

JEWELRY

A. Lange & Shne builds abstract framework to explore limited-edition design properties

May 24, 2017

A. Lange & Shne

worked with Sebastian Kite on Journey into Grey, a social media-ready art installation

By JEN KING

Richemont-owned watchmaker A. Lange & Shne is translating a design element into film to share its aesthetic with a broader online audience.

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The German watchmaker has worked with artist Sebastian Kite on "Journey into Grey," a social media-ready film that was inspired by the grey-colored surface of the solid-silver dial of the limited-edition Lange 31 timepiece. A. Lange & Shne is likely to drum up interest in its limited-edition timepiece through its social media promotions that have included detailed examinations the watch's movements and parts in addition to the artist film.

"Moving beyond utility to art is essential to increasing margins and value," said Chris Ramey, president of [Affluent Insights](#), Miami. "Artification is a pillar of luxury.

"The success of any campaign hinges on the ability of the brand to communicate," he said. "Film translates well across all media. The goal of the film is to fascinate and match values; therefore creating desire for the watch."

Mr. Ramey is not affiliated with A. Lange & Shne, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [A. Lange & Shne](#) was reached for comment.

A grey area

In April, A. Lange & Shne began its promotions for the limited-edition Lange 31 timepiece.

The brand first took time to explain how its twin mainspring barrel and two 1.85-meter-long springs allow the timepiece to keep a power reserve of 31 days. Using a patented constant-force escapement, A. Lange & Shne's watch slowly releases torque over the course of a month.

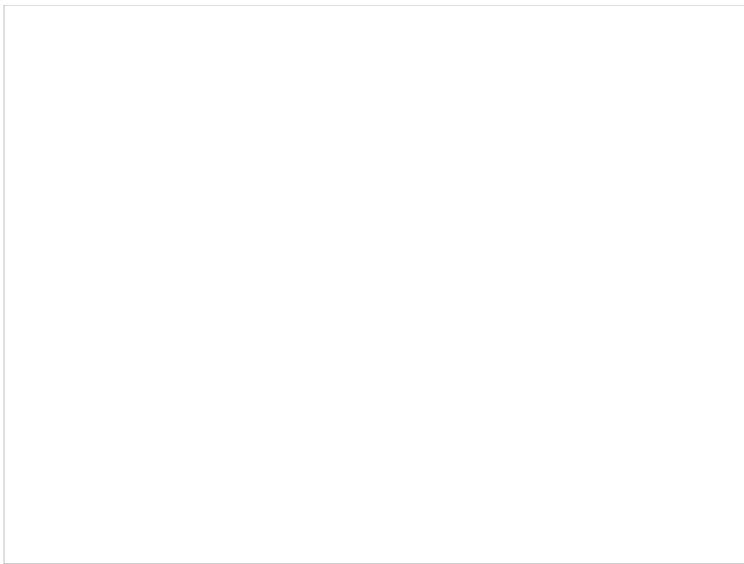
This allows the Lange 31 to display the accurate time and date from the first day of the month until the 31st, as its name suggests.

After explaining its mechanics, A. Lange & Shne shared how the Lange 31 is the product of a close collaboration between its designers and calibre engineers. The freedom of the collaboration has resulted in a recognizable design with a large power reserve of 744 hours.

A. Lange & Shne also mentions that over the two-year creation process the Lange 31 had more than 70 subtle dial design variations before the look was finalized.

Moving to the back of the watch, A. Lange & Shne shows via social posts how the Lange 31 is manually wound by either a crown-winding mechanism or a winding key that is inserted into a socket on the caseback. The mechanics of the winding process are explained in detail in two subsequent social posts.

A. Lange & Shne's technical overview of the Lange 31 timepiece concludes with an artist installation that leverages shareability to tell of its brand's concept.



A. Lange & Shne's limited-edition Lange 31

Journey into Grey was conceived by Mr. Kite, a London-based artist, designer and architect.

Mr. Kite first built a hanging grid-like structure to serve as Journey into Grey's set. With a series of mirrors and open spaces, the light and films of the natural world, in grayscale, are refracted and reflected throughout the set.

Grey was used for the project as it is the definition of no color saturation, but also because of the incredible texture grayscale can produce when looking at nature. The Journey into Grey concept also inspired Mr. Kite to use analog 60 millimeter film.

Mr. Kite used 60 millimeter film because of the medium's own grey properties. A single frame of 60 millimeter film includes 1.5 billion pixels of silver halide, a chemical compound that renders in tones of grey.

During the creation of Journey into Grey, Mr. Kite relied on no electronic devices and no electronic processes for the installation.

At the end of the video explaining Journey into Grey, the narrator brings together its focus with that of the design properties of A. Lange & Shne's limited-edition Lange 31 and its solid-silver dial.

A sound approach

Artists from various verticals and watchmakers often work together to explore the aesthetic relationship between the two mediums.

For example, Swiss watchmaker Audemars Piguet captured the balance between innovation and tradition that goes into its Royal Oak Supersonnerie timepiece through sound.

Audemars Piguet commissioned French DJ and producer Surkin to portray the striking watch's chime in an audiovisual project under his creative entity Gener8ion. Through recorded ambient noise at Audemars Piguet's manufacture in Le Brassus and sounds from the natural world, "Sound Awakens" tells the story of the brand's craftsmanship through a new point of view ([see story](#)).

A. Lange & Shne took a similar approach to explore its tonality in 2015.

The watchmaker demonstrated the intricacies of its Zeitwerk Minute Repeater by turning to another precise craft.

A. Lange & Shne's chiming timepiece was the first mechanical watch to blend a jumping numerals display with a decimal minute repeater, creating what the brand describes as a "fine-tuned musical instrument for the wrist." To demonstrate its rhythmic qualities, A. Lange & Shne's product development director Anthony de Haas was captured engaging in his other passionpercussion ([see story](#)).

"Selling to those who have everything and need nothing requires enlightened classic luxury marketing strategies," Affluent Insights' Mr. Ramey said. "Anything else falls flat to most with the capacity to acquire a watch at this price point."

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