

## AUTOMOTIVE

# Rolls-Royce spotlights Phantom line's musical connections

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*The brand is setting a new stage for the design's 100th anniversary. Image credit: Rolls-Royce*

By ZACH JAMES

British automaker Rolls-Royce is showcasing its signature model's cultural impacts throughout the past century.

Through new photography and a behind-the-scenes film, the brand is continuing its year-long celebration of the Phantom design, which reached the centennial mark in 2025. The content highlights the myriad of connections the iconic vehicle has forged in the music industry over this extended period of time, with the company dubbing it a "Rock n' Roll Legend."

"From the Golden Age of Hollywood to the rise of hip-hop, over the last 100 years, music artists have used Phantom to project their identity and challenge convention," said Chris Brownridge, CEO of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, in a statement.

"Their motor cars often became icons in their own right, with a lasting place in the history of modern music," Mr. Brownridge said. "This enduring connection reminds us that Rolls-Royce and the extraordinary people who are part of the marque's story are united by one ambition: to make their presence felt."

## Historic ties

With the Rolls-Royce's latest marketing endeavor, it seeks to solidify the Phantom's status as an icon within the entertainment world.

In the advertisement, the automotive brand spotlights the long list of musicians who have commissioned the vehicle over the years, ranging from American singer Elvis Presley in the 1950s to New York rapper 50 Cent in the 2000s and beyond.

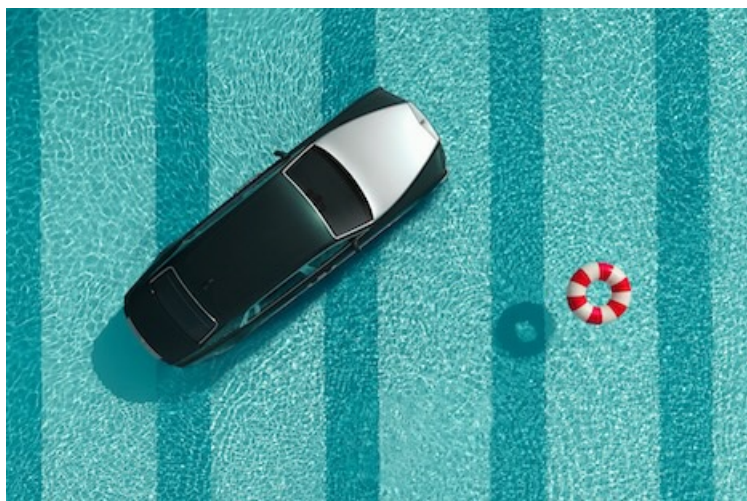
*Rolls-Royce presents "Behind The Scenes: Diving into Rock n' Roll Legend"*

The stills showcase a black Phantom partially submerged in the Tinside Lido, an art-deco swimming pool overlooking the ocean in Plymouth, England. Britain's seafaring heritage is tied to the locale, alongside the massively influential pop group The Beatles, who were captured in an iconic photo along its shores a moment now immortalized through an artistic on-site installation.

One of the band's members, John Lennon, ordered a bespoke all-black model following the release and massive success of "A Hard Day's Night." The one-of-a-kind creation was later repainted yellow with various colored swirls in a tribute to "Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band."

It was sold for \$2.29 million in 1985, becoming the most expensive piece of rock n' roll memorabilia and the highest auction sale

price for a vehicle up to that point. Mr. Lennon would also go on to purchase a white Rolls-Royce Phantom V in a nod to "The White Album."



American pianist Liberace also owned a bespoke, extravagant Phantom at the peak of his popularity. Image credit: Rolls-Royce

In the 1970s and 1980s, British singer-songwriter Elton John would commission two one-of-a-kind vehicles, updating them over the years. One of the pieces would end up in his pool during a party, an image Rolls-Royce is recreating through the advertisements.

The model's musical ties continue into the 21st century, switching from prevalence in the pop and rock genres to an icon of hip hop. 2003's launch of the Phantom VII is credited for its pop culture resurgence, with artists such as Snoop Dogg, Pharrell Williams, Lil Wayne and 50 Cent featuring the car in music videos, in television show appearances, on album covers and in many lyrics, becoming one of the most namechecked automobiles in the industry.

### Industry tempo

With the release of its latest marketing push, Rolls-Royce not only uplifts its cultural impact but also joins in on an ongoing trend.

Music has regained steam as an avenue for luxury brands to reach new and core consumers in recent months, with companies across nearly every industry vertical forging new partnerships and renewing previous collaborations.



The automaker is looking to establish its 100-year-old title as a mainstay in music. Image credit: Rolls-Royce

Earlier this summer, Swiss watchmaker Audemars Piguet linked up with longtime collaborator and British-American record producer Mark Ronson and British singer-songwriter Rachel Keen to craft a new original song, celebrating the horology label's 150th anniversary ([see story](#)).

In the travel space, German film composer Hans Zimmer partnered with Doha-based airline Qatar Airways to provide the company with a fresh sonic signature ([see story](#)). Meanwhile, U.S. fashion brand Ralph Lauren's beauty division enlisted American singer-songwriter Usher as the face of its latest fragrance ([see story](#)).

The luxury clothing sector has also embraced this trend, with fashion labels Burberry ([see story](#)) and Michael Kors ([see story](#)) enlisting musical talents to star and provide a soundtrack for their new campaigns.

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