

WATCH OUT FOR REDMAYNE

THE ACADEMY AWARD-WINNING ACTOR IS GEARING UP FOR HIS LATEST ROLE WITH OMEGA TIMEPIECES.

BY CHRISTINA BOHNSTENGEL





Clockwise: As transgender pioneer Lili Elbe in *The Danish Girl*; at the 87th Academy Awards; as Stephen Hawking in *The Theory of Everything*.



In the Omega family of brand ambassadors, which includes the likes of Nicole Kidman, George Clooney, and Daniel Craig, Eddie Redmayne could be considered the millennial of the house. After all, he is the world's first Oscar winner born in the 80s.

The blue-eyed, freckled, British actor claimed that coveted award, and the superlative, in 2015, for *The Theory of Everything*. He won every important acting award that year for his portrayal of famed physicist Stephen Hawking. And the following year, he was nominated for a second Best Actor Oscar and Golden Globe for his role as Lili Elbe in *The Danish Girl*.

While those two films might have catapulted the Eaton and Trinity College alum—who shared classes, and membership in the elite debate club, with Prince William—onto the mainstream world stage, Redmayne had actually been excelling on theater stages since his professional premiere in 2002. The art history graduate then took those talents to the silver screen in 2006 with *Like Minds* and Robert De Niro's *The Good Shepherd*, and followed those up with such notable projects as *Elizabeth: The Golden Age* (2007), *The Other Boleyn Girl* (2008), *The Pillars of the Earth* (2010), and *My Week with Marilyn* (2011).

When he wasn't catching the eyes of Hollywood producers and directors, or of magazine publishers and editors who were placing him on Best Dressed lists, he turned heads at Omega, the crown jewel of Swiss watchmakers Swatch Group. Retired president Stephen Urquhart explained at the time that the award-winner's youth, reputation for taking on challenging roles, and unique sense of style is what made him such a perfect fit for the new role of brand ambassador.

Redmayne signed on with the luxury label in 2016, originally married to the Globemaster collection. But in late 2017, it was an ad campaign for the Seamaster line that had aficionados doing double takes. Now readers see him sporting the Omega Seamaster Aqua Terra collection on the pages of lifestyle magazines, while model Alessandra Ambrosio is the face of the women's line.





Omega's Seamaster has a storied, 70-plus-year history with the ocean. The aptly Latin-named Aqua Terra came onboard in 2002 with a grand Baselworld premiere. In 2008, Omega introduced the vertically striped dial, inspired by the teak decks of luxury yachts and sailboats. It is a look that the brand boasts as one of the watch's defining trademarks. Last year, it refreshed the design with horizontal stripes instead of vertical. From ship decks to seafloors, from evenings on shore to mornings on board, Omega touts it as a timepiece to be trusted on land, yet, robust enough for weekends on the water.

The 2017 updates offer cleaner aesthetics than previous models. The dial is designed with an easy-to-read layout due to less wording, the date window has been moved from three to six o'clock in order to maximize symmetry, and the bracelets have been redesigned for better integration with the case. And, the Aqua Terra now comes with a rubber strap, for the first time.

The streamlined design is classic Redmayne, who is known for his penchant for exquisite tailoring and well-made shoes. He wowed at the 2016 Academy Awards in his velvet dinner jacket, and turned heads in a white linen suit at the Rio Olympics, for which Omega served as the official events timer.

"I don't like watches to be overstated or ostentatious or crying out too much, but you want to feel a weight to them and a history to them," he said in 2016 when he was officially introduced as a brand ambassador. Omega has that history. "Omega was supplying watches to the Royal Flying Corps in 1917; and of course there's its involvement with NASA and going to the Moon...it's absolutely ripe with stories," he told the *Telegraph* watch editor last year. As it turns out, it's not the first time the Redmayne name has shared histories with the Omega family. "My father had an Omega De Ville, a beautiful gold watch with a leather strap, with that very classic quality you get from watches from the 1950s and 1960s," he said.

For the first millennial Oscar winner to be linked with traditional timepieces, well, it makes quite a style statement in the merging of old and new. "As the new Aqua Terra collection sails into boutiques, there is perhaps no better role model than Eddie Redmayne," the brand said of the actor, who describes himself as aggressively punctual. "On land or at sea, he seems perfectly at home with Omega's newest watches." ■