



# Cinema Paradiso: watches and cinema

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**T**IME.

It's one of life's most elusive things. For their entire history, watchmakers have been trying to control and regulate time, while the art of film focuses on capturing moments in time. In both watches and films, the best results are those efforts that are timeless.

## Watches as symbols

Watches and clocks have been used as symbols throughout the history of film. Remember Harold Lloyd hanging from the giant clock in the 1923 silent film "Safety Last"? In more recent movies, "Back to the Future" is a masterpiece of manipulating time and using imagery regarding time. "Nick of Time" with Johnny Depp used clocks and watches throughout, as it was a movie that unfolded in "real time". "Memento"

and "Pulp Fiction" played with the way time is presented in movies.

In a way, every watch in every movie is a symbol—if only a symbol of what kind of character the actor is. In "Made of Honor", for example, Patrick Dempsey wears a JeanRichard Tourbillon in just about every scene. It's not so much a statement on time, it's more of a statement about him—he is a successful businessman, able to wear such an expensive watch.

In the James Bond movies, Bond has always worn an elegant, yet rough-and-tumble timepiece to reflect his personality. In the recently released "Skyfall", Daniel Craig wears an Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean and, this year being Bond's 50th anniversary, Omega has created a special Skyfall Limited Edition Seamaster Planet Ocean for the occasion.

## Product placement

Watchmakers know that one of the best ways to get you to picture yourself wearing a special timepiece is to place one on the wrist of the star of a popular movie.

As awareness of fine watches increases, and watch brands become savvier about marketing and promotion, watches are being show-

cased more and more in Hollywood. Whether these watches are on the wrists of the heroes (or villains) in the latest blockbusters or sparkling on the red carpet, watches are definitely ready for their close-ups.

In the best product placements, watches are key components to the definition of character in movies. After all, characters are defined by the choices they make: words, jobs, clothes, actions, cars and yes, watches.

Product placement is good for movie producers because it helps defray expenses. "No matter what size the budget of the movie, it is hard for producers to justify spending \$30,000 on a watch or even \$5,000, for that matter, and we always need more than one for safety," says Doug Harlocker, propmaster. "So the exchange of exposure for the use of goods is a very gratifying relationship—the production value of the movie is heightened without costing an arm and a leg."

Watch placement can happen any number of ways. Many watch companies have representatives who work to place watches with studios and production companies. Sometimes, a production company will approach a watch brand about using its products for a particular pro-

↑ Left to right:  
Harold Lloyd in "Safety Last"  
Daniel Craig as James Bond  
Diane Kruger wearing Jaeger-LeCoultre

ject. At times, product placement is about historical accuracy, as in the movie "Pearl Harbor", for example, Touchstone Pictures wanted something authentic and Hamilton Watch was a major supplier to the US military during World War II. The result? A huge close up of a Hamilton watch, worn by Josh Hartnett, in the final cut of the movie.

Another example is the Omega Speedmaster "Moon Watch", which played a part in the real Apollo 13 mission—the astronauts used it to time the start and stop of the engine on re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere—it was the only correct choice of watch for Ron Howard's "Apollo 13".

Some watch brands have relationships with actors who wear their products, and when that actor is in a movie, he or she can help get the watch in front of the camera (John Travolta, a Breitling ambassador, wore his Breitling in "The Taking of Pelham 1 2 3").

On "Ocean's Twelve", propmaster Harlocker carried around at least \$250,000 worth of watches with him every day to satisfy all of the actors' characters. Brad Pitt, for instance, wore a Breitling Emergency, a Chronoswiss, a white-gold Rolex, a Patek Philippe and a Hermès at different times throughout the movie. George

Clooney wore a classic Hamilton in every scene. "I could not have provided those watches without the help of the manufacturers," Harlocker admits. "Brad Pitt, after being exposed to that Breitling, purchased a half dozen of them for his co-stars on 'Oceans Twelve'. In a perfect world, the actor will appreciate the product, wear it in the movie and in real life."

Ann Roth, costume designer on "Julie & Julia" and many others, is obsessive about getting the watch right for each character on her projects. "I can hold up a movie set for hours choosing the right watch," she says. "I choose the watch based on the character. For example, Ralph Fiennes needed a watch for his character in 'The English Patient'. He was Hungarian royalty in the 1920s, got involved in the Royal Geographical Society, lived in London and Egypt, so the watch he wore had to be really particular, I wanted the watch that guy would wear. I found it in London, in a second hand shop, but I needed two of them, so I had a watchmaker make me another one. I am very particular about the watches that characters wear, as they say so much about them."

John Myhre, the production designer on "Nine" and other features, is interested in how a watch "helps with the story telling process,"

he says. "It's a major definition of a person's character. I will meet with the property master and we'll look at all the watches. The choice of watches for movies is very important and the right watch makes perfect sense, like the Hamilton in 'Amelia'. She wore a Hamilton in real life, so it's genius."

Some placements are chosen by the cast and crew, some are paid for and still others are a joint marketing effort—it all depends on the movie, the brand and the situation.

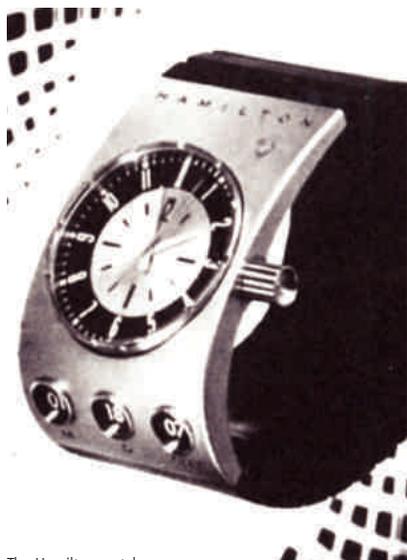
"We do not financially support placements or the gifting of merchandise for participation and have been forced to turn down opportunities because of this," says Larry Pettinelli, president, Patek Philippe NA. "Therefore, and in most cases, directors, producers, propmasters and stylists who have a genuine appreciation for the timepieces and our brand approach our team. These individuals ultimately decide that the inclusion will lend credibility to the story line or characters involved. We scrutinise every opportunity and only commit to those that reflect our company values."

When product placement works, it is much better than any advertising a company could do. The impact is greater, because the audience is caught up in the plot of a great movie. "Product placement provides third party endorsement for audiences," adds Pettinelli. "If it occurs in an organic and appropriate setting, the results can serve to reinforce our brand message. The most successful placements for us have occurred when a timepiece becomes a natural part of the character or scene."

It's also possible that a watch supplied for a movie or TV show and worn during the shoot will never appear on screen, despite everyone's best efforts. After all, movies aren't edited with watch placement in mind and what was a great shot for the watch might not make it into the final edit.

### Watch creation for movies

Some watches, like the watch in Stanley Kubrick's "2001: A Space Odyssey", are designed specifically for films. Hamilton Watch



The Hamilton watch that featured in the film 2001: A Space Odyssey



The Terminator wears Audemars Piguet

The Hamilton watches featured in the "Men In Black" series

Special award watches  
by Jaeger-LeCoultre

Company was commissioned to make the "2001" watch, a special multi-timezone timepiece for the film and the company never even considered selling the watch commercially, as it was too complicated (for the time). In 2006, Hamilton finally made a limited edition reinterpretation of this watch, 30 years after the original film. How limited was this timepiece? You guessed it, 2001 pieces.

"For Russell Crowe in 'Master and Commander', I contacted Breguet to duplicate a watch that they had made in the 1700s to use in the film," Harlocker remembers. "They took it on as a challenge and delivered a magnificent pocket watch absolutely authentic to the period at no charge to us. What did they get out of it? Well, people saw that movie and saw Russell using it. It is a strong association." Arnold Schwarzenegger has worn Audemars Piguet watches in movies for quite some time, including "End of Days", the "Terminator" series and more. For "End of Days", Audemars Piguet created a new Royal Oak Offshore. Schwarzenegger even worked with the company on the design of the watch.

### Impact on sales

Though watch manufacturers are reluctant to say that the appearance of their product boosts sales dramatically, watch retailers do

mention that an increase of interest and awareness, if not sales, occurs.

Hamilton Watch has had a host of movie tie-ins, the most successful and visible being their involvement with the "Men in Black" movies—where they took a classic Hamilton design and put it on the wrists of the two leads, Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith. The result? The watch became a sales leader.

Retailers report customers coming in and asking for the watches by the name of the movie or the character, not even knowing the brand name.

Next time you're at the cinema, or just watching TV at home, pay attention to the wristwatches that the characters wear. If you can barely see the wristwatch, chances are it's not a product placement. If you can see the brand clearly, and the watch itself has its own tight shot, then it's more than likely a product placement.

As watches continue to increase in popularity and visibility, you can expect to see more placements in the movies and TV.

### The red carpet

Red carpet events are the height of Hollywood glitz and glamour—a showcase of entertainment's elite—where the stars come out to shine and where high-end designer fashion takes to the spotlight. It is the stage on which

the crème de la crème of luxury retail flex their muscles in an all-out star-studded advertising affair. And, now, more than ever before, watchmakers are figuring prominently in red-carpet looks across the awards season landscape.

### How it started

When "Who are you wearing?" became a common question shouted by reporters and photographers, brands hustled to provide the answer. Fashion designers and jewellery companies were the first to respond, with watches coming a little later to the party. After all, women get most of the attention with their colourful and unique dresses, and most women don't wear a watch with a beautiful gown. Watch companies have recently been working hard to change this by putting their watches on both celebrity men and women.

"The problem is that actresses' arms are normally not covered so they don't want to wear a big wristwatch," says Jérôme Lambert, president of Swiss watchmaker Jaeger-LeCoultre, a long-time sponsor of the Venice, Abu Dhabi and San Sebastián film festivals and others. "We have some beautiful tiny watches, and these watches can fit quite well on the red carpet. More and more actresses are considering watches, rather than going with huge



Niels Schneider wearing Chopard



Jude Law wearing Chopard

diamond necklaces, bracelets and earrings, as there is a lower insurance risk.

"For men, we are getting more and more actors, directors and producers wearing our watches," Lambert continues. "The Jaeger-LeCoultre brand is getting much more awareness, and creating strong relationships with creative people, and that's how we have been able to get our watches on the Red Carpet." Harry Winston has perhaps the longest history of working with celebrities—it was in 1944

that Harry Winston began to solidify his reputation as the "Jeweller to the Stars", when the brand became the very first jeweller to dress an actress, Jennifer Jones, for the Academy Awards. The red carpet tradition, with both jewellery and watches, is still very much a part of the company today.

Chopard has been involved in an official capacity with red carpet events for more than 15 years, starting with jewellery and going into watches, most visibly with the Cannes

Film Festival. "I have always loved film, and it was in 1998 when I was asked by the Cannes Film Festival's president, Pierre Viot, to redesign the coveted Palme d'Or that Chopard became the Official partner of the Cannes Film Festival," says Caroline Scheufele, co-president and artistic director of Chopard. "Our involvement with these prestigious events solidifies our love for the art of film and beautiful jewellery and watch creations."

Piaget has also been quite visible on the red carpet. Explains Larry Boland, president, Piaget North America, "Piaget watches and jewellery have always been a favourite of high-profile individuals and the brand has a longstanding love affair with cinema and the arts. Dressing celebrities exposes us to new audiences and helps attract new consumers and brings glamour and excitement to the brand and strengthens our relationship with Hollywood."

Swiss watchmaker Baume & Mercier launched an advertising campaign a few years ago that featured Andy Garcia, Teri Hatcher, Ashton Kutcher and other red carpet regulars. "This campaign caught the attention of both consumers and professionals in Hollywood and inspired many to make Baume & Mercier their timepiece choice for everyday wear as well as



Emmanuel Chiqui wearing Baume &amp; Mercier



Bianca Balti with Fawaz Gruosi of de Grisogono



Owen Wilson wearing Piaget



Harrison Ford at the Hamilton "Behind the Camera" awards



Nicole Kidman for Omega



Leonardo DiCaprio for TAG Heuer

for special occasions," Rudy Chavez, president, Baume & Mercier North America, says. More recently, Baume & Mercier has become the lead sponsor of the Hamptons International Film Festival.

Hamilton Watch, in addition to being very active in product placement around the world, is the official sponsor of the "Hamilton Behind the Camera Awards", held in Hollywood and Beijing. "The recognition of these off-screen talents is underlined with the presentation of the awards by leading actors, actresses and other movie professionals, who are wearing our watches," says Sylvain Dolla, CEO, Hamilton International. "Celebrities attending the Hamilton Behind the Camera Awards come because they want to support one or more honorees they worked with on different projects."

### Dressing the stars

Watches or jewellery on celebrities might have gotten there in a number of ways. Sometimes, the celebrities themselves, who might be fans of the brand, request to wear a piece or the agent/manger/stylist makes the initial contact, looking to borrow a watch or a piece of high jewellery for their clients. In other cases, the brands reach out to celebrities.

"We love to dress friends of Piaget," Piaget's

Boland says. "If celebrities make a request and we are able to accommodate them, we do. Other times, we are captivated by the performance of a certain star, or we feel that they exemplify the ideals of the brand, and we let them know it would be our pleasure to dress them in Piaget."

Working with actors and celebrities isn't easy, as they are notoriously demanding and know what they like and want. "When a client selects a piece of high jewellery or a fine watch, they are looking for something very meaningful and very unique," says Frédéric de Narp, president, Harry Winston. "It is an extension of who they are—their personal style, taste, and even comfort—so it's about finding something truly exceptional just for them. This intimate and highly personalised approach allows us to give the clients we work with the complete Harry Winston experience at the highest level."

Some companies set up suites where the celebrities or their representatives come in to choose what watches and jewellery they will wear. Other times, they will come into the LA offices or boutiques of a brand to make their choices.

"At Cannes for example, the celebrities like to come to our suite at the Hotel Martinez to choose for themselves, while other times the

celebrity works with a stylist who comes to us to see the entire collection and selects a few items from there," says Fawaz Gruosi, president of watch and jewellery company de Grisogono. Do red carpet placements have any effect on sales? There is no empirical data, but the general consensus is that it certainly helps awareness, and these placements certainly can't hurt. "When a famous celebrity is seen wearing one of our watches or a piece of jewellery, we will often see an immediate increase in demand," Piaget's Boland says. "Celebrities can also spark trends. When Rihanna wore a classic gold Piaget Polo in her music video, 'Take a Bow', and on the red carpet, it quickly became popular with fashion editors and other celebrities.

"Sometimes the pieces worn on the red carpet are on loan and sometimes they have actually been purchased by the celebrity," Boland continues. "Once a person wears a Piaget timepiece or jewellery, they often fall in love with it, and buy it."

Because of the efforts of watch companies, more and more actors, directors and producers are wearing watches on the red carpet.

"The trend on the red carpet for men is classic and timeless," Boland adds. "It's why you're seeing Hollywood's leading men wearing dress watches again. The actors are choosing



Cameron Diaz for TAG Heuer

slim, elegant dress watches to complete their looks. Our Black Tie Collection and Altiplanos are in huge demand during awards season because they are so discreet and slip easily under the sleeve of your tux.”

### Actors as ambassadors

As long as celebrities have been celebrities, they have been associated with selling products. There are many companies, like Baume & Mercier, TAG Heuer, Roger Dubuis, Jaeger-LeCoultre, Breitling and more, who actively use actors as ambassadors.

“Omega ambassadors play an important role—they bring a human face to the values of the brand,” explains Stephen Urquhart, President of Omega. “Because our ambassadors have generally achieved great international popularity and success, they bring instant worldwide recognition to Omega—something that cannot be easily matched through traditional marketing channels. Our culture loves celebrities and working with people who are not only well-known but remarkably talented and public-spirited is an essential part of our marketing mix.

“We can certainly point to our association with James Bond as a success story. Each time a new film is released we clearly see a renewed interest in the Seamasters 007 wears in the



Rolex mentor Martin Scorsese with protégée Celina Murga

film. Of course, we have James Bond, the character, and Daniel Craig, the actor, as ambassadors so our connection to the franchise is very strong.”

TAG Heuer also uses actors successfully, like Brad Pitt, Cameron Diaz and Leonardo DiCaprio. “Buying a luxury watch is not only about buying a product but also about buying a dream,” says Jean-Christophe Babin, CEO, TAG Heuer. “A relevant ambassador contributes to create a universe, a lifestyle, a success story around a specific range.

“Actors and celebrities help to attract attention within a wide offer and allow the brand to differentiate itself from others,” he continues. “In a given magazine where you can have up to 50 pages of advertising, it is key to stand out from the crowd. Of course the first leverage to do so is the design of the watches, but a famous icon such as Leonardo DiCaprio or Cameron Diaz makes it more special and creates a recall in consumers' minds. They will also generate storytelling and, as a consequence, editorials. Finally, during events, celebrities bring their glamorous aura and generate a general feeling of prestige.”

In the past, TAG Heuer used athletes as ambassadors and this resulted in achieving great success as a sports watch brand. TAG Heuer felt that this designation was holding

them back from realizing the brand's potential. “Therefore we decided to balance our communication and added Brad Pitt to our ambassadors team,” Babin details. “He strongly contributed to developing our Carrera line as an icon. Now Leo and Cameron do the same thing. Thanks to them, we can say today that we are not a sports brand anymore, but a luxury brand inspired by sport.”

### Other cinematic efforts

Montblanc focused on cinema with its recent “Beauty of a Second” short film contest. Presented in 2011, Montblanc asked the public to submit one-second videos, reinforcing the value of time and Montblanc's place in it. To raise its brand awareness in films and media even more, Hamilton Watch has partnered with film schools around the world, spreading the Hamilton message to writers and directors before they even get into the industry. In exchange for funds to buy equipment, Hamilton has these students producing short works that it uses on its website and in its promotions.

In 2009, Hamilton began working with the Osaka Communication Arts School in Japan. In addition, they are working with other schools, including Webster University in Geneva, Switzerland and other premiere communication schools around the world.

Rolex has been working in cinema with its Mentor & Protégé program. Some of the luminaries who have been involved with the program include Martin Scorsese, Zhang Yimou, Walter Murch and Stephen Frears [See Pierre Maillard's article on the Rolex Mentor & Protégé Arts Initiative in this issue].

There are many ways the watch industry and the entertainment world work together. As consumers continue to get bombarded by thousands of media messages a day, brands will continue to find new and inventive ways of standing out from the crowd.

And you can bet that means more involvement in entertainment. ◀