

ADVERTISING

Chanel conveys the couture composition of N 5 for Inside Chanel

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Video still from *Inside Chanel*, chapter 15

By JEN KING

In its latest *Inside Chanel* chapter, French atelier Chanel paints a self-portrait of its iconic N 5 perfume, introducing its backstory and role in the brand's DNA.

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Inside Chanel now consists of 15 chapters that explore the brand's codes such as its use of particular colors, the lion motif and the legacy of founder Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel. As its most well-known fragrance, N 5 has been the subject of two other *Inside Chanel* chapters to date, showing the significance of the house's first scent.

"Each chapter is well produced, visually stimulating and on-brand," said Jem Ripley, **SapientNitro** head of retail Northeast. "Both the video and audio storytelling are compelling. The videos communicate sophistication, progressive independence, femininity, mystery and historical authority, much like anything else created by the fabled fashion house.

"The video uses a lot of provocative, 'millennial feeling' language. The fragrance is described as an 'abstract painting' with 'complex fragrance notes' that will 'construct an aura' to evoke the 'audacity of mademoiselle,' he said. "In a way, this positions Chanel as a challenger brand from the start the O.G. of chic provocation which certainly could appeal more to younger consumers who seek authenticity and heritage from their preferred brands.

"That being said, Chanel is still one of the best known brands in the world; so, it will be an uphill battle any time it seeks to slightly reposition its products or pillars. The house should continue to own its history and its rightful position as a fashion authority; all consumers appreciate confidence and transparency in communication."

Mr. Ripley is not affiliated with Chanel, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Chanel did not respond by press deadline.

Couture compositions

Chanel promoted the 15th chapter of *Inside Chanel*, titled "The Self-Portrait of a Perfume," on its Facebook account by leading off with a quote from the video, in which the narrator speaks as if she is the fragrance, saying, "I am a consciousness, a way of walking, of thinking, of dreaming, of being true to oneself: a final flourish of elegance. A freedom."

Similar to its teaser's approach, *Inside Chanel*'s latest chapter begins with a quotation from Ms. Chanel, spoken by

the narrator. In the statement, Ms. Chanel said, "I wanted an artificial perfume. That's right, artificial, like a dress; meaning manufactured. I am a designer of couture. I want a perfume that is a composition."

Afterwards, the narrator begins to speak as if she were Chanel N 5, explaining that the fragrance is an "abstract painting, an olfactory geometry whose lines are emotions and whose tracings are memories."

With its quickening pace, the animations show N 5 juice sloshing around outlines of the fragrances' bottle, a nod to the concept of an invisible decanter, which extend into the frame's vantage point as if it were a fun house mirror.

Chanel then introduces the "dynasty of artisans" who have worked on the scent, beginning with perfumer Ernest Beaux, who developed the scent in 1921. Also mentioned are Henri Robert, Jacques Polge and Olivier Polge, the current fragrance creator for the house of Chanel.

The overarching theme of the N 5 chapter of Inside Chanel is how the fragrance brings forth utterances of memories, whether it be Ms. Chanel's favorite forest or the orphanage where she was raised.



Video still from Inside Chanel's The Self-Portrait of a Perfume

As a "secret inspiration," the video touches on additional brand codes and muses such the color black, the city of Venice and the rebellious spirit of Ms. Chanel.

Continuing the video creates a floral bouquet naming the numerous ingredients used in N 5's composition. Iris, rose, bergamot, tobacco, orange blossom and jasmine, among many others are part of the "chorus of a floral symphony" and a "composition of the finest ingredients."

From here, the video touches on its simple bottle design that puts the juice as the focal point rather than its glass surroundings. As it nears its conclusion, Inside Chanel chapter 15 speaks of the consciousness of the fragrance, using the quote shared as a teaser.

The Self-Portrait of a Perfume - Inside Chanel

The role of N 5

The importance of N 5 for Chanel has been explored in both the first and second chapters of the Inside Chanel series.

For the second chapter, Chanel invited consumers to learn the intimate history of its N 5 fragrance through a video featuring Marilyn Monroe.

The widely-known quote by Ms. Monroe about her only wearing Chanel N 5 to bed is the theme of the "Marilyn and N 5 Inside Chanel" video ([see story](#)).

While the heritage of the fragrance is important to Chanel's overall narrative, the brand has scripted present-day messaging around its olfactory offerings.

For example, Chanel personalized its fragrance marketing with a video featuring model and brand ambassador Gisele Bündchen.

Ms. Bündchen is the current face of Chanel's iconic N 5 fragrance, and the effort departed from the French label's typical campaign created for this segment of its brand. Instead of focusing heavily on product and glamour, Chanel concentrated on what fragrances may mean for the wearer and those around them ([see story](#)).

The Inside Chanel video formula presents consumers with a point of entry to embraces Chanel's heritage.

"The video communicates the essence of the fragrance, and the history that inspired its complex scent Coco's time

at the orphanage; her obsession with the number 5; her desire to combine nature with artifice; her forward-thinking decision to mix floral notes with masculine smells; her understanding that every woman is complex and contains multitudes," Mr. Ripley said.

"N 5 is as much of a standalone brand as it is a part of Chanel's DNA," he said. "It has inspired many other brands, artists, consumers, men and women, and has existed in many iterations since 1921.

"One video cannot tell almost 100 years of history; this single piece of content is one of many official and unofficial parts of the fragrance's story."

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