

MULTICHANNEL

Saks sponsors special issue of W magazine for immersion in art world

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Saks Fifth Avenue ad in W:Art showing Givenchy shoe

By SARAH JONES

Department store chain Saks Fifth Avenue is sponsoring Condé Nast-owned W magazine's upcoming stand-alone special issue W:Art.

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The 88-page W:Art focuses on the direction of contemporary art, from galleries to music producer and recording artist Pharrell Williams. By acting as primary sponsor and exclusive retail partner of this issue, Saks will be able to more fully immerse itself in the art community and other creative channels, a mission of new president Marigay McKee.

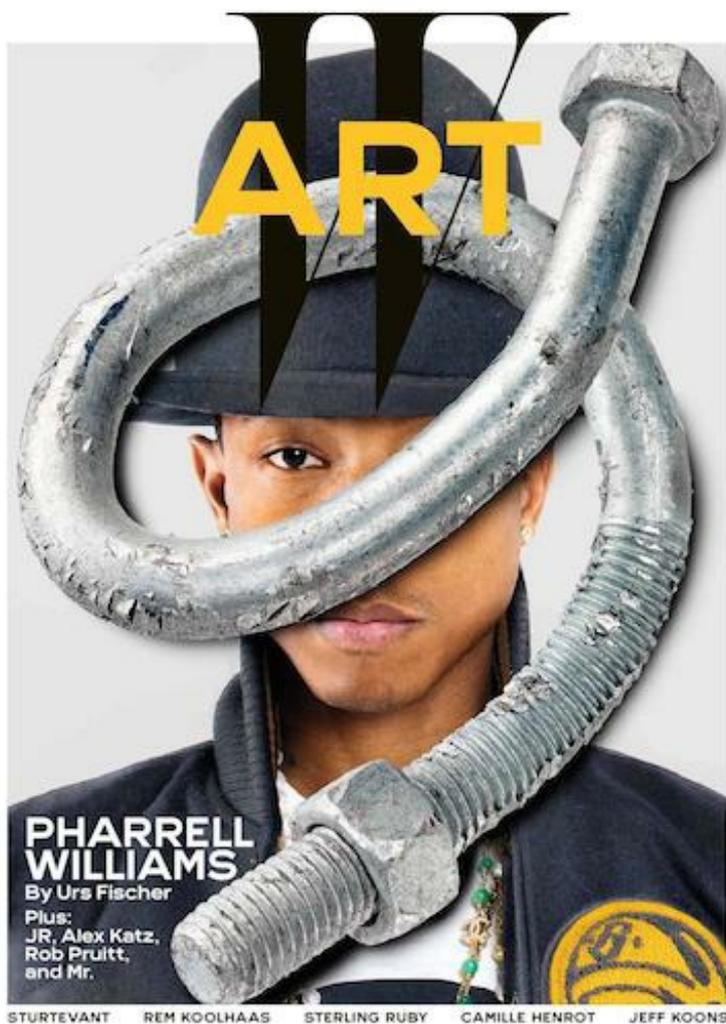
"We wanted to be more involved in the Art community and thought the partnership with W:ART was the perfect opportunity," said Mark Briggs, chief marketing officer at [Saks Fifth Avenue](#), New York.

"W:ART is a special issue by W Magazine that provides an in-depth look to what's next in Contemporary Art," he said. "We chose to partner with W Magazine for this reason.

"Our customers understand the importance of art's influence in fashion, therefore we wanted to take our ad campaign to a more artistic direction."

Product placement

W magazine's W:Art issue features sculptor Urs Fischer, painter Alex Katz, Rob Pruitt, photographer JR and anime-style artist Mr., who all interpreted Mr. Williams in their own aesthetic for the cover spread. It also profiles installation artist Sterling Ruby.



W:Art cover of Pharrell Williams by Urs Fischer, photography by Joshua White exclusively for W Magazine

Within W:Art, Saks has a 16-page advertising spread conceived by Mr. Briggs. Accessories become the subject for a large-scale photography exhibit, titled “Magnified:Magnifique,” held in a warehouse-esque gallery space. Close-up shots of handbags, shoes and jewelry are printed to stand stories high over the models’ heads.



Saks ad in W:Art featuring Chloé handbag

The blown-up proportions are meant to communicate the lengths of time and skill necessary for brands like Louis Vuitton, Dior, Bulgari and Saint Laurent to create their accessories.

“Magnified:Magnifique” has also been interpreted for Saks’ store windows, in a display that opened May 5 and will run until May 14.



Saks ad in W:Art featuring a Gucci shoe

W:Art will arrive poly-bagged to subscriber copies with the June/July issue. On May 7, the issue was available for sale at Wmag.com, select Saks stores and New York Frieze art fair events.

Consumers can also purchase the issue on newsstands in New York and Los Angeles when the June/July issue becomes available May 27.

W magazine editor in chief Stefano Tonchi and Mr. Briggs are hosting an event May 9 at Sotheby's. The event space will house a video installation to animate W:Art's pages.

In-store art

Saks works to incorporate fashion and art into the entire consumer experience.

The retailer's New York in-store restaurant Café SFA created a Fabergé-themed egg dish to tie into the department store chain's Easter display by the jewelry brand.

Saks was the official retail partner of Fabergé's The Big Egg Hunt, and its flagship store in New York was a featured destination for the scavenger hunt, with nine artist-designed eggs in-store. By creating a signature dish for this event, Café SFA was able to provide consumers with a well-rounded experience at Saks that blended fashion, art and cuisine ([see story](#)).

Partnering with a magazine on a special issue allows brands the opportunity to be part of a collectible, as well as providing the benefit of a culturally inclined audience.

Italian apparel label Emilio Pucci built momentum for “The Glamour of Italian Fashion” exhibit at London’s Victoria & Albert Museum by working with Hearst’s Harper’s Bazaar’s United Kingdom imprint to release four limited-edition covers.

The four Emilio Pucci covers graced the April issue of Harper’s Bazaar and helped the London fashion scene feted the opening of the museum exhibit on April 5. Harper’s Bazaar has an active partnership with the Victoria & Albert Museum and likely increased foot traffic to the exhibit by way of its readership ([see story](#)).

This connection to fashion makes sense, since fashion and art are so intertwined.

"Our designers are artists," Mr. Briggs said. "Each product we carry is designed with art as an inspiration element, and carefully constructed in detail.

"When our customers purchase a shoe or handbag, he or she is purchasing a piece of art in the form of fashion."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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