

JEWELRY

## Audemars Piguet connects with Givenchy creative director for limited-edition launch

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*The move is a first for the brand, as it has never dropped redesigns of two flagship models at once. Image credit: Audemars Piguet*

By ZACH JAMES

Swiss watchmaker Audemars Piguet is collaborating with a well-known name in luxury fashion.

In partnership with American designer and Givenchy creative director Matthew Williams and his 1017 ALYX 9SM apparel brand, Audemars Piguet is releasing four limited-edition chronometers. Placing sleek design at the forefront of the collection, the models opt for minimalism as the maison seeks to move haute horology forward into new arenas, touting the cross-pollination of fashion and timepieces.

"The collaboration is an unexpected choice, but a great choice," said Rony Zeidan, founder and creative director of [RO New York](#).

"A collaboration with a fashion designer is no surprise across all industries, from Samuel Ross's collaboration with Kohler, to Mugler and H&M, and now Matthew Williams to Audemars Piguet," Mr. Zeidan said. "Fashion designers have the ability [to bring] a fresh design perspective into other categories and bring in their tribe of followers.

"This crossover of creativity and potential new customers is a crucial point [of] these collaborations."

Haute horology

The move is a first for Audemars Piguet, as it has never dropped redesigns of two flagship models at once, especially those that are matching.

This collaboration also brings Mr. Williams into uncharted territory, having never been involved in the creative process of manufacturing a timepiece in his other positions.

"A collaboration like this allows for me to explore and extend my knowledge to another area of excellence," said Mr. Williams, in a statement.

*The timepieces' minimalist construction is spotlighted in a short film*

Comprised of the iconic Royal Oak and Royal Oak Offshore watch lines, the limited collection transforms the timeless designs into solid gold statements while retaining the manufacturer's recognizable codes.

The 37 to 42mm cases are made entirely of 18K white or yellow, depending on the model. Regardless of the

consumer's choice of size or coloration, they'll be met with a sleek and clean aesthetic that is matched by its counterparts.

"The product itself is very slick and masculine, and the image and campaign created around it is very dynamic, young and hip," said Mr. Zeidan.

"It has a high potential of attracting a young set of elites that could opt for an Audemars Piguet watch instead of a Rolex or Cartier," he said. "The potential is there."

*The campaign video features abstract imagery*

The collection, limited to 75 pieces for the Royal Oak Offshores and 200 for the Royal Oak, is meant to showcase the "crossroads" of the fashion and horology worlds, melding together into an avant-garde spirit present in the short film promoting the dual release.

In the campaign video, the chronographs can be seen on a wide variety of people's wrists during a vast amount of differing tasks, showing the everyday use case present with a comfortably minimalist luxury watch.

The presentation of that information is where the film stands out, as the editing is fast and frenetic, shifting perspectives, film stock and styles throughout its minute and half-long runtime.

"That is the beauty of this collaboration: the synergies are such that we have taken each other to the next level," said Francois-Henry Bennahmias, CEO of Audemars Piguet, in a statement.

The Royal Oak and Royal Oak Offshores range in price from \$73,500 to \$111,500.

**Making a difference**

Attaching a well-known name helps to signal boost new releases to audiences that may not have previously considered purchasing a maison's products.

Other labels have also worked with Mr. Williams and 1017 ALYX 9SM for this purpose, previously collaborating with Italian fashion company Moncler on a capsule collection in late December 2022 ([see story](#)). While this practice is widely used, some luxury brands have coupled these joint ventures alongside charity events in order to give back to the underprivileged.

Swiss watchmaker Jaquet Droz's partnership with English rock band The Rolling Stones is proof of this ([see story](#)). Coupled with U.S. jeweler David Yurman's efforts in the arena ([see story](#)), luxury labels are making a difference in more creative and beneficial ways, whether it be long-term agreements with charitable organizations or granting tangible benefits to those supporting causes.

As part of this trend, Audemars Piguet created a one-of-a-kind Royal Oak Selfwinding Chronograph that was auctioned at the Tokyo launch event for the collaboration with Mr. Williams' brand. Fetching \$1 million from the sale, the proceeds are being donated to Kids in Motion and Right to Play, NGOs that benefit children and their education in the town of Lamu, Kenya.