

WATCHES AND JEWELRY

Cartier examines its inspirations in digital journey

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Cartier is exploring different aspects of its history in a new series. Image credit: Cartier

By SARAH RAMIREZ

French jeweler Cartier is sharing signature moments of its history with an entertaining digital series geared towards younger fans.

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The three-part series "L'Odyse de Cartier" discusses the impact of former creative director Jeanne Toussaint, as well as British and Russian influences on the maison. Luxury brands often differentiate themselves with their storied legacies, requiring them to find creative ways to their share their heritage with up-and-coming consumers.

"Marketing is best served as a legendary experience," said Casey Golden, founder/CEO of [Luxlock](#), New York.

"L'Odyse de Cartier is more romantic than usual marketing.

"It speaks to a new customer but doesn't leave out its core customers," she said. "Instead, it's a moment that can be shared."

Ms. Golden is not affiliated with Cartier, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

L'Odyse de Cartier

Each film in the series runs about two-and-a-half minutes and is directed by Camille Salvan. As the series' narrator, French actor Edouard Baer takes on an excitable and humorous personality.

Chapter one of L'Odyse de Cartier tells the story of Ms. Toussaint, nicknamed "la Panthre." It opens with a dazzling light shining on the Cartier logo before a panther appears onscreen.

"Doesn't she look familiar?" the narrator asks. "It's her I want to tell you about. The unique, the creative, the very first panther woman: Jeanne Toussaint."

L'Odyse de Cartier Chapter 1 discusses the impact of Jeanne Toussaint

Archival footage of 1920s Paris sets the scene, with the narrator occasionally pausing for comedic effect. The scene then shifts to a modest office, described as the birthplace of iconic Cartier styles.

Portraits on the walls allow the narrator to introduce Louis Cartier, the grandson of Cartier founder Louis-Francois Cartier, and Ms. Toussaint. The younger Mr. Cartier appointed Ms. Toussaint as the house's head of creation in 1933.

"At that time, giving a woman such a position was rather outside the box," the narrator says. "Well, actually it shatters the box."

The narrator then explains how Ms. Toussaint reinvigorated the brand with colorful creations, showing sketches and another animated panther, whose markings are made of gemstones. As the jewelry is described as the "mark of proud womanhood," footage is shown of celebrities wearing Cartier creations.

Chapter two, "Cartier and the British touch," is set in London, which the narrator describes as "where humor is added to red, white and blue." The short traces Cartier's history in the United Kingdom to the 1870s, when the founder's son

Alfred lived in England.

Jacque Cartier took over the house's Bond Street boutique in 1906. At this time, King Edward VII, a noted Cartier patron, sat on the throne.

The episode also places special attention on the Cartier Crash watch, which was inspired by London's quirkiness. With Cartier continuing to have a presence among the British high society set, the narrator mentions that the London flagship was recently revamped.

Chapter three, "Cartier and the Russian influences," begins in the 19th century as Russian aristocrats began traveling by train to Paris.

While in Russia, Pierre Cartier invented the "garland style" for delicate diamond tiaras. The film also spotlights the so-called Romanov bracelet, which features a 197-carat cushion-cut sapphire, formerly of Czarina Maria Feodorovna and set by Cartier in 2015.

Cartier also still creates high-jewelry using glyptic, a Russian technique of sculpting gemstones. The Ballets Russes premiere in Paris also inspired Cartier's signature green and blue color combination.

The film concludes by noting that Cartier's connection with Russia will continue with the opening of a boutique in Moscow.

The third chapter of the series explores the connection between Cartier and Russia

Although each episode has its own storyline and jumps around chronologically, the narrator and the technique of using archival images and computer animations creates cohesiveness.

"The digital series pulls you in, just as the Cartier in-store experience does," Ms. Golden said. "The culture of craft is a pillar of Cartier.

"L'Odysse bridges the past with the future and leaves you wanting more," she said.

Luxury legacies

Luxury brands often turn to film to share their histories or philosophies in entertaining and educational ways.

French fashion label Chanel has an ongoing heritage film series, "Inside Chanel," which began in 2012.

Chanel emphasized the longtime link between two different cultures with the latest installment of Inside Chanel, "Chapter 25, Gabrielle Chanel Goes West," which follows the house founder's arrival in the United States ([see story](#)).

Similarly, Prada's Miu Miu has long shared Women's Tales, a video series that explores themes of vanity and femininity.

The 18th commissioned film in Miu Miu's ongoing series, "Brigitte," features both conversations with the photographer Brigitte Lacombe and footage of her at work capturing shots of subjects she is closely connected to.

Ms. Lacombe is known for her portraiture, and has photographed Miu Miu's creative director and founder Miuccia Prada multiple times. The photographer has also been on-site during the filming of numerous Women's Tales shorts to document the behind-the-scenes process through stills ([see story](#)).

"Heritage creates the lust new brands can't manufacture," Luxlock's Ms. Golden said. "The romance of the brand's story over time emphasizes the house."