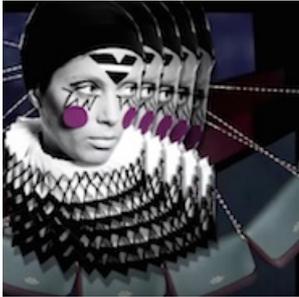


INTERNET

Smythson pairs with Quentin Jones for lively gifting campaign

November 23, 2015



Video still from Quentin Jones' "Wonderland" for Smythson

By SARAH JONES

British stationer Smythson is putting a new spin on its holiday gift selection in a surreal collage by artist Quentin Jones.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246** ▶

"Wonderland" uses Ms. Jones' stop-motion animation style to enliven traditional present ideas such as notebooks and jewelry boxes. While an element of the expected is welcome at the holidays, pushing boundaries can help a storied brand stand out and retain a contemporary appeal.

"Quentin is a young, creative, global artist with experience in the luxury, fashion and music worlds," said Marko Muellner, digital vice president and group director at [Edelman](#), Portland. "Her art is both accessible and provocative, perfect for a holiday collaboration. Quentin also brings an existing audience and relationships with influencers to the brand.

"It's a standard approach for luxury brands by now to partner with interesting established or up and coming artists around new collections," he said. "This effort in particular adds a bit of whimsy and depth to the collection while providing great content to fuel social media. The addition of the holiday card collection is a great touch."

Mr. Muellner is not affiliated with Smythson, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

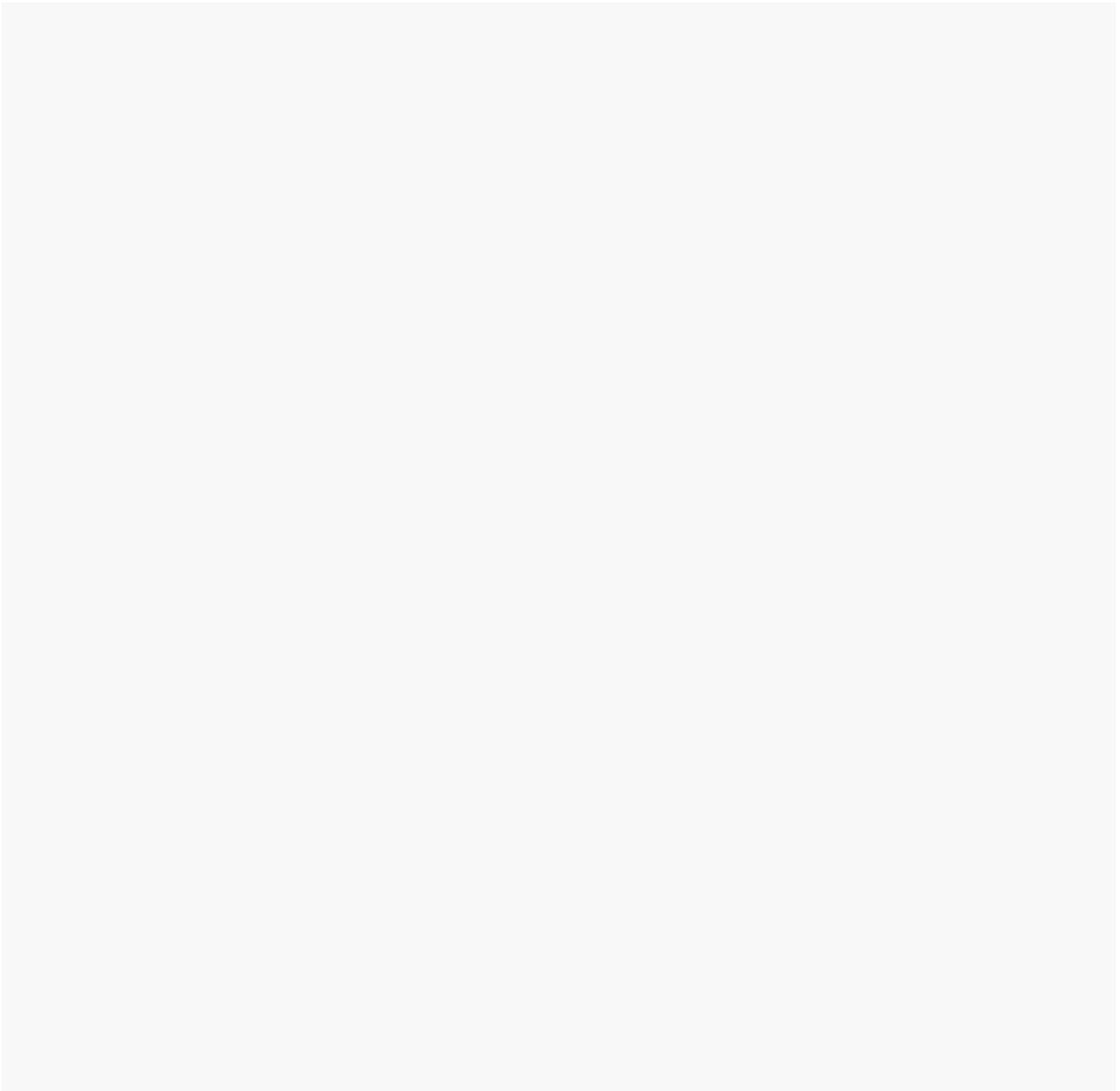
Smythson was unable to comment directly before press deadline.

Clowning around

Wonderland premiered on Smythson's digital channels on Nov. 20. It is meant to be a representation of Christmas through the eyes of a child, capturing the excitement and amazement of the season.

A teaser created exclusively for Instagram shows Ms. Jones' head floating within a graphic ring, her eyes covered with circular photos. As she strikes different poses, the pictures covering her eyes change as well.

Other footage shows the artist wearing a sculptural headpiece and a Smythson backpack, turning as she gives the camera a look.



A video posted by Smythson (@smythson) on Nov 20, 2015 at 1:14am PST

The full Wonderland film took over Smythson's Web site homepage at launch. The film shows Ms. Jones as a black-and-white harlequin clown surrounded by colorful gifts and cutouts. Also illustrating the scenes are masks fashioned out of Smythson's Blue Nile paper.

At the beginning of the short, she is situated with her head peeking out of a hole. Her eyes pop open, revealing her feathery false eyebrows. As gift boxes pile around her, she smiles, picks one up and uncovers the lid, releasing a star-shaped paper that expands to show the letter "S."

Throughout the film, the animations gradually spell out the brand's name letter by letter. For instance, "M" is a kaleidoscope of journals, key rings and pouches.

Smythson Wonderland by Quentin Jones

Other scenes plant Ms. Jones' visage onto the inside of jewelry boxes or show her waving a white glove behind a blinking array of wallets, as if a magician taking control of the scene.

"Quentin Jones brings a unique take on the holiday campaign in this ad for Smythson," said Juliet Carnoy, marketing manager at [Pixlee](#), San Francisco. "The video itself is a piece of surrealist art with a playful twist. Almost hypnotizing at times, the ad uses stop-motion techniques to revisit traditional holiday symbols and figures.

"Brands use surrealistic takes in advertising because it fascinates people and its creative nature envelops potential

buyers," she said.

Consumers can shop an edit of gifts featured throughout the film, some of which they may have missed in the intricate scenes. This guide includes small leather goods such as card holders, cosmetic cases, luggage tags, key rings, card holders and diaries.

In addition to the film, Ms. Jones created a series of holiday cards for the brand in her signature style, allowing consumers to share some of Wonderland with their loved ones.



Cards created by Quentin Jones for Smythson

Surreal appeal

This is not the first time Smythson has worked with Ms. Jones.

In 2014, the brand partnered with the artist on a collection of handbags, diaries and key chains bearing Ms. Jones' cartoon drawings.

The line of accessories launched exclusively online and in-store at Parisian concept boutique Colette, known for its quirky merchandise. Smythson was able to reach a younger audience with this collection, both through Ms. Jones' cutesy art and Colette's trendy consumers ([see story](#)).

Ms. Jones has been a frequent collaborator of luxury labels, adding a touch of whimsy to brand campaigns.

French fashion house Louis Vuitton enlisted artist and fashion filmmaker Ms. Jones to imbue its fall/winter accessories collection with her signature energetic and exuberant style.

The video includes rapidly morphing shapes and colors, fractured planes and music similar to a video game while presenting many looks of the fall/winter accessories collection. Teaming up with an acclaimed filmmaker grants the brand the ability to reimagine what it stands for ([see story](#)).

While entertaining, the consumer engagement with Smythson's collaboration with Ms. Jones may be short term.

"Smythson, like many other luxury brands, is trying to connect with younger audiences and give customers something fun to watch during the holidays," Mr. Muellner said. "If it drives interest in the collection, that's a bonus.

"The combination of the film, the nice blog post that gives us a glimpse behind the scene and the addition of the holiday card collection makes for a nice campaign," he said. "But today, promoting pieces like this only on your Web site and with single organic posts on your social channels just isn't enough.

"Serializing the content a teaser, a holiday card series of posts, short video highlights from the full length version, product imagery Smythson has it all but seems to have failed to truly capitalize on the tools and assets to drive amplification, engagement and consideration.

"Consumers open to Smythson and luxury collections this holiday will find the campaign fun, but then they will move on quickly. From the comments on Instagram, there is love and compliments, but nothing about the collection

or Smythson specifically. The adjacency is strong and Smythson certainly benefits, but with a bit more strategic and tactical rigor, this campaign could have driven more peer-to-peer sharing and collection exploration."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, staff reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.