

INTERNET

Gucci reinvents heritage print through artist collaboration

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Gucci cruise 2015 campaign image featuring Flora Knight

By SARAH JONES

Italian fashion label Gucci is educating consumers on the heritage of its Flora print, seen across its cruise 2015 collection, through digital marketing.

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Gucci tapped Canadian artist Kris Knight to reinterpret the flowered pattern with a modern touch. By making the connection between past and present, Gucci is able to present the garments as more than clothing.

"Any time a brand pulls something well-known from its archives and reinterprets it in a modern way, there are bound to be reactions and thus media attention," said Jordan Phillips, New York-based author of ["The Lure of Luxe."](#)

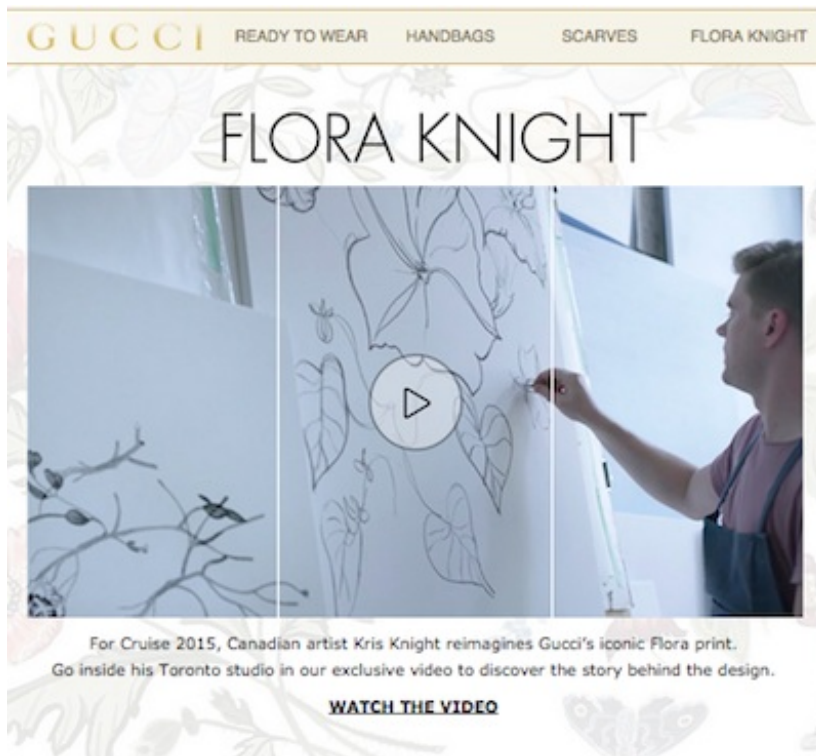
"In this case, the classic Flora pattern is the perfect candidate for a modern update, because bohemian floral prints are very on trend right now and for spring 2015," she said.

Ms. Phillips is not affiliated with Gucci, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Gucci did not respond by press deadline.

Brush strokes

Gucci sent an email to its newsletter subscribers with the subject line “Introducing Flora Knight: A modern vision for our legendary floral print.”



Email from Gucci

In the body of the email, consumers are first invited to click-through to view a video of Mr. Knight in his studio in Toronto. When clicked, the link takes the user to Gucci's Web site, where the full two-minute video can be viewed.

Mr. Knight's voiceover tells of his life in the countryside, where he can “get lost,” as footage switches between the artist drawing and stalking around with a camera in the woods.



Video still

The painter continues to explain the inspiration of the pastel color palette, his work tinting icing for his mom's bakery. He also explains that he went further back than the '60s for his work for Gucci, referencing the brand's Italian heritage with plants used in ancient Rome by women to command power over men.

Throughout the video, florals spring to life on canvas, appearing as if by magic.

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/bvme6K-7iwo](https://www.youtube.com/embed/bvme6K-7iwo)

Gucci Presents: A Conversation with Kris Knight

Further down in the email, Gucci shows a few of the completed cruise garments featuring Flora Knight. Text next to the photos explains that the print was originally made for Princess Grace of Monaco, but has been given a “stylishly seductive” image this season.



Email from Gucci

Consumers are invited to shop the collection.

At the bottom of the message is a link to view the "artist in residence," and learn more about Flora.



Email from Gucci

Current creative director Frida Giannini was the first to revive Flora, rediscovering the print in 2005.

On social media, Gucci shared some vintage advertising images and photos of Princess Grace herself wearing the scarf.



Gucci

November 6

Gucci Flora

First created in 1966 for Princess Grace of Monaco, Gucci Flora is a timeless beauty—sweet, delicate, feminine. Yet this classic also knows how to reinvent. Today, a look at Flora's history. Tomorrow, a new story unfolds. [#floraknight](#) (7 photos)



Facebook post from Gucci

The brand has kept up a string of posts showing product images for both men and women, Mr. Knight in his studio and highlighting the prints from this season.



Tweets from Gucci

Heritage focus

Flora is a central part of Gucci's museum, with its own room in the permanent Florence space and dedicated display in traveling editions.

For instance, Italian fashion house Gucci brought its museum across the Atlantic Ocean for the first time with an exhibit at the JK Iguatemi mall in São Paulo.

The temporary "Forever Now" display, which was be up for three weeks, showcased archival pieces on loan from the permanent Gucci Museo in Florence.

Highlighted was the Flora motif, a floral pattern that can be traced to 1966. Rodolfo Gucci wanted to create a special item for Grace Kelly's visit to the brand's Via Monte Napoleone boutique, and enlisted artist Vittorio Accornero to create a print for a scarf.

Gucci has since reinterpreted Flora for each season, making it a consistent presence in the brand's designs ([see story](#)).

Keeping a thread of design motifs can help a brand promote its heritage.

French jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels also explored its heritage of incorporating florals into

designs through a social video housed on a microsite dedicated to the Cosmos collection.

The video aspect of the microsite is presented as a timeline that gives enthusiasts a brief glimpse of the maison's floral designs through the decades. This added microsite feature is relevant to the Cosmos collection as it highlights the continuous inspiration of Van Cleef & Arpels' designs ([see story](#)).

"The modern update of the iconic pattern provides another opportunity for Gucci to reinforce its message of Italian heritage and craftsmanship, plus its connection to Princess Grace of Monaco, who the pattern was created for," Ms. Phillips said.

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/ty4xjycU2vE](https://www.youtube.com/embed/ty4xjycU2vE)

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