

JEWELRY

Cartier speaks to adventurers with flight fantasy

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The Santos de Cartier campaign features Jake Gyllenhaal. Image courtesy of Cartier

By SARAH JONES

French jeweler Cartier is letting ideas take off in a cinematic campaign that leans on celebrity.

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To promote its Santos de Cartier timepiece, the Richemont-owned house took inspiration from aviator Alberto Santos-Dumont, capturing his unceasing aspirations to fly. The resulting short film starring actor Jake Gyllenhaal aligns Cartier's watch with a sense of curiosity and adventure.

"Gyllenhaal is a respected actor whose personality conveys an understated authenticity, yet he is known for the bold, risk-taking roles that have earned him numerous accolades," said Jennifer Bowles Tyriver, senior art director at [MDG Advertising](#), Boca Raton, FL.

"He has established himself as an actor who is both a contemporary classic, as well as someone who isn't afraid to take risks to create something remarkable both of which are qualities that represent the modern evolution of this classic and influential timepiece," she said.

"The campaign appears to be a tribute to visionaries those who dare to dream big and explore new frontiers. This theme marries well with the iconic Cartier brand, which has been on the forefront of design in the past, and isn't afraid to evolve and keep innovating."

Ms. Bowles Tyriver is not affiliated with Cartier, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Cartier](#) was reached for comment.

Head in the clouds

Cartier announced Mr. Gyllenhaal as its brand ambassador in March. While many of its peers frequently feature celebrity ambassadors in their marketing efforts, Cartier has typically shied away from star spokesmodels, making this partnership unique for the brand ([see story](#)).

Mr. Gyllenhaal, known for his roles in films such as "Brokeback Mountain" and "Donnie Darko," is taking on a new character for Cartier.

In a 60-second short, the American actor appears as a protagonist inspired by Mr. Santos-Dumont. The Brazilian aviator and friend of house founder Louis Cartier prompted the creation of the Santos de Cartier timepiece, asking the jeweler for a watch he could use to tell time while flying.

Translating the idea of Mr. Santos-Dumont's aerial ambitions to the present day, British director Seb Edwards captured Mr. Gyllenhaal dreaming of flight.

The actor first appears at a caf as he looks out the window, thinking about being up in the clouds. As he gets lost in thought, his glass begins to glide across the table on its own.

Next, he is out on a city street when clouds billow in, enveloping him as he walks. Similarly to the glass that took off, inanimate objects such as chairs and cars float alongside him.



Still from Santos de Cartier film. Image credit: Cartier

Getting inside the protagonist's mind, an airplane is seen spinning in the air.

Finally, the film makes a comparison between flying and speeding on land as Mr. Gyllenhaal races through a tunnel on a motorcycle. As the objects did before him, he is seen twisting above the ground in his imagination.

"I wanted to create a Fellini-style fantasy world to tell the thrilling story through the eyes of Cartier, in the most immediate way possible," Mr. Edwards said in a statement. "I tried to capture the spirit of Alberto Santos-Dumont and his obsession with flight, speed and danger.

"I like to imagine what his dreams might have looked like... and come up with some wild imagery, a kind of abstract fantasy..." he said.

Santos de Cartier

Film forays

Cartier previously looked to Hollywood for a retro-themed campaign that brought back the 1980s along with its watch, an icon from the decade.

Oscar winner and 2017 Best Director at the Cannes International Film Festival, Sofia Coppola, directed Cartier's latest advertisement in which the eighties decade is rampant. The ad brought back the Panthre de Cartier watch, which was discontinued by the jeweler, but recently reintroduced citing consumer demand ([see story](#)).

Beyond its work with cinema, Cartier has looked to film to storytell around its designs.

The jeweler continued its pursuit to gain footing with millennial consumers in an effort dedicated to engagements.

Cartier's "The Proposal" series told the love stories leading up to the big question, offering heartfelt insights into the protagonists' romantic relationships ([see story](#)).

"A film-centric approach is a smarter sell to today's audience, who responds more to an emotional pull," MDG Advertising's Ms. Bowles Tyriver said. "Luxury brands are wise to promote a feeling or a lifestyle instead of the product alone.

"When you buy a Cartier, you aren't just buying a watch or particular style," she said. "You're buying the lifestyle, status and quality that the brand's image is known for.

"That's why carefully representing a brand's voice and image are so important."