

IN-STORE

## Printemps has visions of spring for holiday season

November 2, 2015



*Printemps holiday 2015, illustrated by Laurent Sanguinetti*

By JEN KING

French department store Printemps is defrosting the holidays with the help of a springtime fairy.

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For its holiday 2015 campaign, Printemps is retelling the story of a 1911 fairy tale written in honor of the Parisian department store. As the retailer ends a year-long celebration for its 150th anniversary that has focused heavily on its springtime associations ([see story](#)), it is fitting to reflect upon an element of its past while simultaneously enchanting today's consumer during its busiest season.

"Printemps' is combining its 150th anniversary with its Christmas campaign to maximize the impact on holiday shopping with gold-themed items that are designed exclusively for Printemps," said Ken Morris, principal, [Boston Retail Partners](#). "The unique anniversary items will appeal to loyal Printemps customers who are proud to be associated with the luxury brand.

"With its company name representing spring' in French, the springtime theme for the Christmas fairy tale is a clever way to tie into the heritage of Printemps," he said. "Printemps' anniversary campaign builds upon its iconic heritage of innovation, elegance, service culture and sharing.

"It is a 'Back to the Future' approach by honoring the heritage of the brand while appealing to a new generation of brand enthusiasts with technology-driven theatrical experiences."

Mr. Morris is not affiliated with Printemps, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

**Printemps** did not respond by press deadline.

### Winter awakening

Printemps' holiday campaign for 2015 is based on its eponymous fairy who turns "grey skies, snowy landscapes, frozen water and a sleeping world" to spring with the swish of her magic wand. Printemps' Christmas fairy tale includes a stanza that reads:

And in the midst of this total silence,

the elegant, impish Printemps Fairy shivered in her enchanting golden dress. Seized by an irresistible urge to awaken the world, she decided to hurry spring along.

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Posted by [Printemps](#) on [Thursday, October 29, 2015](#)

Under the stage direction of Philippe Decoufle, Printemps has created "an ode to light" for its holiday marketing initiative. The "total show" approach will include multiple aspects of the store including window displays, artwork and digital communications.

The windows displays on Boulevard Haussmann, which will be unveiled Nov. 6, will tell the story of the Printemps Fairy as she turns Paris' grey winter to a spring-filled wonderland. Within the 11 window panes, the Printemps Fairy will bring springtime to Christmas using special optical effects.

For instance, in some panes time speeds up and stretches, while in another window forms move through the snow and air. Each display will include a "veritable explosion" background made of flowers such as roses, daffodils, peonies and climbing flowers.

Printemps' windows on Boulevard Haussmann will also be animated for the first time. In its panes, Printemps will introduce passersby to the Printemps Fairy's companions, envisioned by the department store's brand partners, with each display showing the metamorphosis from winter to spring.

For instance, Longines' Little Timekeepers help the Printemps Fairy speed up time in a window filled with cogs and clock hands, while Lancôme's Rose Maidens flit from rosebud to rosebud to awaken the flowers.



*Longines and Lancôme windows at Printemps, illustration*

Additional characters include: Evian's Spirits of the Source, an adult and child duo symbolizing life and purity; Sonia Rykiel's Parisian Dolls, dressed in the designer's latest fashions serve as the ambassadors of the Saint Germain neighborhood Printemps calls home and the Pretty Dances by Christian Louboutin host a "scarlet revue."

Lastly, Burberry included its British Puppets, dressed in the house's traditional wares to represent the spirit of gifting.

Printemps' "The Magical Christmas Journey by Burberry" in 2014 told the story of a young boy who floats from London to Paris on an umbrella. Through in-store displays, a large installation on the store's facade and an exclusive collection, Burberry was able to reach Printemps' customers, while also generating foot traffic for the retailer.

Printemps' Burberry branded story was told through 11 windows, which featured handmade puppets dressed in the exclusive Burberry collection made for the campaign ([see story](#)).

The holiday campaign continues on the store's Boulevard Haussmann-facing facade where the retailer will place a 16-foot tall, three-dimensional fairy accompanied by a 15-minute light show. On the store's Rue du Havre facade Longines has a "Petite Maitre du Temps," or master of time, display set with lights, cogs, stars and flowers.



*Printemps' Boulevard Haussmann facade, illustration*

Overall, Printemps' holiday effort includes nearly 5 miles of fairy lights, 195,000 LED bulbs, 8,000 flowers and 8 million flashes per minute accomplished over a three-month build, a 15-day construction and six trucks full of decorations.

Inside the store itself, Lancome will set up a trial pop-up shop designed to look like a conservatory in the beauty brand's colors. Under a rose canopy, Lancome will offer an interactive space with available beauty sessions and exclusive products developed for Printemps' 150th anniversary.

The holiday experience continues at Fauchon, Printemps' in-house bakeshop, where exclusive anniversary pastries will be served. Printemps' restaurant, La Brasserie, will also serve a gold-themed, three-course menu prepared by young, Michelin-star chef Virginie Bassetot.

Gifting options were also considered by the retailer, especially for young children. For the 2015 holiday season, Printemps is creating a space dedicated to toys and games under the auditorium on the 7th floor Women Store.



*Toys at Printemps for Christmas 2015*

Here, consumers can shop in the space curated by La Grande Recre, for the year's must-have toys including Star Wars, Playmobil, Disney and Barbie.

For its 200-piece gift selection, Printemps has also curated an edit of gold-themed limited-edition products exclusive to the retailer's flagship location. These include footwear by Saint Laurent, Manolo Blahnik and Tod's, handbags by Moschino and Chloe, a Michael Kors watch and personal care goods by Dior and Armani, among many others.

An exclusive Printemps gift edit for Christmas is available as well with gifts from Manolo Blahnik, Longines, Maison Martin Margiela and Jimmy Choo.

Reinterpreting the same narrative

Each holiday seasons brands must reinvent their marketing to be fresh, offering a new perspective, but they must not stray too far off course as to displease and alienate loyal consumers who may only engage with the retailer for seasonal shopping.

For instance, British department store chain Selfridges is taking consumers on a "Journey to the Stars" this holiday season with an astrologically themed campaign.

This year's Destination Christmas diverts from the typical snowy atmosphere in favor of zodiac signs, using the

personality profiles as a reference point for window displays, gifting merchandising and in-store events. Taking an out-of-the-box approach may help Selfridges differentiate itself from other retailers during the important holiday shopping season ([see story](#)).

"Consumer who may be tired of traditional Christmas themes and cold winter weather, may be energized by the fresh, springtime theme with an emphasis on fairies, flowers, gold and sparks," Mr. Morris.

"Many consumers think of shopping as entertainment and enjoy the theatrical experiences offered by luxury retailers such as Printemps," he said. "With a non-secular springtime message in the theme, the campaign may also appeal to a broader audience beyond those that celebrate Christmas."

Final Take

*Jen King, lead reporter on Luxury Daily, New York*

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