

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Burberry weaves cinematic heritage tale to kick off holiday season

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*Still from "The Tale of Thomas Burberry"; image courtesy of Burberry*

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By STAFF REPORTS

British fashion house Burberry is getting consumers in the holiday spirit by telling a dramatized story of its founder and the key moments in time that shaped its brand.

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"The Tale of Thomas Burberry" is a three-minute trailer for an imagined full-length film, directed by Academy Award winner Asif Kapadia and written by Academy Award nominee Matt Charman. Rather than aligning with traditional holiday themes, Burberry's film instead looks to create an emotional appeal for its gifting collection with themes of love, adventure, dreams and tradition.

"This Christmas, as we celebrate our 160th anniversary, we wanted to tell the story of Thomas Burberry pioneer, inventor, innovator and the man behind the iconic trench coat in our own words," said Christopher Bailey, CEO and chief creative officer of Burberry, said in a statement from London.

"The film we have made is a brief glimpse inspired by his full and extraordinary life, which threaded its way through the history of the twentieth century in all its tumultuous highs and lows," he said.

### Reimagining history

Burberry's film, shot mostly at Shirburn Castle in Oxfordshire, Britain, stars Domhnall Gleeson as the title character. The real Thomas Burberry was born in 1835 and worked as an apprentice draper before starting his own company.



*Asif Kapadia on-set of The Tale of Thomas Burberry*

In the film, he is first seen on the floor of a factory, as a superior asks to see what he has made. After giving a scoffing look at the fabric, Mr. Burberry shows the ingenuity behind his creation, as he pours water on the gabardine and it runs off.

Sienna Miller appears as Mr. Burberry's fictional love interest Sara, as he meets her in a downpour, using his water-resistant coat to shield them both from the rain.

In another scene, explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton, played by Dominic West, comes to Mr. Burberry seeking attire appropriate for an expedition to Antarctica, which for the film's purposes is a dramatized version of his ill-fated 1914 trek south. The real Sir Ernest and other Antarctic explorers wore Burberry for their journeys.



*The Tale of Thomas Burberry campaign image*

Mr. Burberry is also called upon by fictional pilot Betty Dawson, played by Lily James, for a wardrobe ready for flight. This plot point is based on the accomplishments of real-life female pilot Betty Kirby-Green, who flew in a plane called "The Burberry."

The role of Burberry's iconic jacket in the military is also seen, as the brand's patented Tielocken belted coat serves the men in the trenches during World War I.

Many of the costumes for Burberry's film were custom-made, with others pulled from its Heritage Archive and its current collection.

### *The Tale of Thomas Burberry*

Aside from the trailer, shorter clips will be used for social media posts. Print and out-of-home placements will feature stills from the film.

Along with the release of the film on Nov. 1, Burberry launched its gifting selection online and in-stores.

"To do justice to this story, we turned to a team of truly great 21st-century British talent: Asif Kapadia, a director whose work I admire enormously, and a cast of our brightest and our best actors: Domhnall Gleeson, Sienna Miller, Dominic West and Lily James," Mr. Bailey said.

"We feel very proud to be sharing The Tale of Thomas Burberry this Christmas," he said. "His spirit and his vision are still at the heart of everything we do at Burberry today."

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