

AUTOMOTIVE

## Mercedes looks to inspire, empower with extensive Cinderella campaign

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*One of the most beloved fairy tales of all time is back, and Mercedes-Benz is helping provide a new chariot. Image credit: Mercedes-Benz*

By KATIE TAMOLA

German automaker Mercedes-Benz is contributing to the magic of happily ever after with its new multichannel partnership with Amazon Prime Video's Cinderella.

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The multi-faceted campaign celebrates inclusion, dreams and overcoming hardship, with a special focus on female empowerment. It spans a television commercial, a livestream event and more exclusive online content, much of it highlighting the film's cast and crew.

"This Cinderella remake centers around female empowerment and celebrates Cinderella as a strong heroine rather than focusing on her attempt to find a husband," said Julie Blackley, communications manager at **iSeeCars**, Boston. "The classic Cinderella story is being redefined, and Mercedes is attempting to redefine itself by reaching a younger audience."

Time for a new story

Amazon's *Cinderella* stars Camila Cabello as Cinderella and Billy Porter as the Fabulous Godmother, Fab G. The film will premiere on the Prime Video streaming platform on Sept. 3.

Both leads will serve as Mercedes brand ambassadors and appear in different campaign elements.

"We're proud to collaborate with Amazon Prime Video on the reinvention of this classic film, which is set to redefine the magic that is *Cinderella* and inspire all generations of women around the world," said Monique Harrison, head of brand experience marketing at Mercedes-Benz, in a statement. "Mercedes-Benz will continue to amplify powerful stories, showing women and girls everywhere that they are truly capable of shattering the glass ceiling."

*In 2021, Cinderella is one of many women writing their own story*

"Rewrite the Story" cleverly and poignantly shows Ms. Cabello along with *Cinderella* director and writer Kay Cannon, producer Shannon McIntosh and other crew members challenging societal expectations for women while embracing their own paths.

The cast and crew theatrically and sarcastically list some common gendered phrases women hear, such as "don't be so bossy" and "you're prettier when you smile." The vignette ends with Ms. Cabello confidently walking to her modern-day chariot, a Mercedes-Benz G-Class.

"It's time for a new story," she says directly to the camera. "One we write."

As she gets into the vehicle, text overlay informs the audience that a new kind of Cinderella has arrived.

The spot, which is now airing running digitally and will run on network and cable starting Aug. 23, was a collaboration between Mercedes and its agency, Merkley + Partners. Rachel McDonald directed.

In the online-only "Custom Chariot" spot, Mr. Porter discusses his role as Fab G and the character's stunning and grand style.

He also meets with Mercedes-Benz designer Will Castro to discuss how to transform a Mercedes-Maybach S560 into a ride worthy of a fairy tale. Mr. Castro demonstrates how the sedan's innovative technology and personalizations can help Cinderella arrive at the ball in style.

*Fab G is ready to make all of Cinderella's dreams come true with the help of the innovative a Maybach S560*

After the Mercedes team adds the flair befitting of a fairy tale to the Maybach chariot, Mr. Porter then speaks about authenticity and how the world, including the German automaker, are continuously embracing inclusivity, and how this entity benefits us all.

"This ad is effective in so many ways as Billy Porter represents Broadway, is coming off of FX's Pose' and is a person who embodies inclusion in every way," said Kimmie Smith, cofounder and creative director of [Athleisure Mag](#), New York. "He is also someone who is comfortable in his skin and brings glamour to his every day.

"By adding these elements of the film into this spot and seeing how easily Billy embraces the Mercedes-Benz as it fits his aesthetics, it also breathes new life into this car [and brand], while drives the point that customization is possible and that what you envision is only limited by your budget," she said.

Mr. Porter will also host Mercedes' "Dressed for a Dream" livestream fashion show on Aug. 28, alongside actress Jamie Chung.

The show will star "Everyday Ellas" who will share personal success stories and model looks from the film. Another upcoming spot, "Inside Ella's Closet," features costume designer and Mercedes brand ambassador Ellen Mirojnick with a behind-the-scenes look at the film's wardrobe.

Tell us a story

Whether telling a new story or one that has been revered for a lifetime, brands continue to tap into the power of artistic expression.

Other luxury brands are also inviting consumers to become part of their own fairy tales.

In April, travel company Black Tomato brought timeless tales to life in a travel package offering affluent families the ultimate immersive experience.

After identifying timeless stories beloved by children and adults alike, Black Tomato introduced unique fairytale-inspired family vacations. The "Take me on a Story" program provided families itineraries, lodging and activities based on popular children's books ([see story](#)).

In March, French fashion house Dior blurred the lines between time and space with a mythical, dreamlike take on its fall/winter 2021-2022 ready-to-wear collection and presentation.

With the collection and film, Dior creative director Maria Grazia Chiuri aimed to challenge and revisit stereotypes and archetypes, creating a narrative projected into the future. To accompany and promote the digital show, Ms. Chiuri commissioned five animated teasers from five international female illustrators ([see story](#)).

The latest effort from Mercedes-Benz reflects brands' continued attempts to utilize something classic in reaching new heights and audiences.

"Mercedes-Benz shows that just like the cultural movement of inclusion and authenticity, this luxury car brand will continue to be one that is accessible across demographics and will continue to stay innovative, personalized and keep its customers' interests and needs at the core of what they do," said Athleisure Mag's Ms. Smith.

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