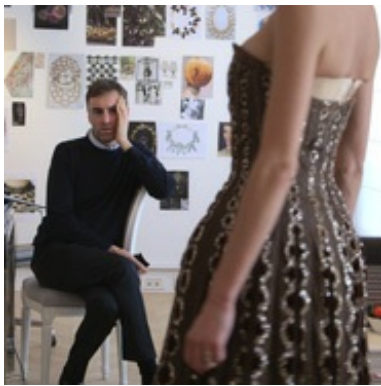


EVENTS/ CAUSES

Dior gives insider access to atelier in documentary

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"Dior and I" promotional image

By SARAH JONES

French couture house Christian Dior is allowing consumers to see the inner workings of its atelier with a documentary premiering during New York's Tribeca Film Festival beginning this weekend.

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"Dior and I," which covers the beginning of creative director Raf Simons' tenure at the house, was screened as the opening film for the documentary competition on April 17. Opening the doors to its atelier will allow the brand to showcase both its past and its present, which will appeal to brand loyalists.

"In today's social media age, consumers have the expectation that brands, including luxury brands, be transparent and accessible," said Christine Kirk, CEO of [Social Muse Communications](#), Los Angeles.

"Dior accomplishes the goal of being both transparent and giving access into the inner workings of the fashion house through this documentary," she said.

"While luxury brands are often aspirational luxuries, consumers appreciate and expect to at least engage with and have a deeper understanding of a brand via social media and

other marketing channels. This documentary gives both affluent and aspirational consumers a behind the scenes look into the fashion house of Dior."

Ms. Kirk is not affiliated with Dior but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Dior did not respond by press deadline.

Current creative

"Dior and I" was directed by Frédéric Tcheng, who worked on the fashion films "Diana Vreeland: The Eye Has To Travel" and "Valentino: The Last Emperor."

The documentary follows the first seven weeks of current creative director Raf Simons' tenure at Dior as the designer prepped for his first Haute Couture collection for the house in 2012. Viewers see the collection develop from conception to the eventual runway show.



Behind-the-scenes image from before Raf Simons' first show taken by Willy Vanderperre

Mr. Simons consults the Dior archives and visits Christian Dior's childhood home in the film, telling about how he found many connections to his own early life in the biography of the house's founder.

Vogue editor-in-chief Anna Wintour makes an appearance, as do the faces of Dior ad campaigns actresses Marion Cotillard and Jennifer Lawrence.



Raf Simons' first show at Dior

Along the way, there are intimate portraits of the atelier. One of which was published as a teaser on Dior's online magazine.

In the DiorMag article, the house paints the picture of the final night before the show in the atelier. A video clip shows seamstresses sitting around a table meticulously sewing beads onto a gown, with one joking that they heard the ghost of Mr. Dior.

The phone rings and they are called away to a celebration where Champagne is popped open and Mr. Simons thanks the Dior staff for welcoming him into their family, and shares his hopes that they have a long way to go.

Dior and I - Tribeca Film Festival - Trailer

Following the premiere, the 90-minute film will be screened three more times in the next week.

Past and present

Other fashion houses have created documentaries to highlight their new creative talent.

Italian fashion house Gucci hosted a private screening of its brand documentary during Paris Haute Couture week to become part of the festivities.

Gucci was the focal point of "The Director: An Evolution in Three Acts," which followed

the brand's creative director Frida Giannini for 18 months. It was directed by documentary filmmaker Christina Voros and actor James Franco, who has modeled for the brand in the past. The pair captured her at work and got intimate interviews with the designer.

Gucci first screened the film at the Tribeca Film Festival in April 2013 ([see story](#)).

Other brands have taken a different approach that highlights their history rather than focusing on the present.

Jeweler Tiffany & Co. tapped Matthew Miele, director of "Scatter My Ashes at Bergdorf's," for a documentary chronicling its history to be released in 2015.

The documentary will shed light on how Charles Lewis Tiffany developed the brand following its inception in 1837 and then travel through pivotal moments in its history. Unlike social media followers, for example, audiences of a documentary have a higher tolerance for absorbing information, which gives Mr. Miele plenty of slack when capturing the brand's lengthy background ([see story](#)).

By focusing on Raf Simons rather than the house in general, Dior will be able to connect with consumers on a deeper level.

"People want to engage with other people – not logos," Ms. Kirk said. "By putting a face to the brand of Dior, this humanizes the brand and makes it more relatable.

"Additionally, everyone can relate to the excitement and energy of the first few days on a new job, and this makes both Raf and Dior relatable to a broader audience than Dior's typical affluent target," she said.

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York