

# Rosalía's *Lux* (2025): A Transmedia Analysis of the Album Launch and Post-digital Music Marketing.

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## Abstract

This paper focuses on the post-digital, transmedia marketing campaign surrounding Rosalía's 2025 album *Lux*. It examines how a succession of communicative actions — from urban and digital teasers to listening parties and media appearances— built a coherent brand identity that went beyond the music itself. The aims are to identify the main strategies for visibility and community building, to explore the interplay between visual design, symbolic narrative and audience participation, and to assess the public reception of the release. A qualitative, interpretive methodology is employed, framed as an instrumental case study, using a corpus that includes visual materials, live events, social-media posts and journalistic articles. Key findings include the deployment of religious iconography on the visual identity of Rosalía's *Lux* project, the release of the single "Berghain" with high-profile collaborators, listening parties in Mexico City, New York and Barcelona, the management of an album leak prior to the official launch, and the performance of "Reliquia" at the Los40 Music Awards. The conclusions affirm that the campaign represents a paradigmatic example of contemporary music marketing, successfully combining tradition and modernity, exclusivity and participation, and consolidating Rosalía's status as a global cultural figure.

## Keywords

Cultural marketing; Music industry; Mass media; Cultural identity; Popular music

## 1. Introduction

The aim of this research is to identify and document the strategies surrounding the release of Rosalía's album *Lux* (2025), which was accompanied by an ambitious and highly influential marketing campaign. The launch of *Lux* marked a turning point in Rosalía's career and became one of the most discussed cultural events of the year. Over the previous decade, the Catalan artist had challenged the boundaries between flamenco, pop, and electronic music, demonstrating a singular ability to appropriate aesthetic elements from diverse traditions and transform them into a distinctive artistic universe. With *Lux*, her seventh studio album, she presented a work of symphonic scope and a spiritual narrative divided into four movements. The project was conceived as an artefact merging music, visual arts, and performance, supported by a communication strategy that combined multiple resources: billboard placements in major cities, large-scale urban projections, supposedly spontaneous yet controlled leaks, listening parties in several capitals, television appearances, and an intensive digital presence. Together, these actions generated a participatory phenomenon that transcended the commercial dimension and turned the campaign into a shared cultural experience.

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This study departs from the hypothesis that the launch of *Lux* represents a paradigmatic case of post-digital music marketing, in which transmedia storytelling, aesthetic coherence, and fan engagement contributed to building an artistic brand that surpassed the boundaries of the traditional music product. It argues that Rosalía's strategy articulated a consistent visual and symbolic identity, blending physical and virtual actions to activate her audience's collective imagination, ultimately transforming her project into a space of emotional participation. Based on this premise, the research seeks to analyse how the different communicative vectors were deployed, which aesthetic elements sustained the identity of *Lux*, and how audiences became involved in the expansion of its narrative universe.

From the perspective of cultural communication, *Lux* can be understood not as a mere promotional launch, but as a complex cultural intervention. The campaign operated as a synergic narrative that intertwined religious symbolism and club aesthetics, underground events and large-scale spectacles, folkloric traditions and digital technologies. This convergence turned the album into a focal point for rethinking contemporary modes of musical production and reception, while raising questions about how globally recognised artists reconfigure their identities through transmedia marketing strategies. The following analysis seeks to reconstruct and examine this process to assess to what extent it confirms the initial hypothesis and what insights it offers into current debates on post-digital music marketing.

## **2. Rosalía and Contemporary Music Marketing**

The emergence of digital culture has profoundly reshaped the music industry (Banet-Weiser, 2012; Pérez-Rufi *et al.*, 2025). Over the past two decades, the sector has undergone a transition from a promotion model based on traditional media to an ecosystem where digital platforms, social networks, streaming services, and live experiences converge. Jenkins (2006) described this convergence as an environment in which content flows across multiple channels and audiences become active participants. Within this framework, music marketing increasingly focuses on constructing complex brand narratives, where the album represents only one component of an expanded storytelling universe (Baym, 2018). The musical brand thus emerges as a space of collective identity: the artist not only produces songs but also articulates symbols, discourses, and experiences that activate fan communities and generate emotional connections (Banet-Weiser, 2012).

In the post-digital era, the creation of musical value relies on aesthetic and narrative coherence (Pérez-Rufi *et al.*, 2025). Visual identity—including album artwork, bodily stylisation, and graphic design—operates both as a recognisable code for the artistic proposal and as a vector of symbolic positioning (Banet-Weiser, 2012). Klein (2002) argues that brands function as cultural systems capable of conveying ideologies and collective aspirations. In the music industry, where products circulate within affective networks, the consistency of such branding becomes crucial. Marshall (2015) observes that contemporary music figures are continuously self-exposed through digital media, and that this visibility constitutes part of their brand value. From this perspective, contemporary music marketing may be understood as a world-building practice that integrates discourses, aesthetics, and participatory experiences.

The transmedia approach has become a central axis of contemporary music marketing. This concept refers to a narrative's ability to unfold coherently across multiple platforms and formats, with each medium contributing a unique fragment to the overall story (Jenkins, 2006). In the musical field, this involves combining videos, live performances, graphic campaigns, urban interventions, podcasts, and interactive events

to build a universe that audiences can explore in different contexts. Interactivity and participation are essential: audiences no longer consume content passively but reinterpret, remix, and amplify it. Innovation in music marketing therefore depends on articulating distinctive aesthetic identities, fostering fan communities, and telling stories that extend beyond the sonic dimension (Pérez-Rufi *et al.*, 2025). These dynamics provide the framework for analysing the *Lux* project.

From her earliest works, Rosalía has embodied a hybrid figure that merges flamenco tradition with experimental pop and contemporary visual culture. This hybridity responds to a deliberate strategy of artistic identity construction grounded in cultural appropriation and in the creation of coherent visual worlds through the music video and social media (Sedeño-Valdellós, 2021). *El mal querer* (2018) established a model of transmedia visual album in which the videos operated as chapters of a symbolic and conceptual narrative, filled with explicit references to Spanish imagery and feminist reinterpretations of cultural myths. Through this process, the artist transformed the album format into a total work of art (Sedeño-Valdellós, 2021).

The success of *El mal querer* and *Motomami* (2022) demonstrated Rosalía's mastery of media codes and her sustained interest in constructing conceptual universes around her albums. In *El mal querer*, she reinterpreted a 13th-century Occitan novel, transforming it into an audiovisual narrative centred on power and female autonomy, whereas in *Motomami* she created an imaginary world that fuses motorcycles, samurais, anime-style caricatures, and religious iconography, producing an aesthetic of fragmentation and digital empowerment (Pérez-Ordóñez *et al.*, 2022). In that project, Rosalía extended transmedia logic to contemporary platforms, particularly TikTok, combining strategies of communication and cultural marketing with a continuous process of self-representation (Pérez-Ordóñez *et al.*, 2022) that presented her as both “a modern diva and an ordinary girl”, thereby fostering intimacy with her audience while maintaining the sophisticated visual design of her audiovisual productions.

At every stage of her career, Rosalía has articulated clear visual identities and shared narratives, relying on collaborations with designers, art directors, and production companies such as Canada and Stillz, whose work has contributed to consolidating a recognisable aesthetic within the global cultural industry (Pérez-Ordóñez *et al.*, 2022). As Sedeño-Valdellós (2021) notes, the transmedia nature of her work lies in the creation of visual leitmotifs, the continuity across diverse formats, and the interactive relationship with digital audiences, where the artist sustains a performative dimension that extends beyond the music video into the terrain of everyday self-staging.

These previous experiences paved the way for *Lux*, a project described as a “mass-album” where spirituality and club culture coexist. The campaign unfolded within a context of media saturation, in which artists compete for attention through spectacles and viral strategies. Rosalía has distinguished herself by her ability to merge tradition with avant-garde experimentation, to juxtapose Catholic symbolism with futuristic aesthetics, and, above all, by her awareness that brand construction is as crucial as musical content. The study of *Lux* makes it possible to examine the extent to which Rosalía has consolidated her own marketing methodology and how she employs transmedia narratives to sustain an ongoing cultural conversation.

### **3. Objectives and Methodology**

The main objective of this research is to analyse how the musical brand of *Lux* was constructed and projected through a post-digital transmedia campaign, and to assess how this strategy activated communities and reinforced Rosalía's artistic identity. From this general aim, three specific objectives are established: to identify the main marketing and

communication actions accompanying the album's release, understood as strategies of visibility, symbolic differentiation, and community building; to examine the interplay between visual, narrative, and symbolic branding decisions that shaped a coherent identity capable of attracting media attention and embedding itself within collective cultural practices; and to evaluate audience reception and participation, observing how listeners contributed to the expansion of the *Lux* universe.

The research adopts a qualitative and interpretative approach, suitable for analysing complex phenomena related to meaning-making and contemporary cultural dynamics (Hernández Sampieri *et al.*, 2014; Flick, 2015; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). An instrumental case study design is employed (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018), since the release of *Lux* provides a significant example from which to draw insights about post-digital music marketing and brand construction in the current media landscape. This approach allows for an in-depth exploration of a specific case while also identifying principles that may be transferable to other artistic and promotional contexts.

The corpus under analysis consists of both primary and secondary sources. The primary materials include the music video "Berghain", the album cover and its large-scale display in public squares and urban screens, posts from the artist's social media accounts, live events (the launch in Madrid's Plaza del Callao, listening parties in Mexico City, New York, and Barcelona, her performance at *Los40 Music Awards*, and her appearance on *La Revuelta*), as well as user-generated content such as memes, viral videos, and social media reviews. The secondary sources comprise journalistic articles, interviews, and critical reviews documenting the campaign, together with academic literature on music marketing, branding, and participatory culture. The analysis is organised into three levels: a qualitative content analysis that reconstructs the chronology and discourses surrounding the release; a semiotic analysis of its aesthetic and symbolic codes (for instance, religious iconography, symphonic aesthetics, and references to club culture); and a reception analysis focused on audience participation and the reinterpretations of *Lux*'s overarching narrative.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Digital Teasers and Urban Announcements

The *Lux* campaign began enigmatically on 13 October, when Rosalía posted on Instagram a fragment of a handwritten musical score for a composition titled "Berghain". Fans quickly recognised it as a string piece and began sharing their own interpretations of the score (Palao, 2025).

On 20 October 2025, several digital billboards in Times Square, New York, unexpectedly displayed an image of Rosalía wearing a white veil and crop top emblazoned with the word "LUX" repeated across the fabric, accompanied by the date "7 NOV" and the phrase "Habemus album" (Mier, 2025). The intervention sparked speculation across social media, as the album's title had not yet been officially confirmed. Only a few hours later, Rosalía reposted the same image on Instagram, formally announcing the project. This gesture transformed one of the world's most iconic advertising spaces into a stage for global anticipation, aligning the release with an imagery of spectacle, ubiquity, and high cultural visibility.

The next phase of the announcement took place that same day in Madrid. A giant screen was installed in Plaza del Callao displaying a countdown timer. As previously hinted on social media, the artist arrived driving through Gran Vía before running towards a nearby hotel, from whose balcony she greeted her fans. When the countdown reached zero, the *Lux* album cover was revealed for the first time, along with the release date.

Thousands of people gathered spontaneously to witness the moment (Callao City Lights, 2025). The intervention, which had not been authorised by Madrid City Council, prompted criticism from the mayor — a controversy that ultimately amplified the visibility of the event (La Vanguardia, 2025). According to England (2025), Rosalía used the occasion to transform the heart of Madrid into a vast stage for projecting the album’s visual identity. This supposedly improvised urban “spectacle” functioned as both a promotional act and a collective ritual that introduced audiences to the mystical universe of *Lux*.

#### **4.2 The Single “Berghain” and Its Music Video**

As the first preview of *Lux*, Rosalía released the single “Berghain” on 27 October 2025. The track, named after the iconic Berlin nightclub, featured collaborations with Björk and Yves Tumor and included the participation of the London Symphony Orchestra. Critics described it as a composition built around dramatic orchestral passages and an emotional crescendo reminiscent of film music (López, 2025). The release was accompanied by a music video directed by Albert Moya, in which Rosalía appears in a domestic apartment setting, performing everyday tasks while surrounded by a symphony orchestra. Gradually, the scene unfolds into a dreamlike space where references to the 1937 Disney film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* emerge as symbolic elements.

The lyrics of “Berghain” address emotional exhaustion, heartbreak, and the search for healing through spirituality and communion with another. The song explores the fusion of identities (“His fear is my fear,” “His blood is my blood”) and the tension between vulnerability and desire, while the reference to the Berlin club remains more metaphorical than literal. The presence of Björk and Yves Tumor adds a transnational and experimental dimension, and the orchestral accompaniment reinforces the symphonic character of the production. *Rolling Stone* highlighted that the song inaugurates a broad emotional arc that unfolds throughout the entire album (López, 2025).

The release of “Berghain” served as a central piece in shaping the aesthetic of *Lux*. The contrast between the mundane and the transcendent depicted in the video reaffirmed the album’s core theme: the pursuit of enlightenment within the ordinary. The collaboration with leading figures from the international avant-garde reinforced Rosalía’s image as a global artist capable of engaging in dialogue across diverse musical and cultural traditions. Fragments of the video, fan reactions, and memes circulated widely, turning the premiere into an interactive event that dominated digital trends.

The launch of “Berghain” revealed the conceptual framework and narrative intent of the album, presenting *Lux* as a creation oriented towards the communication of spiritual and religious values, linked to the artist’s personal vision of God and the feminine sanctity of Catholicism.

#### **4.3 Listening Parties and Participatory Experiences**

One of the most distinctive innovations of the *Lux* campaign was the series of listening parties organised in several cities ahead of the official release. The first took place in late October in Mexico City, where Rosalía travelled personally and broadcast parts of her visit live on TikTok. The stream showed her riding in a limousine, tasting local dishes such as *pozole* and *enfrijoladas*, tattooing the word “LUX” on a member of Latin Mafia, and receiving a necklace of the Virgin of Guadalupe (Cano, 2025). These gestures blended album promotion with a tribute to local culture, generating an intercultural dialogue warmly received by her Latin American followers. The exclusive club event allowed selected fans to listen to the album and take part in an intimate encounter with the artist.

The narrative of the trip, coupled with the gastronomic and social media experience, fostered a sense of authenticity and closeness.

On 1 November, Rosalía hosted another listening party in New York at the Weylin, a historic building in Brooklyn. *Harper's Bazaar* described the event as a glamorous gathering attended by figures from the music and fashion industries, including Dua Lipa and Emily Ratajkowski (Wang, 2025). Rosalía appeared wearing a translucent dress and a painted golden halo in her hair, reinforcing the mystical symbolism of the *Lux* era. The event took on the atmosphere of a secular liturgy: guests listened to the album in a neoclassical setting, were served “spirited” drinks, and shared real-time impressions across social networks. The combination of exclusivity and media exposure heightened anticipation, as guests became content multipliers by posting photos and videos to their profiles.

Finally, on 5 November, a listening session was held at the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC) in Barcelona. Press reports described how Rosalía welcomed around 900 attendees in the Oval Hall, where mobile phones were sealed, lyrics were projected onto a curtain, and the artist performed lying down as part of the experience (Graell, 2025).

These listening parties were conceived as community rituals. The mobile phone restriction in Barcelona encouraged concentrated listening, while the TikTok livestreams from Mexico allowed millions to follow the experience in real time. The alternation between exclusivity and open access reinforced the sense of belonging: some fans could claim “I was there,” while others shared the excitement from afar. The artist’s travel narrative—from Madrid to Mexico City, New York, and Barcelona—created a symbolic itinerary connecting continents. From a branding perspective, these actions adopted the codes of a contemporary cult: gatherings in iconic locations, shared symbols, and a narrative that unfolded in stages.

#### **4.4 The Album Leak and the Management of Narrative Control**

The *Lux* campaign was unexpectedly disrupted by two leaks. On 5 November, just two days before the official release, the track “Reliquia” briefly appeared on Spotify before being taken down, prompting speculation about whether the incident was part of a deliberate strategy. Only hours later, the entire album was leaked online (Catalan News, 2025).

The leak posed a challenge to the artist’s carefully orchestrated narrative, yet it also helped to amplify media attention. Rather than reacting defensively, Rosalía’s team adhered to the original schedule: the listening parties and her performance at *Los40 Music Awards* went ahead as planned, and the artist refrained from making dramatic public statements. Fan reactions ranged from outrage at the perceived lack of respect to excitement over early access to the album. From a marketing perspective, the leak ultimately did not undermine the overall narrative; instead, it intensified the sense of urgency surrounding the release and reaffirmed the community’s emotional investment in the artist.

#### **4.5 Official Release and Subsequent Actions**

*Lux* was officially released on 7 November 2025. To mark the occasion, Rosalía chose to debut the song “Reliquia” live at the *Los40 Music Awards Santander 2025*, held at Valencia’s Roig Arena. The performance became one of the most memorable moments of the evening. Rosalía sang accompanied by an orchestra, surrounded by candles and illuminated crosses displaying verses from the song (20 Minutos, 2025). The staging evoked a form of contemporary spirituality: the singer moved among the crosses while

proclaiming, “Pero mi corazón nunca ha sido mío, yo siempre lo doy” [“But my heart has never been mine, I always give it away”], a line that resonated deeply with the audience. The performance concluded with an extended standing ovation (EFE, 2025).

For most viewers, this was their first encounter with the songs from *Lux*, and the performance successfully blended liturgical solemnity with spectacular theatricality. Reports from *EFE* (2025) and *20 Minutos* (2025) highlighted the visual contrast between darkness and light created by the stage design, with black-clad musicians performing amid luminous crosses. In addition to performing “Reliquia”, Rosalía received the “Global Icon” award in recognition of her international influence. The gala cemented her status as a global artist and extended the aesthetic of *Lux* into a mass-audience televised spectacle.

At midnight on Friday, 7 November, *Lux* was released on streaming platforms such as Spotify, as well as in physical formats in record stores. Hernández (2025) noted that the physical editions included three exclusive tracks unavailable on digital platforms—a strategy designed to encourage the purchase of vinyl and CDs as collectible objects. This approach promoted the value of physical media within a streaming-dominated market and reinforced the idea of *Lux* as a tangible, curated artefact. Initial critical responses praised Rosalía’s boldness in blending sacred music, electronic textures, and flamenco traditions, while embracing the ambition of a highly conceptual project. Thus, rather than being undermined by the earlier leak, the official release became a moment of collective celebration and narrative redefinition surrounding the album.

Critical reception was overwhelmingly positive. Alonso (2025) emphasised that the album departs from the melodic immediacy of *Motomami* to construct dense soundscapes in which each arrangement appears oriented toward transcendence rather than commercial appeal. He compares certain passages, such as “Porcelana”, to the classic film scores of Max Steiner, highlighting the compositional care and cinematic intention behind the project. While acknowledging continuity with her earlier works, Alonso interprets *Lux* as a coherent evolution that reinforces Rosalía’s hybrid identity while expanding her aesthetic language towards the symphonic. The result is an album of creative maturity—demanding, reflective, and rewarding for those willing to engage deeply with its emotional and conceptual depth (Alonso, 2025).

Following the release, Rosalía appeared in interviews and television programmes that extended the narrative of the campaign. The show *La Revuelta*, hosted by David Broncano, announced her as the main guest for its 10 November broadcast, only a few days after the album’s debut (La Vanguardia, 2025). She also gave interviews to magazines, participated in podcasts, and hosted live sessions on social media, offering behind-the-scenes glimpses of the album’s presentation and interacting directly with fans, thereby reinforcing a sense of closeness and authenticity. Anticipation was further heightened by the timing of her television appearance and Broncano’s reputation for irreverent humour.

In addition, Spanish television news programmes reported extensively on the events and public response associated with the release, cementing *Lux* as one of the most significant cultural phenomena of the year.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusions

The reconstruction of the *Lux* campaign confirms the initial hypothesis: the album’s launch represents a paradigmatic case of post-digital music marketing, in which a coherent visual and symbolic identity, a carefully orchestrated transmedia strategy, and active audience participation converged. Unlike traditional campaigns centred on the promotion of singles and press appearances, *Lux* unfolded as a multidimensional

phenomenon combining urban interventions, digital activations, exclusive events, and high-profile media performances. The use of religious iconography—veils, halos, and crosses—infused the project with a spiritual aura that contrasted with the materiality of screens and consumer spaces. This tension between sacredness and spectacle, between tradition and avant-garde aesthetics, produced a distinctive narrative that enabled Rosalía to occupy a singular position within contemporary pop culture.

A central element was the alignment between the musical content and the campaign's communication design. The album, structured in movements that shift between liturgy, orchestral symphonism, flamenco, and electronic music, was mirrored in promotional actions that evoked rituals, pilgrimages, and ceremonies. The sequence of teasers in Times Square and Callao introduced the aesthetics of miracle and revelation; the “Berghain” video visualised the transformation of the everyday into the sublime; the listening parties re-enacted forms of collective ritual through specific codes such as mobile-phone bans, painted halos, and local gastronomy; and the performance at *Los40 Music Awards* enacted a form of pop mass before millions of viewers. This correspondence between form and promotion reinforces the notion that, in contemporary music marketing, narrative coherence is a key factor in producing cultural impact and memorability.

Another key aspect lies in the management of audience participation. Rosalía and her team skilfully alternated exclusive experiences with open-access events. The listening sessions in Mexico City, New York, and Barcelona offered selected groups the opportunity to experience the album prior to its release, while the live streams on social media allowed millions of followers to join virtually. This duality between intimacy and mass exposure created a sense of transnational community and encouraged the circulation of shared narratives. The album leak, though unintended, was successfully integrated into the broader storytelling framework and ultimately strengthened community cohesion. The fans' response—moderating spoilers and debating the ethics of the leak—illustrates how audiences perceive themselves as co-responsible agents of the brand and how, in the post-digital era, narrative control has become a shared endeavour.

The findings highlight the uniqueness of the *Lux* campaign within the landscape of global pop. The appropriation of religious symbolism and the conception of a “mass-album” that engages with Spanish Catholic tradition, the fusion of flamenco and experimental music on a symphonic scale, and the travel narrative linking Madrid, Mexico City, New York, and Barcelona collectively positioned Rosalía in a distinctive cultural space. These elements demonstrate the artist's capacity to reconfigure established cultural codes and to generate a project that transcends the conventional boundaries of music marketing.

This research presents certain limitations. The analysis is based exclusively on publicly available sources and does not include access to the campaign's internal metrics, such as advertising segmentation strategies, interaction data, or negotiations with streaming platforms. Future studies could explore more deeply the relationship between platform policies and the dissemination of music marketing campaigns, as well as examine how discourses of gender, class, and race are articulated within these promotional dynamics. It would also be relevant to assess the album's long-term critical reception and its broader impact on the music industry.

In conclusion, the release of *Lux* demonstrates that post-digital music marketing has evolved into a complex form of cultural storytelling. Rosalía orchestrated a campaign that combined tradition and modernity, spectacle and spirituality, exclusivity and participation. The transmedia strategy enabled the construction of a coherent and immersive universe that engaged her followers as co-creators of meaning and

consolidated her artistic brand on a global scale. The *Lux* experience confirms that, in the contemporary era, the success of a musical project depends not only on the songs themselves but on the expanded narrative that surrounds them and the artist's ability to establish an emotional bond with her community.

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