AUTOMOTIVE

Mercedes-Maybach, Rolls-Royce among auto brands veering into luxury fashion

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The Mercedes-Maybach "Haute Voiture" is one of several new releases inspired by high fashion. Image Credit: Mercedes-Maybach

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British and German automakers Rolls-Royce and Mercedes-Benz are among a rising wave of luxury auto brands that have released or reimagined recent models from their respective collections that are inspired, or accompanied by, high fashion.

These drops arrive as part of a growing trend that sees the upmarket auto sector merging into lifestyle's lane. Repeatedly leveraging fashion's "cool" factor are brands such as British automaker Aston Martin and Toyota Corp.'s Lexus, each of which has recently debuted fashion-related activations, with some even going as far as to release apparel of their own.

Changing Lanes
Last month, Mercedes-Benz teamed up with British menswear designer and choreographer Saul Nash to create a capsule collection in celebration of professional esports organization SK Gaming's 25-year anniversary.

Mr. Nash received the Queen Elizabeth II Award for British Design as National Designer of the Year just months before the late monarch's death (see story).

The collection is comprised of long-sleeved performance tees and reversible black sports jackets, versatile in nature, made from recycled polyester and Lycra. Inside, a color combination of lilac and blue bears the logo of both Mercedes-Benz and its partner.

Both items are formfitting, with marketing presumably representative of the athletes the brand seeks to attract.

Similarly, British automaker Aston Martin has begun to promote branded baseball caps, key rings, pull bags and thermos bottles in addition to t-shirts in various colors, in a wearable extension of its marquee heritage.

A standout collection showcases its long association with the "James Bond" franchise. Tops are emblazoned with the fictional spy agent's "007" number. Notebooks are labeled with the 2021 film's title.

Speaking of film, earlier this fall, Lexus took its adventure-ridden ethos a bit further with a luxury crossover between

the automotive and fashion realms.

After the release of an adventure-ridden, themed campaign, the automaker is back with more for the vehicle's launch. This time, Lexus is teaming up with British American designer Harris Reed for "Ruby Red Rims," a cocreated custom debuted by the design duo at W Magazine's 50th-anniversary party (see story).

With a license from Warner Bros. Consumer Products at its core and a creative at its side, the car company's concept celebrated the contemporary update of its best-selling model.

The 2023 Lexus RX dazzled under red light and a redesign from Mr. Reed, who had a heavy hand in designing the pair of specialty red rims, inspired by two signature hats from his recent spring/summer 2023 presentation.

With backs created from solid aluminum with gloss-sealed glitter, and fronts that featured a red center with the brand's logo emblazoned, all polished in ruby red, LED lights finished off Lexus' innovative introduction.

Well-Worn Path
Switch gears to collections dropped within the last 30 days and the trend continues.

For instance, those lucky enough to come into possession of a new limited edition Mercedes-Maybach's S-Class "Haute Voiture" collection can also opt for a complementary barrel bag, made of the same boucl and Nappa leather that comprises the car's interior (see story).

Creatives at British automaker Rolls-Royce were recently sparked by haute couture, as evidenced by the release of "Cullinan-Inspired by Fashion," which reintroduced one of the brand's most memorable models in its repertoire in two bold new colors, "Fu-Shion" and "Re-Belle."

With the new Cullinan come two sets of luggage, one to correspond to each reimagining of the re-release (see story).

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