

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Montblanc treads line between tradition and innovation in new campaign

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Montblanc's nib, dipped twice over in gold, has undergone several innovative changes over the last century, while maintaining its iconic shape. Image credit: Montblanc

By MARYBETH CONNAUGHTON

A new promotional video released by German stationery house Montblanc highlights the means and methods by which it balances tradition and innovation, resulting in objet d'art meant to leave an indelible mark.

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Entitled "Between Insanity and Genius," the video showcases some of the meticulous processes that Montblanc writing instruments undergo before finding a home in the hands of writers. The latest model to display such dedication is the Meisterstück Great Masters Calligraphy 149 fountain pen.

Brilliance and Madness

The video opens by referencing the popular—though hardly clinical—definition of insanity: to repeat an action over and over while expecting a different result.

Here Montblanc flouts this thinking and argues that maintaining a traditional practice for over a century need not preclude, and can even lead to, pioneering changes.

This means handcraft working in tandem with cutting-edge technology, letting each one take over where the other leaves off. Much of this technology is invented in-house, and its handcrafting is done in Hamburg, Germany.

The video gives viewers a close glimpse of some of this machinery in motion.

Viewers are invited to watch some of the house's most innovative processes at work.

The nib, which is the heart of Montblanc's design, is, alone, a result of 35 processes. This means it is at once is flexible while never losing its shape. The rest of the pen, though it has been formed of different materials over the years, has retained the same cylindrical, cigar-like shape.

The ring, that sets at the lower half of the pen, is rendered by a machine that marries 20 tools into one.

All models are polished, hand-tested and retested by experts.

These time-honored processes have earned Montblanc pens a place in history. The house displays on its website a series of photographs wherein heads of state, including former U.S. presidents John F. Kennedy Jr. and Barack Obama, and the late Queen Elizabeth II, are seen using Montblanc to sign seminal documents.

The Art of Writing

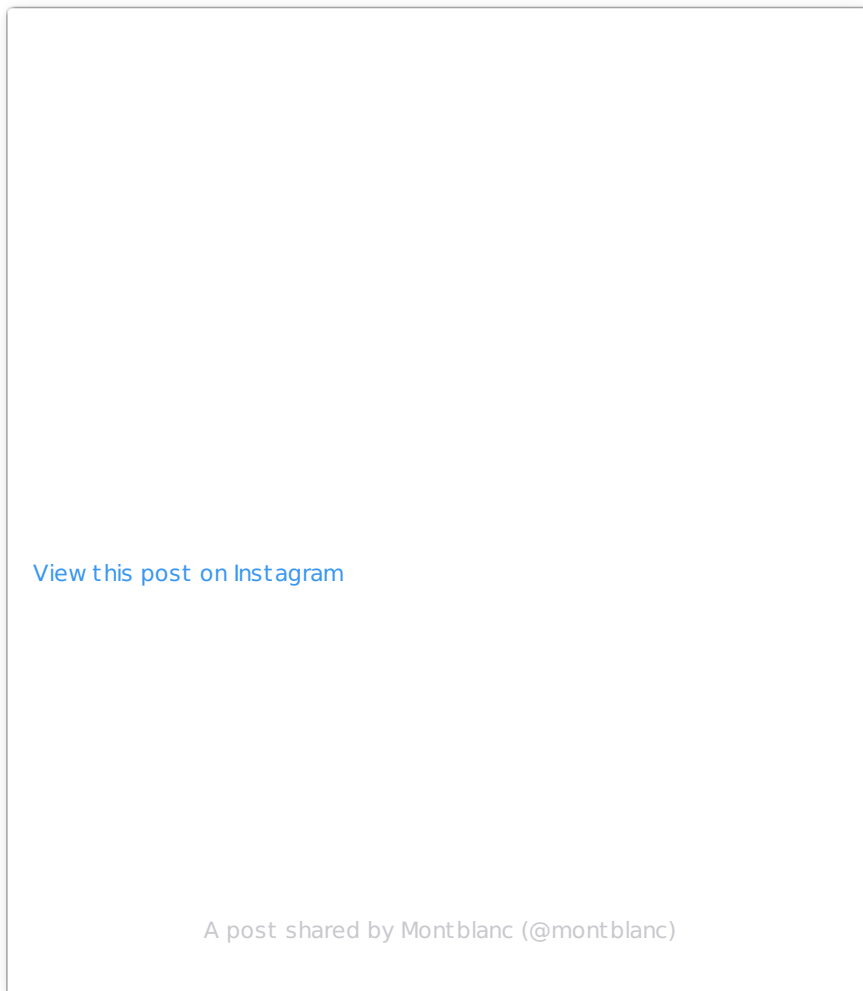
Punctuating its posts with the hashtag #inspirewriting, Montblanc considers writing an art, and hopes that writers will use their pens to write their own stories.

"With today's ever-increasing pace, it is vital to be confronted with products that have been crafted to withstand the passing of time," reads a statement on the brand's website. "Montblanc's pieces will weather the ages with you and witness your unfolding stories and those of your family. Just as a soul remains long after its body is gone, our pieces are crafted to perform superbly and symbolize elegance for many lifetimes."

If there is a pen that makes an art of writing, it is the **Montblanc** Meisterstück Great Masters Calligraphy 149 fountain pen.

The inaugural Meisterstück, which is German for "masterpiece," was released in 1924. This latest model has a curved nib and a unique silhouette that allows for unrestricted movement. It is inspired by, and lends itself perfectly to, the fine art of calligraphy.

In fact, it is capable of making all kinds of fine art. In one promotional video, an artisan, filling the pen from an inkpot, puts it to canvas to hand sketch a portrait.



This pen is made of made of black precious resin and features gold-coated details, including a clip which bears an individual serial number. The handcrafted nib is made of 18 karat gold with a rhodium-coated inlay.

Writers can choose from nib types Fine, at .50 millimeters, Medium at 0.62 millimeters, and Broad, at 0.92 millimeters.

The result is clearly appreciated by those who hold the end results in their hands.

"What an exquisite writing instrument!," "A very unique writing experience," were just two of the comments under a video on the brand's Instagram page.

Another viewer writes, "This is such a special pen to me. I cannot wait to get mine and use it for years to come. What a fine masterpiece."

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