

JEWELRY

Prada builds allure around jewelry via mythological marketing

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Prada's Talisman collection is the brand's first to use semiprecious stones. Image credit: Prada

By SARAH JONES

Italian fashion house Prada is imbuing its debut jewelry line with a sense of the mystical and natural through a walk in the woods.

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The label's first semiprecious jewelry collection, dubbed Talisman, is an homage to what the brand refers to as the original designs, as individuals in ancient times would construct and revere objects for their magical properties. Introducing the unisex accessories, the brand is exploring some of the imagined powers of these semi-precious objects through a short film.

"Most major players in fashion have already launched substantial brand extensions in the realm of jewelry," said Anthony Del Gigante, director of brand at **MDG Advertising**, Boca Raton, FL. "And it's clear why.

"According to a survey by McKinsey & Company, the branded jewelry segment accounts for 20 percent of the overall jewelry market, but projections show that it will grow to 30-40 percent by 2020," he said.

Mr. Del Gigante is not affiliated with Prada, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. **Prada** was reached for comment.

Mystical charms

The 100-year old label had designed costume jewelry such as necklaces, bracelets and earrings before, but fall/winter 2017 marks Prada's first foray into finer jewelry.

Prada's Talisman pieces are constructed out of silver and semi-precious stones, with additional natural materials. For instance, the collection includes a strand of shells and pendants made out of wood with a sculpted silver koala or primate hanging on.



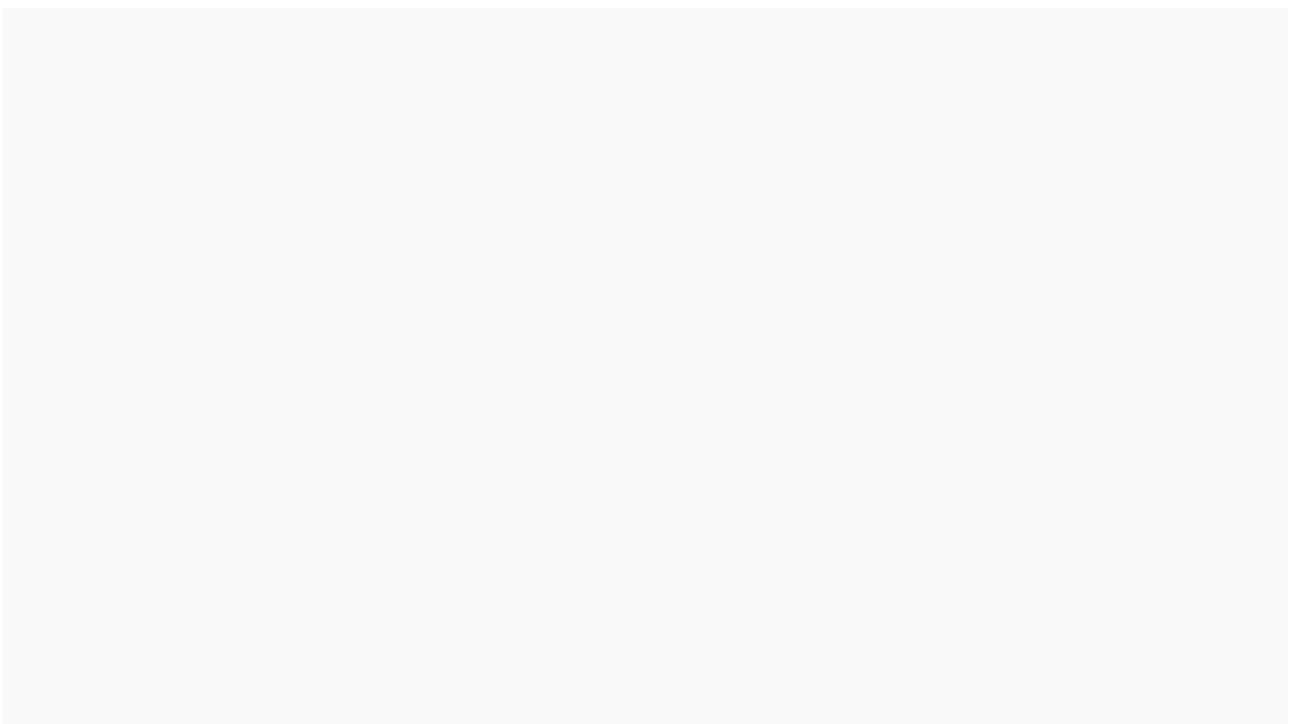
Prada's Talisman collection. Image credit: Prada

In addition to wood and shell, the line also uses labradorite, amethyst, citrine quartz shingle and rock crystal.

A short film celebrates the potential for the supernatural that exists in these pieces. Set in a forest, the video opens on an aerial perspective of a woman and a man walking separately on paths.

Getting to their level, the viewer is immersed in the natural environment through the ambient noise of a babbling brook or a chirping birds mixed with a beating soundtrack.

The characters, depicted in different shots, are seen peeking out from behind trees or traipsing through the woods. At moments, they pause to touch their amulets, and the power within the objects becomes apparent through sound effects such as a gush of breath.



What makes a pendant a talisman? Link in bio. #PradaTalisman #PradaFW17

This connection to the natural world is evident in Prada's craftsmanship film for the collection. An artisan is seen cutting branches off a tree and using elements such as fire to shape the pieces.

Other craftsmen appear, showing the hands that made the collection, from carving wood to polishing stones.

With semiprecious jewelry a new category for Prada, this content allows the brand to communicate that the pieces share the label's focus on attention to detail as its fashions and leather goods.

"The film, and the product itself, delivers the brand promise of originality: a celebration of contemporary auteurs, their uniqueness and elegance," Mr. Del Gigante said. "Prada's latest collection is easily envisioned, adorning trendsetting technologists and new media innovators.

"The Talisman film speaks to modern tribalism, and the simultaneous coexistence of individual and affinity-centered communities," he said. "The talisman itself, a finely made and unique piece, is portrayed as a source of mystic strength, protection and desire, while making a strong statement in support of handcraft."

Powerful potential

The global jewelry and watch market is expected to grow steadily over the next few years, with total revenues projected to reach \$410 billion by 2019, according to a new report from Fashionbi.

A growing ultra-high-net-worth population in emerging markets such as Mexico, Brazil, Turkey and India along with strong performance in Asia-Pacific and the United States are expected to driving forces in the jewelry sector's predicted rise. While the sector as a whole is anticipating growth going forward, key players have seen mixed results in the past year, with Tiffany & Co.'s sales plunging and Richemont's results up, pointing to the risks of deflated currencies and other macroeconomic hurdles ([see story](#)).

This move into more upscale jewelry comes after a year of declining sales for the brand ([see story](#)).

Prada's digital marketing typically romanticizes products through storytelling or elements of the surreal.

Italian fashion house Prada blended whimsical themes with high-fashion class in its latest eyewear campaign.

Prada's Cinema film features a woman spending the day at the movies, in a nod to the film industry. However, Prada does not lose its high-fashion image, with a mystique tone throughout the vignette ([see story](#)).

"Staying true to your brand's vision allows for expressive yet authentic forays into new categories and markets," Mr. Del Gigante said.

"Prada's commitment to originality, elegance and expression has established a legacy of coherence in everything they do: provocative runway lines, elegant ready-to-wear collections and iconic stores around the world designed by trailblazing architects such as Rem Koolhaas and Herzog & de Meuron," he said. "Their launch into jewelry is certainly no exception."