

AUTOMOTIVE

## Mercedes begins segmented rollout of art-filled fashion piece

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*Mercedes' mbcollective fashion story*

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

German automaker Mercedes-Benz is continuing its mission to align its brand with fashion, even after ending its New York Fashion Week sponsorship, with a new collective that taps a range of talented names for the sake of art.

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The #mbcollective fashion story for 2017, titled "Generation Now, Generation Next," focuses on the differing generations as characters, instead of just themes. Mercedes' first chapter features music artists M.I.A. and Tommy Genesis alongside its Concept EQ vehicle in a film shot by Luke Gilford, modeling fashion from emerging talent in the industry.

"It was important to me to emphasize the emotional intelligence of the Concept EQ," said Luke Gilford, photography for Mercedes. "To do that, I wanted to make the human connection between M.I.A. and Tommy Genesis the heart of the story, illustrating their exchange of energy and inspiration."

**Fashion forward**

Mercedes will be unveiling three chapters as part of its #mbcollective fashion story for 2017. The first rollout features the rappers as representations of the two generations.

The collective is part of the on-going promotion for the new generation Mercedes' Concept EQ, a battery-electric vehicle that fits in with the two younger generations' ideals.

M.I.A.'s relationship with up-and-comer Tommy Genesis is the perfect representation for Mercedes' generation concept. As the established rapper acts as the younger's mentor, the two symbolize Generation Now and Generation Next, respectively.

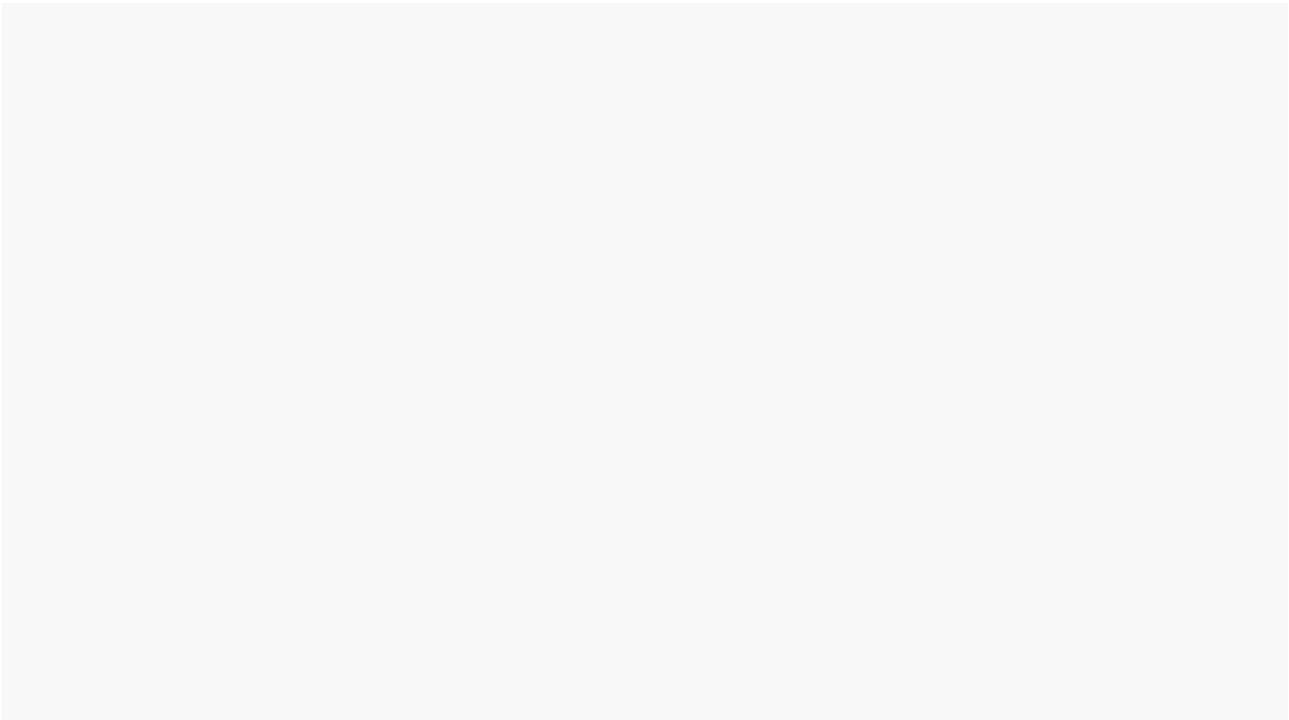
Young designers Anna October, Xiao Li, William Fan, Ran Fan and Steven Tai are the fashion brands behind the looks for the rappers for the film.

Mr. Gilford shot all three episodes of the ongoing campaign.

The first episode shows the young rappers in an undisclosed location with a desert feel, and the Mercedes Concept

EQ in the background. Quick edits of the women, landscape, vehicle and various elements of nature are woven together while voice overs of the girls are heard.

Quotes such as "I move with the leaves," "I'll take my love and I'll split it in two, here's one part for me and one part for you" and "You go your way," "and I will follow you," can be heard throughout.



Director @LukeGilford's vision for the 2017 #mbcollective Mercedes-Benz Fashion Story is about pushing boundaries, being authentic and connecting generations. Chapter One star @MIAMatangi presents the new vanguard: @TommyGenesis and the @MercedesBenz Concept EQ. ? @LukeGilford. #MIA #TommyGenesis #GillianGarcia #LukeGilford #switchtoEQ #mbcollective #MBFW #MercedesBenzFashion

A post shared by MercedesBenzFashion (@mbfw) on Mar 23, 2017 at 8:47am PDT

The automaker has had a longstanding relationship with fashion, which recently changed. New York Fashion Week underwent a lot of changes in the past few years as Mercedes-Benz withdrew its title sponsor of the event.

Following the February shows in 2015, Mercedes-Benz stepped down from its title sponsorship, but has remained a sponsor of the event and in September 2015, the shows also moved out of Lincoln Center. Mercedes-Benz's decision to leave the lead sponsorship had an affect the brand's interaction with fashion and has had some effects on fashion week, but the brand continues to develop different fashion initiatives ([see more](#)).

#### Multichannel approach

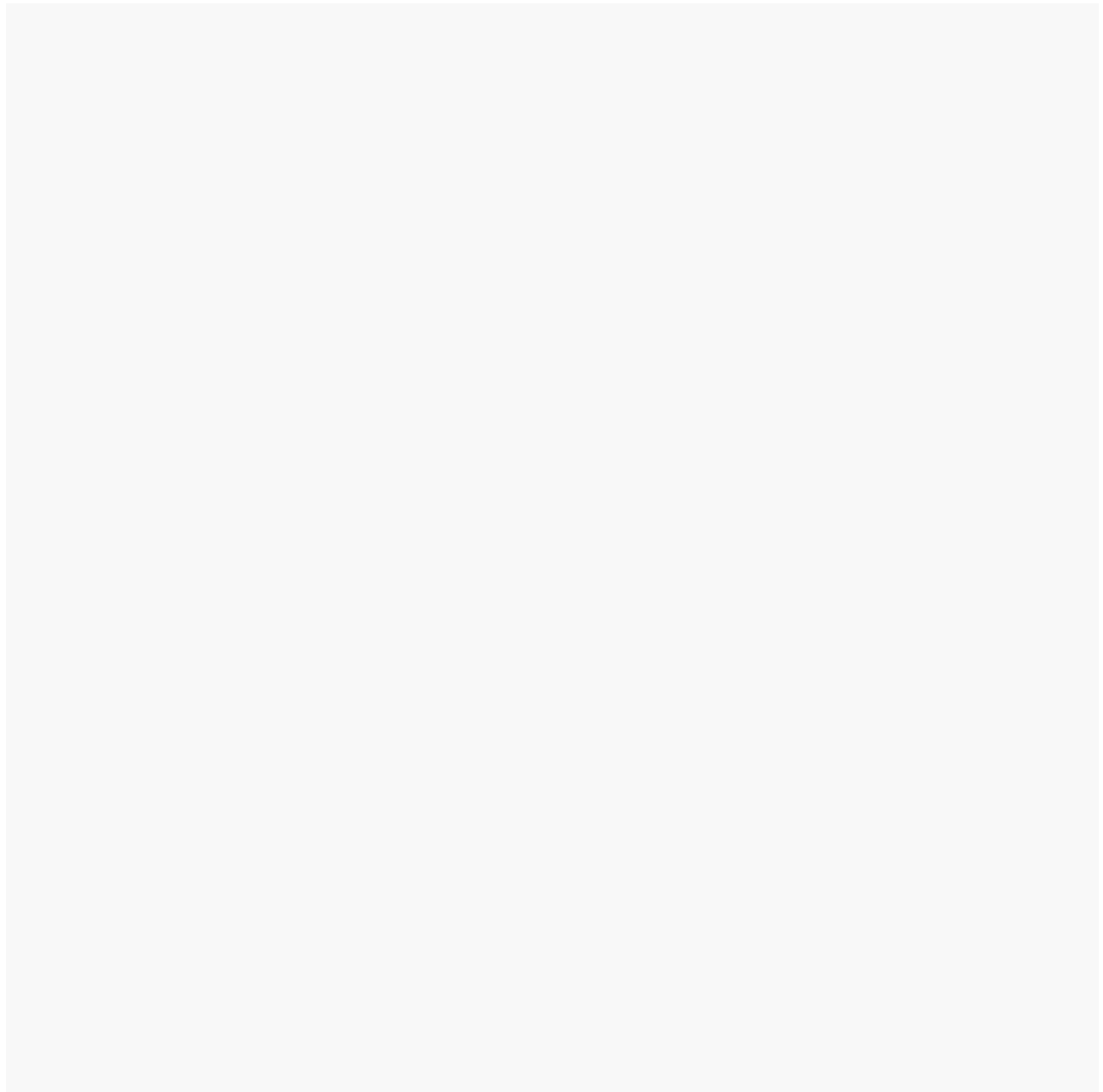
Mercedes is complemented the video itself with a series of pushes on social media and beyond. Images of the shoot and episode are being shared on its variety of social pages.

Accompanying videos put a humorous spin on the artful campaign. For instance, a clip on Instagram shows the girls being taken to the filming location in a Mercedes Concept EQ, but they are not told where it is they are actually going.

Viewers can see the women asking their driver where they are going and even pulling over to ask someone on the production team, who responds by telling them that it is confidential.

Another video, made in partnership with Purple Fashion, shows the puppet assistant of the fashion magazine's founder attempting to interview M.I.A. while she's filming onset. As his boss furiously messages him to get to the interview, the puppet, Petit Oz, searches for the rapper and arrives late.

Once he is ready to start the interview, she has to leave to start filming for Mercedes' episode.



Has anyone seen @MIAtangi? @OzPurple's puppet assistant Petit Oz goes backstage at the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Story location but will he get the interview? Video by @TobenSeymour, in partnership with @PurpleFashionMagazine #OlivierZahm #PurpleMagazine #TobenSeymour #MIA #mbcollective #MBFW #MercedesBenzFashion

A post shared by MercedesBenzFashion (@mbfw) on Mar 22, 2017 at 2:27pm PDT

Mercedes-Benz is often sharing campaigns that are rooted in fashion and art. The brand also recently put a new spin on cliché advice with its "Grow Up" campaign that features five of its vehicles in five different narratives.

Each story under of the Grow Up moniker features a narrative that plays off an age-old line of advice that many consumers will recognize and related to concept of growing up. The featurettes incorporate Mercedes vehicles into the story, keeping an underlining presence as part of the film, but without a full-blown advertisement ([see more](#)).

"I wanted to make their connection feel honest and raw like the beginning of an amazing relationship," Mr. Gilford said.

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