

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Prada unites fashion, cinema in wintry tale

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The film's subjects set out on a voyage home. Image credit: Prada

By NORA HOWE

Italian fashion house Prada has brought the worlds of fashion and film together in a cinematic voyage for its 2021 holiday campaign.

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Starring actors Julia Garner, Shira Haas, Louis Patridge and Taylor Russel, "A Midwinter's Night Dream" tells the story of four protagonists who trek through frozen terrain in the pursuit of returning home. With this project and campaign, Prada invites audiences to celebrate cinema, fashion, community and creativity.

"At first viewing, I did not see this as an interesting or even compelling holiday campaign for Prada," said Daymon Bruck, chief commercial officer and partner at **The O Group**, New York. "After watching again, though, a number of core elements started to emerge that were surprisingly effective.

"It was almost as if they took a classic holiday message and broke it down to its core essentials and then reconstructed a short film around those elements," he said. "A sweeping fantasy, a mystery unfolding, a spirit of togetherness, a sense of wonder, the collective experience and a winter landscape all come together to create an air of holiday magic."

Midwinter's Night Dream

Directed by Glen Luchford, the film captures a winter scene as the four actors set out on a quest across what appears to be a glacier, which is ultimately revealed as Los Angeles.

Mr. Luchford has worked with Prada since the 1990s, and continues to share his craft in collaboration with the brand.

"A Midwinter's Night Dream" is based on an original story and script by renowned screenwriter and director Mary Harron, who is known for cult classics such as *American Psycho* and *I Shot Andy Warhol*.

Four actors travel across a frozen terrain, unveiled to be Los Angeles

The campaign opens on a cold, winter scene. Walking against the wind, the four main characters discuss the improbability that they are all traveling together at this time.

"I don't think it's strange," Ms. Garner says. Mr. Partridge and Ms. Haas reconsider the journey as fate, as opposed to happenstance.

They hold each other close to brave the winds and low temperatures, and eventually come upon a palm tree covered in ice and snow. A sign reads, "Los Angeles City Limit."

In a new scene, the group moves towards a joyous gathering, and looks out over a sprawling city of lights.

"Is this is meant as a climate change warning," said Mr. Bruck. "Perhaps the intended message below the beautiful surface of the film is supposed to invoke the emotion of uncertainty: a dark warning mixed in with a little holiday magic and hope."

The idea for the campaign was inspired by Prada's belief that fashion and film both have an ability to convey stories that bring people together through shared experiences.

Further merging the creative worlds, the campaign's imagery is taken from film stills, displayed as the setting of the short film.



Imagery taken from film stills serves as the setting for the campaign. Image credit: Prada

Leveraging the evolution of technology in film, Prada and Mr. Luchford brought the voyage to life using Volume, a virtual effects tool originally created for "The Mandalorian." The tool allows for an immersive experience made up of glowing LED screens in a curved pattern.

Film and fashion, a natural pair

Film and fashion are almost intrinsically linked as channels for creativity and self-expression, and brands frequently leverage the power of cinema in their campaigns.

Last year, Italian fashion label Gucci collaborated with Dazed to launch "Absolute Beginners," a series granting various artists their directorial debuts.

Gucci and Dazed challenged a selection of nine artists, from models to actors, to get behind the camera and direct short films for the fashion brand. The artists developed their own screenplays and brought their visions for Gucci to life as directors ([see story](#)).

Saint Laurent played with the metaphysical in a cinematic effort for its spring/summer 2021 campaign. A nine-minute short film, entitled "French Water," takes viewers into a dreamy, eerie world directed by Jim Jarmuch and featuring designs from creative director Anthony Vaccarello.

The star-studded cast navigates a capacious setting, post-dinner-party, while mysteriously reappearing in different products from the latest collection ([see story](#)).