

IN-STORE

Hublot partners with Jay-Z, Barneys for large-scale holiday collaboration

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*Hublot for Jay Z's A New York Holiday*

By JEN KING

Swiss watchmaker Hublot, together with Shawn "Jay Z" Carter, unveiled two wristwatches that make up the rapper's larger collaborative effort with department store Barneys New York to further align the watch brand with the iconic figure and the retailer.

The watches will be part of Jay Z's "A New York Holiday" capsule collection that will be exclusively available Nov. 20 - Jan. 3 at select Barneys' locations. Jay Z's A New York Holiday collaboration features multiple brands to create a total affluent lifestyle that will appeal to consumers beyond timepiece enthusiasts.

"The high-end watch field is crowded with competitors, many with unusual names like Hublot, how can any potential buyer figure out which brand to buy?" said Al Ries, founder and chairman of [Ries & Ries](#), a Roswell, GA-based marketing strategy consultancy.

"Jay Z is a well-known celebrity with a with-it reputation and his endorsement of Hublot will convince many consumers that Hublot is a very good watch brand," he said.

"Not necessarily the 'best' watch brand but consumers don't want to spend the time and effort to figure out which brand is the best, they just want to know that the brand they buy is a good choice."

Mr. Ries is not affiliated with Hublot, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Hublot](#) was unable to comment before press deadline.

Empire state of mind

Jay Z's collaborative efforts with Barneys will feature a pop-up shop in select retail locations called "BNY SCC," or Barneys New York Shawn Corey Carter, where his collaborations for A New York Holiday include limited-edition items from his creative projects with Lanvin, Moncler, Balenciaga and Hublot, reports [WWD](#).



BNY SCC pop-up shopping bag

A New York Holiday will be available on Barneys' ecommerce site as well as at the retailer's New York, Beverly Hills, CA, San Francisco, Boston and Chicago locations. In addition, a select number of pieces from the collection are available prior to the launch date of Nov. 20.

The collection includes a fragrance, Cognac, a travel humidor, bags, a jacket and jewelry such as the two Hublot wristwatches created for the series. The "Shawn Carter by Hublot" 45mm watches are among the most expensive items in the collection.



Lanvin jacket and Balenciaga backpack for Jay Z's A New York Holiday

Shawn Carter by Hublot comes in two models, 18-karat yellow gold and black ceramic, both on a black alligator leather strap. The 18-karat gold watch retails for \$33,900 limited to 100-numbered pieces while the ceramic watch, a 250-watch reserve, can be purchased for \$17,900.

Both watches feature a sunburst motif that is found throughout Jay Z's collection. The colors of the watches fit within the overall color scheme of black, white, gold and silver used throughout A New York Holiday.



Shawn Carter by Hublot watches in black ceramic and yellow gold

The Shawn Carter by Hublot watches will continue to be sold at select Hublot retailers after the Barneys' holiday partnership has ended as part of the Shawn Carter collection.

In the spirit of giving, 25 percent of the proceeds from A New York Holiday will be donated to Jay Z's The Shawn Carter Foundation. Celebrating its tenth anniversary, the charity, organized by the rapper, awards higher education scholarships to children facing socio-economic difficulties.

Celebrity input

Celebrity ambassadors help to create a face and personality for a brand.

For example, precision-cut crystal maker Swarovski is initiating a 25-country, multichannel campaign featuring supermodel Miranda Kerr and original music by singer, songwriter and producer Pharrell Williams that aims to spread awareness and enliven the brand's image.

The campaign's print advertisements begin in November followed by a television commercial that will air in France, Italy and Hong Kong. The campaign's use of vivid images, music by a well-known producer and pliable content will allow it to seamlessly travel from one country to another ([see story](#))

Similarly, creative collaborations between brand and celebrity can elevate the brand to new heights.

For example, New York-based department store Henri Bendel launched a new accessories collection through a partnership with tennis star Maria Sharapova in collaboration with her Sugapova candy brand.

The retailer is promoting the new accessories collection through an in-store event and digital promotions. By establishing a partnership with a well-known athlete, Henri Bendel could convert tennis fans into brand enthusiasts ([see story](#)).

A noteworthy celebrity brand ambassador will likely be known for their endorsement long after the contract ends.

"Celebrity endorsements work in the long term as well as in the short term," Mr. Ries said.

"Once a celebrity is associated with a brand, consumers will continue to make the connection," he said.

"Of course, this connection will slowly deteriorate, but it could take many years, even decades, for that to happen."

Final Take

Jen King, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York