

INTERNET

Dior showcases spring/summer 2016 collection in deserted Los Angeles

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Dior spring/summer 2016 runway show

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

French fashion house Christian Dior is taking consumers to an urban wasteland to show off its latest collection.

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The spring/summer 2016 ready-to-wear collection is featured in Dior's latest video, "Drift," which features a woman traveling along the Los Angeles River into a desolate city. A well-executed narrative video will give viewers extending beyond the Dior fan base a reason to watch and thereby reach markets that other promotions would not.

"The Drift video exudes a spirit of freedom, boldness, individuality and style all true to the Dior brand," said Jim Gentleman, senior vice president of account management and strategy, **SK+G**, Las Vegas. "As a legacy luxury brand, Dior must continue to find ways to remain relevant in a modern world. This video and story of intrigue helps Dior remain both relevant and intriguing to the fashion connoisseur."

Mr. Gentleman is not associated with Dior, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Dior was unable to comment directly.

Drifting away

Drift was directed by Vincent van de Wijngaard and features Hungarian model Vanessa Axente and English actor Jeremy Irvine, of "War Horse" fame. It was made available through Dior's online magazine, DiorMag, and was also shared on Facebook and Twitter.

The three-minute film begins with the sounds of police sirens and a message being relayed over opening credits. The first images show a man driving a car, his face barely visible in the rearview mirror, through the dry Los Angeles River bed. In voiceover, he intones, "there is a beauty getting lost, a release, a freedom in being missing."



Vanessa Axente in "Drift"

As he continues, the film cuts to a woman diving into the water, as if to connect her to the voiceover. The cut back to the driver, played by Mr. Irvine, shows him talking with a police officer, which has pulled over next to him.

Mr. Irvine, seen clearly in a Dior suit, finds something on the riverbed, with the cut briefly showing off his shoes. As he picks up the item, there is a quick cut to the woman, suggesting that the item belongs to her. Shots of Mr. Irvine driving and Ms. Axente running through the desert in a dark jacket are juxtaposed, and the voiceover returns with the line, "You are only missing if somebody is looking."

She emerges on the rooftops of the city first in an off-white top with pink flowers and then, after a cut, in white lingerie top and shorts, with Mr. Irvine, now wearing a white suit, in pursuit.



Dior ss16 ready-to-wear

Ms. Axente is then seen in a montage of locations along the Los Angeles River and the city modeling a number of outfits, showing that she continues to wander. "3.8 million people in L.A., 40 [million] in the state. How do you find just one?" Mr. Irvine asks.

However, at that moment, he finds her. He exits the car, the two make eye contact, and the film ends.

Christian Dior - Drift

The editing style and reliance on a ponderous voiceover instill a sense of mystery within the video, a trait that luxury brands often try to cultivate and could make consumers more likely to share the video, even with those outside fashion's inner circle. In addition, the abstract approach to narrative allows Dior to show off a large portion of its collection, with the film subtly aligning desirability and exclusivity with the clothing being modeled.

"The Drift storyline and reappearing/disappearing heroine provides a clever device for Dior to showcase a range of fashion from its Spring-Summer 2016 ready-to-wear collection," Mr. Gentleman said. "In addition to guessing where the heroine might next appear, the viewer is also engaged by wondering what she'll be wearing next."

Mystique

Dior videos often have an aura of mystique around them, preferring to market brand traits in a manner that strikes

consumers as more organic.

For example, Dior appealed to consumers to break the rules in a new campaign for its Homme Intense scent.

Photographer Peter Lindbergh captured actor Robert Pattinson, who portrays a man who never sleeps and thus lives 1,000 lives in one, which the brand explains mirrors the face's own life, on the streets of New York. Through this, Dior is promoting not just its cologne, but also a way of living ([see story](#)).

Often times, these efforts have a tangible tie to heritage, justifying their mystery and giving an authentic element.

In addition, Dior also explored elusive messages with its spring/summer 2015 menswear campaign.

"The Letter" took inspiration from a handwritten note penned by Mr. Dior, found tucked away in the brand's archives by campaign photographer Willy Vanderperre. This Dior Homme campaign creates a link to the history of the house, while also crafting a mysterious image for the label's menswear ([see story](#)).

"Anything brands like Dior can do today that doesn't feel like advertising is more likely to be consumed and potentially shared by current and potential customers," he said. "The Drift video presents a contemporary, youthful, and even edgy Dior a distinctive position against some of its high-end fashion competitors."

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