

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

“Chanel and Cinema” series spotlights Venice Film Festival co-stars in conversation

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British actress Tilda Swinton includes a detailed rundown of her role in "The Eternal Daughter" alongside British actress Carly-Sophia Davies, as part of the "Chanel and Cinema" series. Image credit: Chanel

By AMIRAH KEATON

French fashion house Chanel is bringing behind-the-scenes to light, exploring the inner workings of a cultural mainstay.

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The brand's latest series, "Chanel and Cinema", delves into the stories behind acclaimed works recognized during the 2022 Venice International Film Festival. Across three episodes, event honorees lend insights into their creative process and sources of inspiration for their respective film endeavors.

Chanel takes cinema

Spanish actress and House ambassador Penlope Cruz, British actress Tilda Swinton and French director Alice Diop star in Chanel's new creative execution.

A shared participation in this year's 79th Venice Film Festival unites the trio. Each star either plays a leading role or leads production altogether.

In the first of three, Ms. Diop speaks about her work directing "Saint-Omer," a film rooted in themes of justice and reflection with parallels to Greek mythology starring actress and "Chanel and Cinema" subject Kayije Kagame. The film received the Silver Lion and the Lion of the Future awards during this year's festival.

A short montage flashes characters in imagery dating back to black-and-white, juxtaposed against the famous faces of current, set to orchestra tones signaling the content's high art context, and serves as the series intro for each episode.



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"What is the origin of your first movie?" a white-text prompt asks.

"I decided to write a fiction based on the transcript of a real-life trial, with a plotline that I wove around the character Kayije Kagame," Ms. Diop replies in French dialect, donning a pair of dangling Chanel earrings that move with her enthused speech.

The director is joined by Ms. Kagame before unveiling that an earlier chance encounter with the actress served as the origin point for the movie's script, which she proceeded to write based on a photo she happened to snap at the time.

"It's also an honor to present the film accompanied by Chanel, which has very strong ties with cinema," notes Ms. Kagame.

Chanel's connection with the film world spans decades as, according to the brand, Coco Chanel was said to have built relationships with working actresses of decades past by dressing them. These stars would vouch for the company, forming an informal brand ambassadorship of sorts through the years.

The series' second drop features Ms. Cruz, who plays leading roles in two Venice Biennale films: "En Los Mrgenes," directed by Argentine-Spanish actor Juan Diego Botto and "L'immensit," directed by Italian screenwriter Emanuele Crialese.

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Ms. Cruz marks attending the festival with her Chanel friends among a list of her most memorable festival experiences over the years.

Whereas many luxury brands focus Film Festival content on celebrity dressing moments, Chanel is choosing to highlight the cultural significance of the event through its latest series.

Ms. Swinton opens the series finale with a detailed rundown of her role in "The Eternal Daughter" alongside British actress Carly-Sophia Davies.

"This film, as well as all [director Joanna Hogg]'s films, is entirely improvised," Ms. Swinton reveals.

When asked how it feels to be accompanied by Chanel through the festival, both women gave raving reviews of being hosted by the brand.

"Chanel [is] pretty much always where really interesting cinema projection is going on," comments Ms. Swinton.

Her co-star hones in on the ability to exist authentically with Chanel's support.

"It makes me able to enjoy the experience a lot more," Ms. Davies says.

"I feel comfortable. I feel like me."

Enduring visibility

Chanel's unorthodox approach adds a layer of genuine patronage to the well-thought-out series.

The luxury house is up against peers like primary festival sponsor Cartier. The French jeweler held the title of Venice Film Festival's official partner for the second year in a row ([see story](#)).

The official partnership began in 2021, when the French jeweler became the leading sponsor for the prestigious biannual festival, and has evolved to now include this year's 79th Biennale Cinema.

Many notable jewelry houses are boosting their images in the public eye by signing on to fund film festivals, from Chopard with Cannes to Bulgari with the Toronto film festival ([see story](#)).

Yet, Chanel manages to cut through the noise of an existing festival sponsorship by going directly to the source for content, employing a brilliantly potent strategy and cementing its top spot luxury spot.