

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Rmy Martin partners with Usher for music history lesson

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Usher for Rmy Martin. Image credit: Rmy Martin

By NORA HOWE

French Cognac brand Rmy Martin is celebrating the union of two cultures in a thought-provoking campaign with multi-Grammy Award winning artist Usher.

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The new "Team Up for Excellence" film highlights the cultural connection between Cognac and American music since 1917, and how the two have been historically intertwined. Imagined in collaboration with creative agency **Fred & Farid New York**, the campaign pays tribute to the styles and rhythm from the 1920s until present day.

"Cognac and music have always lived in the same nightlife and entertainment venues and the connection between the two has only grown stronger over time," said Fred & Farid New York, in a statement to *Luxury Daily*.

Team Up for Excellence

Born Usher Raymond IV, the R&B singer has sold more than 65 million albums worldwide and won eight Grammy Awards. One of the defining artists of the 2000s, Usher has also appeared as a coach on the NBC singing competition "The Voice" and appeared in several films.

Teaming up with the "Yeah" singer and Cognac brand are globally recognized creatives including music composer Raphael Saadiq, Academy Award-winning costume stylist Marci Rodgers, dance choreographer Aakomon Jones and production director Jake Nava.

From blues and swing dancing to hip-hop and breakdancing, Usher and Rmy Martin journey through nine decades in France and the United States.

Team Up for Excellence - Film

Talking directly to the camera throughout the entire short film, Usher explains to viewers how the French embraced American jazz since World War I and elevated the celebration of music with their Cognac.

"When Black American soldiers were stationed in France during the two World Wars, they opened the eyes, ears and hearts of the French to blues and jazz, then played in clubs and in return discovered cognac and its culture," Fred &

Farid New York said. "Both were naturally found in the same places.

"Creatively, what interested us was that the proximity between the two could also relate to the values and the know-how behind music and cognac," they said. "They are both cultures of excellence that are a part of history, in the lasting sense and as a form of parallelism."

Traveling through the decades, audiences experience the evolution of music, getting a taste of each era's style.

In only six minutes, jazz turns into rhythm and blues, R&B turns into hip-hop and hip-hop introduces block parties in the Bronx.

"Music doesn't need Cognac to exist and Cognac doesn't need music to exist," Usher says in the film. "But they were meant to meet and when they did, they created cultural harmony."

Cultural movements throughout history have paved the way for musical artists to innovate while paying homage to their roots and the styles that came before them. Rmy Martin and cellar master Baptiste Loiseau aim to honor that same respect for heritage through the film.

In 2019, Rmy Martin and Usher teamed up during the artist's "OMG" world tour, where the brand was the official sponsor of the tour's after-parties across the U.S., Canada and Europe.



Jazz has been integral to music evolution over the last century. Image credit: Rmy Martin

Additionally, Usher cohosted the launch dinner for the producer series with Jermaine Dupri in 2018.

Following the launch in the U.S., the short film will be screened and showcased globally.

Beats of cognac

Throughout its history, Rmy Martin has set out to strengthen the union between Cognac and music, from jazz to hip-hop.

In 2019, Rmy Martin's Louis XIII communicated the complexity and impact of a single drop of its cognac through a composition that centers on a sole musical note.

Louis XIII worked with jazz composer Yaron Herman to create "One Note Prelude," a piece centered on the G-sharp pitch created by the sound of two cognac glasses clinking. The original score follows the house's other musical and cultural partnerships that sought to convey its craftsmanship in a creative manner ([see story](#)).

In December 2020, Rmy Martin celebrated the cultures of Cognac and music through a film series featuring Grammy-nominated recording artist 6LACK (pronounced "black").

Appearing in the "Ground's Melody" series, 6LACK reveals how music is strongly influenced by the cities and communities in which it was created, similar to the production of Cognac. The first episode focused on 6LACK's hometown of Atlanta, while the second paid tribute to the Los Angeles community which has fostered musical excellence for generations ([see story](#)).

"Rmy Martin acknowledged very quickly that audiences were not interested in a rational form of marketing, but that a more cultural approach should be embraced," Fred & Farid New York said. "This creative output is aimed at all those who find themselves enjoying the pleasure of Cognac and music.

"There is a form of artistic patronage in Rmy Martin's approach, along with great confidence in the talent of others."

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