

EVENTS/CAUSES

# Luxury takes Women's Month celebrations online

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Hilton, Mercedes-Benz, Prada and Cartier are among the names celebrating female accomplishment. Image credit: Hugo Boss

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By ZACH JAMES

As March progresses, so does high-end brands' public appreciation of one-half of the global population.

In observation of Women's Month, many maisons are highlighting their respective commitments to female audiences, employees, creatives, executives and others within the space. Across the spectrum, from fashion to automotive, labels are embracing women's empowerment, launching digital campaigns, hosting panels and premiering songs, among other types of online activations.

## Empowering the moment

Several prominent names in the travel category are activating for the occasion.

Doha-based airline Qatar Airways came out first, uplifting the women both on-staff and in the general population that "reach new heights every day." U.A.E.-based company Etihad Airways is taking a similar approach, releasing a short film celebrating those that break down cultural and societal barriers in the name of progressing gender equity.

Taking a different approach, American multinational hospitality company hosted Icelandic singer-songwriter Laufey to debut her latest song, "Goddess," as a part of its "Connecting Room Concert" series.

### *Music connects audiences across cultures*

Fashion is embracing female talent in a completely separate approach, often targeting systemic inequality.

Italy's Prada Group is expanding the scope of its artisanal training program in Mexico, helping the local community and uplifting talent that would otherwise go untapped.

"The beauty of the UNFPA partnership with the Prada Group is that it places creativity at the center of building inclusive communities for women and girls," said Mariarosa Cutillo, chief of strategic partnerships at the United Nations Population Fund, in a statement.

"We have seen the impact of this model in Africa, using fashion to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender equality, and women's economic empowerment, and are excited to see the results it can have for the women artisans from Quertaro, Mexico."

*The Prada Group's Miu Miu will release the latest in its "Women's Tales" series of short films this month*

French luxury conglomerate LVMH is taking a similar action, launching a new initiative to mentor female talents in its workforce to help foster more successful careers within the industry ([see story](#)).

Looking outside its confines, German fashion house Hugo Boss hosted a panel discussion on imposter syndrome in the workplace and empowering women. English model Naomi Campbell was among the participants in the dialogue.

Reaching outside of the high-end apparel sector, big names in luxury jewelry also made a splash.

Furthering the conversation around women's ambitions and uplifting their talent, American actress and activist Yara Shahidi and American author, lawyer and fellow activist Meena Harris discussed the aforementioned topics and more during a half-hour discussion platformed by French jewelry maison Cartier.

*The maison uplifts the importance of instilling confidence in girls at a young age*

The brand also hosted an event, the 2024 Cartier Women's Initiative Ceremony, in Paris, France. At this celebration of progress, Liv Andersson, CEO and cofounder of English biotechnology firm BioZeroc, read a poem she wrote; they then [posted](#) the powerful message on their YouTube account.

Other jewelers, like Pommelato, also got involved. In an annual exercise, the maison enlisted women's and human rights advocates, as well as American actress and activist Jane Fonda, to stand up against domestic violence ([see story](#)).

Across other segments, specifically beauty, beverages and retail, Coty, Guerlain, Diageo and Holt Renfrew ([see story](#)) separately spotlighted women within their respective businesses.

## **Driving change**

The luxury automotive industry was arguably more active than any others in the space.

Mercedes-Benz came out full-force, as the German automaker continued a now-annual campaign. Titled Be One of Many, the messaging which originally launched last year centers on the experiences of three highly successful women, platforming non-traditional role models for young girls, as the talents all work in male-dominated roles.



*Started on International Women's Day, the campaign will continue throughout the remainder of 2024. Image credit: Mercedes-Benz*

"With the continuation of the Be one of many' campaign for International Women's Day, we're promoting diversity and equal opportunities," said Bettina Fetzer, VP of communications & marketing at MercedesBenz AG, in a statement

"We seek to encourage women to confidently claim their places in life," Ms. Fetzer said. "As a brand with global relevance, we want to inspire people to see things in new ways and use our social media reach for positive change, beyond today's International Women's Day."

At British automaker Bentley, it is looking to the past to drive forward into the future. Creating one-of-one Bentayga S, Azure and EWB models, the brand drew inspiration from the "Bentley Girls" of the 1920s.

Female designers and creatives were behind the custom commission project, also shifting the company's "Extraordinary Women" initiative into another gear.



Three "Bentley Girls" Mary Petre Bruce, Dorothy Paget and Diana Barnato Walker inspired each one-of-a-kind vehicle. Image credit: Bentley

"The Bentley Girls each played a crucial role in Bentley's history and it is important to bring their involvement to light," Karen Lange, Member of the board for human resources at Bentley, in a statement.

"We are always striving to expand the Bentley Family' and sometimes that means looking back and honoring important people who brought so much meaning to the Bentley brand we know today," Ms. Lange said. "These three cars are an homage to the lives of the Bentley Girls, and the contributions they made to the Bentley we know and love today."

Taking a more traditional approach, U.S. automaker Cadillac and British automaker McLaren both released short films celebrating International Women's Day.

Across the spectrum, from fashion to automotive, maisons were active in uplifting the female talent responsible for the progression of the overarching luxury industry, a trend that is likely to continue as the years roll on, as ESG initiatives uplift the importance of diversity in all roles in high-end business.

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