

Samsung Taps Paul Mescal to Capture a Turbulent 2020 Through Modern Dance



It's difficult to describe 2020 in one word. Chaotic, tumultuous, depressing, scary and unrelenting all work, but the list is endless.

Instead of words, Samsung in the U.K. has opted to use dance to capture the events and emotions brought about by this turbulent year.

The electronics brand tapped Irish actor Paul Mescal to star in its new campaign, Samsung Spotlight, which aims to inspire and give a platform to emerging artists who have been put out of work due to the pandemic.

The campaign kicks off with a 90-second spot starring Mescal, one of 2020's breakout actors and the Emmy-nominated star of Hulu drama series *Normal People*—which *Adweek* named one of the best new TV shows of 2020—performing a contemporary dance routine in an abandoned warehouse.

“Lockdown,” created by London agency Taylor Herring, aims to

tell a story about the pandemic's impact on the arts through Mescal, who also brings acting into the routine. The film is shot in 8K video on the Samsung Galaxy S20 smartphone.

The routine, set to a classical score, follows Mescal as he searches for a new stage following the closure of venues across the U.K. and Ireland. Mescal dances among mannequins meant to symbolize an absent audience and transitions to leaping in the air, crawling across the floor and tutting, which is a street dance style in which one creates shapes and patterns with their arms and fingers.

"Following the events of this year and impact on the arts industry, Samsung wanted to provide a spotlight for arts students and creators across the U.K. and Ireland who have had their stage taken away from them," Tom Morey, director of corporate marketing at Samsung U.K., said in a statement. "Samsung Spotlight has been created to give performers the opportunity to share their talents and get the chance to have their work shared with the world."

Samsung is inviting artists in the U.K. and Ireland to submit auditions via Instagram using the hashtag #SamsungSpotlight. The brand requires that the submissions be original performances of up to 90 seconds in any style, such as dance, acting, poetry and physical theater.

Mescal will judge the competition and choose three winning performances to be reshot with a production crew using Samsung Galaxy S20 devices. The winning films will also be showcased across Samsung's digital channels, in-store screens and in an upcoming digital ad.

"There are thousands of performers in the arts industry that have been affected by the closures of theaters, venues and stages who have and are going through an incredibly challenging time," Mescal said in a statement. "I'm really proud to launch Samsung Spotlight which aims to help

performers by giving them a platform to showcase their talents.”

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