

MULTICHANNEL

Bulgari gives guided tour of eclectically remodeled London boutique

April 15, 2016



Bulgari New Bond Street store

By SARAH JONES

Italian jeweler Bulgari is giving consumers a first look at its newly reopened London store through an artsy film.

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Hosted on content platform Nowness, Bulgari's video stars architect Peter Marino, who takes the viewer through some of his choices made when designing the space. Bulgari is making a concerted effort to include its global followers in the opening through social content, allowing them to be part of the milestone regardless of their physical location.

"This film give a stylish sneak peak of the store and a brief look into the mind of the famous designer, without giving away too much," said Simon Gerard, content director at [Luxury Branded](#).

"Peter Marino is a well-known interior designer, who has also worked with Ermenegildo Zegna, Christian Dior, Fendi and Louis Vuitton," he said. "So he will already be known by luxury fashion fans, or this will spark their interest to find out more.

"Also behind-the-scenes content has always been a hot trend with social media, albeit one luxury brands are careful withbut Bulgari does it just right in this case."

Mr. Gerard is not affiliated with Bulgari, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Bulgari](#) did not respond before press deadline.

Personal tour

Mr. Marino previously remodeled Bulgari's Roman flagship, bringing a modern touch to the historic store. Now he has taken the brand's London "temple" on New Bond Street and refashioned it with a design that pays homage to its Italian heritage while echoing British architecture.



Interior of Bulgari London store

Celebrating the launch of its new store, Bulgari filmed a short video featuring Mr. Marino.

The architect, who got his start with a job for Andy Warhol, is a personality himself, known for his everyday wardrobe that often consists of head-to-toe black, with lots of leather and rubber. In Bulgari's video, he appears on-screen in his usual garb, complete with a biker hat.

At the start, the lights come up to reveal the protagonist, who stands in the center of a circle of empty glass cases. The scene cuts, and the viewer is transported to a gilded elevator.

Mr. Marino's voiceover comes through, distorted as if he is speaking across a phone line. He talks about the how originality and truth will never go out of style.

The architect ascends a marble staircase as he responds to a prompt by his unheard interviewer, who had asked if he had anyone in mind when envisioning the VIP area. He mentions he considered Elizabeth Taylor, who he met in the 1970s, a classic yet late Bulgari regular.



Bulgari London boutique

For those among the living, he thought of Daphne Guinness or the Princess of Qatar.

The VIP lounges and the Happening Room will host parties, exhibitions and private events. Here, the walls are decorated with images of some of Bulgari's most famous clientele.

Over a montage of close-up images comparing design elements such as the intricate patterns in marble or a light with the house's gemstone jewelry, his voiceover gives his thoughts on the idea of luxury. "I always say that the largest luxuries in life are light, space and time," he says.

Rather than sharing the film, directed by Albert Moya, on its own digital channels, Bulgari had it posted on Nowness, the video platform owned by LVMH, also Bulgari's parent company. The video can be viewed [here](#).

"It's a tactic that's beneficial to both Bulgari and Nowness," Mr. Gerard said. "Nowness is a big influencer in the luxury/design/fashion/art categories and will reach an exact audience who Bulgari wants to see the video.

"Bulgari couldn't be a more a more famous luxury brand and by giving Nowness exclusive content, they are sure to appreciate it and get it out there," he said. "And with the video only being out a day, it's already looking good from Nowness' initial post with almost 2,800 Facebook shares and over 500,000 Twitter impressions so far."

On the night of April 14, Bulgari invited consumers to tune in on social media to virtually take part in the grand opening.

Open door

The store opening has become a multichannel event, as brands celebrate retail milestones with digital campaigns.

For example, British fashion label Burberry celebrated the opening of its Beverly Hills store with the first Los Angeles-based feature for its Art of the Trench social media campaign.

Burberry had photographers capture both emerging and established talent in Los Angeles wearing its iconic trench coat using iPhones. These photos could be viewed across Burberry's social media accounts, spreading word of the store opening indirectly through the portraits ([see story](#)).

When Italian fashion house Fendi opened its new Madison Avenue boutique in New York, it launched a coordinated charity auction with familiar local faces.

Five New York women, including a blogger, model and actress, embellished a 3Baguette handbag for the brand, which were auctioned online to benefit causes selected by the tastemakers. This online event invited a global audience to participate in the store opening, extending the reach of the celebration ([see story](#)).

The key is to make consumers still want to visit in person.

"[Bulgari's video] does a great job of engaging and piquing interest, as it gives only a partial preview of the space and just a taste of personal insight into the project, while still maintaining the mystique luxury brands don't want loose in a social media world of oversharing," Mr. Gerard said.

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