan World Expo 2015 from May 1 until October 31. This will give visitors ample opportunity to visit throughout the summer, allowing them to learn more about Swiss craftsmanship.



The objects were created by student craftsmen at ECAL

The Milan World Expo 2015 is an international event dedicated to the exchange of ideas and new technology between countries. The Expo takes place over six months and is intended to spur creativity and promote innovation.

"Expo Milan is the largest trade fair of its kind in the world, considered a leading venue for showcasing the latest in furniture and design from countries around the world," Ms. Miller said. "To host an exhibition there makes a significant statement to consumers and competitors concerning their support of an initiative, affords a brand press and PR and provides students with extensive global exposure."

Vacheron's exhibition will display the work of 12 students from ECAL. They were instructed to create unique objects that represented the theme of time, which is appropriate given Vacheron's position as a watchmaker.

Featured objects are intended to show the richness, variety and relevance of craftwork in contemporary society. Craftsmanship is often overlooked in favor of complex machinery or technology when producing products, so highlighting this aspect is an important step in educating the younger generations.



One of the objects was a unique picnic basket

The students used a wide range of materials, including paper, stone and glass to create projects such as picnic baskets, glass vases, mirrors and lamps. All of these projects represented the circular time of seasons for the students, who managed to express this abstract theme in physical objects.

Other projects included an ax and knives developed with a carbon fiber expert, ceramic plates, fans produced with special a paper cutting technique, a grain grinder made with a stone carver and a music box. The diversity of the exhibition further emphasizes the importance of craftsmanship in all areas of life.

Ultimately, the exhibition will give Vacheron the opportunity to highlight the incredible of the Swiss students it supports. It is an excellent way for the brand to gain publicity and have a positively impact the future of luxury production.



A wide variety of objects were included in the exhibition

Guidance counselors

Other brands have previously promoted celebratory projects to show off the young talent in their country of origin. For example, French jeweler Chaumet partnered with the Académie des César to highlight young French actors in its “Revelations” project before the winners of the 40th annual César Awards Ceremony were announced Feb. 20.

The jeweler has been the official sponsor of the Académie since 2005 and regularly hosts a special evening event to honor the nominees. The brand also hosts an exhibition of photographs of the young actors, which this year was expanded into a short film ([see story](#)).

Young talent is important for the future of the luxury industry, and anyway that it can be fostered and supported will be beneficial. The Luxury Education Foundation, an institution dedicated to this cause, recently celebrated its 10-year anniversary March 23 with a panel discussion and presentation of projects at The New School in New York.

Members of the program’s board of directors such as president Ketty Maisonrouge, treasurer Robert Chavez and program chair Barbara Cirkva made remarks before introducing a panel of former LEF students to discuss their experiences. LEF brings

together young talent and industry leaders to create a program that educates students and provides them with real experience in the world of luxury ([see story](#)).

"Highlighting the craftsmanship of a product is one of the most important marketing elements for a luxury brand," Ms. Miller said. "Heritage brands, such as Vacheron Constantin, have built their reputation on innovation and quality through the design and craftsmanship of their products.

"It is these details that establish and continue to set them apart from their competitors and authentically provides the foundation for compelling narrative. This sharing of knowledge begins to build a relationship between a brand and a consumer, the basis for increased sales.

"Vacheron Constantin's 12 "duos" worked on the theme of Time and more precisely the cyclical time of the seasons, allowing students and manufactures the opportunity to work together exposing students to artisanal craftsmanship and manufactures with new products."

Final Take

Kay Sorin, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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