

AUTOMOTIVE

Porsche provides ultimate canvas in artistic effort

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Nelson Makamo meticulously paints the side mirror of a Porsche 911. Image credit: Porsche

By KATIE TAMOLA

German automaker Porsche is presenting one of its vehicles as the ultimate canvas in a new campaign starring acclaimed South African artist Nelson Makamo.

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In a short film, Mr. Makamo discusses how his upbringing in his township has continuously influenced his art. The campaign shares the artist's previous work and inspirations before he ultimately puts a colorful twist on a Porsche 911.

"Luxury sports cars like the Porsche 911 are aspirational cars for many and are often symbols of success," said Julie Blackley, communications manager at [iSeeCars](#), Boston.

"In achieving his dream of owning a Porsche 911, Nelson Makamo paid homage to his artistic vision that got him there by turning his vehicle into a masterpiece," she said. "Porsche vehicles are the pinnacle of craftsmanship and are masterpieces in their own right, and this is reinforced by the brand's partnership with a world-renowned artist."

Finding yourself

The [#PaintYourPassion](#) vignette opens with a shot of paintbrushes followed by a palette with several gobs of paint, with colors ranging from turquoise to scarlet and light pink. Mr. Makamo's voiceover begins as he introduces himself, meticulously mixing water with different paints in a studio.

Born Letsholo Nelson Makamo, the artist describes his upbringing in Limpopo, in a small town called Modimolle. The shot cuts to the artist's hometown, weaving in scenes of bright fruit and playful children.

Mr. Makamo discusses his upbringing and how it has influenced his work

Mr. Makamo talks about how he used to view Limpopo as home, but has since learned that home can be anywhere he feels he can express himself freely without feeling limited.

The artist then talks about how the city of Johannesburg influenced him as an artist.

"What has probably made me the artist that I am is Jo'burg because Jo'burg culture has sort of pushed me to believe

this is what it takes to be an artist of my calibre," he says.

When he was growing up, he often played and was photographed without shoes or clothes, and how those are the images people most often find when they Google images of African children. He then explains how through his art, he challenges this limiting idea.

"Today you won't find a lot of [those pictures] because our work pushed those narratives away," he says.

Mr. Makamo expresses his belief that all people are born equal, with a power to affect change. This is reflected in every portrait of a child that he creates, as he has purposely included glasses for each child, symbolizing their intelligence and immense potential.

Suddenly, Mr. Makamo is no longer painting a portrait of a child on an easel. He is now painting a line of the outlines of humans, in a rainbow of disparate colors, on the bumper of a Porsche. He paints more parts of the vehicle, featuring figures of humans in different colors.

"So any person can find themselves in that," he says.

He arrives at Porsche Johannesburg, where the vehicle featuring his art is unveiled.

Having even painted the key fob, the artist reacts emotionally and joyfully to seeing the finished product featuring his designs. He then discusses how he can relate to the brand as the shots pan to the exquisitely painted details of the seats and his name engraved in light.



The interior of Nelson Makamo's Porsche 911. Image credit: Porsche

The film concludes with Mr. Makamo driving back to his hometown in the Porsche. He reflects on the importance of his drive home, as it was where his artistic journey began.

"For me to drive there, it was not to show them how successful I am, it was not that," he says.

"It was just for me to drive and show how much that place has inspired me, and I wanted to come back and inspire it back."

Sparking emotion

Porsche's latest spot with Mr. Makamo is only a continuation of a recent string of emotional narratives.

Last month, Porsche explored the topic of dreams through inspiring and educational stories of the past and present.

With its campaign, "Dreamers On," the automaker aimed to support consumers around the world in achieving their dreams, while anchoring its brand purpose, which is poetically "driven by dreams." In its first media partnership with *Vogue* and *Wired* magazines, Porsche has also introduced "The Art of Drive," an interactive online mentoring program with notable personalities who discuss how they strive to fulfill their dreams and inspire other people to do the same through short films, articles, interviews and digital events ([see story](#)).

Similarly, Toyota Corp.'s Lexus is paying tribute to creativity and innovation in automotive engineering through a new video series.

For the "Emotional Sparks" campaign, the Japanese automaker teamed with several artists to create an original song and music video. The campaign will run on television, as well as digital, social, print and out-of-home ([see story](#)).

Storytelling is essential for automakers, including Porsche, to produce content that resonates with consumers.

"This spot shows the importance of having a dream and a vision, and that nothing can get in the way of those who

dare to dream. It doesn't feel like an advertisement, but rather a story," Ms. Blackley said.

"Nelson Makamo uses his Porsche 911 to tell his own personal story while inspiring members of his community to believe in the power of their dreams."

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