

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

Versace creates scent profile through martial arts-inspired narrative

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Versace's Dylan Blue campaign

By SARAH JONES

Italian fashion label Versace is telling a cinematic story of modern masculinity to launch its latest cologne.

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Shot by photographer Bruce Weber, the black-and-white campaign film for the Dylan Blue scent stars a cast of models and fighters, who come together for a vintage-inspired tale of friendly rivalry and friendship. While scent can be difficult to communicate via digital mediums, consumers may be able to associate with this group of friends and therefore the fragrance.

"By tapping into MMA themes and even fighters albeit in a retro European gang movie feel gives the brand an ultra-masculine cache that appeals to young men," said Marko Muellner, senior vice president digital at **Edelman**, Portland.

"Adding Gigi Hadid as the sole, inaccessible yet seemingly promiscuous object of desire just heightens the omnisexual feel of the creative," he said. "The over-acted stunts and humor she only notices me when she's kicking me is a nice additional touch.

"All in all, the short film checks all the boxes visually beautiful, worldly/European, fantastical yet accessible, relevant/of the current zeitgeist, sexy and provocative."

Mr. Muellner is not affiliated with **Versace**, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Versace was unable to comment directly before press deadline.

Squad goals

The film opens with ambient city noise under the Versace logo. A shot of a group of men on motorcycles is seen speeding into an alleyway one by one is followed by a clip of male models walking behind Gigi Hadid.

A narrator begins to explain that his father was prone to saying, "You can't live with women and you can't live without them."

From there, the scene changes to show the inside of a gym, where the men and Ms. Hadid are training. They box

each other and perform flips and kicks as the narrator explains that the lone woman can out kick box the men.



Video still

The narrator's chagrin at Ms. Hadid not noticing him is illustrated by the model kissing another man. He goes on to explain that this man, Trevor, had a job selling ice cream at the Jersey Shore, which made him a better catch.

The group is seen on the streets, swapping punches, traveling as a pack or racing down the streets on their bikes.

He concludes with the thought, "In her way, she loved us all, no matter who won the fight."

Versace #DylanBlue / A film by Bruce Weber

"I've been watch lots of movies lately where the actors are mixed martial arts fighters," said Mr. Weber in a statement. "It seems like they are always proving themselves, so that the women characters will fall in love with them.

"I thought it would be interesting to do some photographs and make a film that dealt with this kind of relationship," he said. "Many women I know really respect the sensitivity and vulnerability of men.

"I wanted to show that men can have these qualities while remaining very strong and disciplined – like great athletes – and still fall in love with the girl of their dreams. For me, Versace has always represented this kind of driving passion.

"That's why I've always loved working with them – they give photographers and filmmakers like me the freedom to image a big life."

Versace Pour Homme Dylan Blue is categorized as an aromatic fougere fragrance.



Versace Pour Homme Dylan Blue

The new scent features top notes of water, calabrian bergamot, grapefruit and fig leaf. Middle notes are violet leaf, papyrus, patchouli, black pepper and ambroxan, while base notes include musk, incense, tonka bean and saffron (see story).

"The creative does a brilliant job positioning the brand and product far on the right of the [stereotypically] masculine

scale appealing to both men who buy fragrance and the women who buy fragrance for their men," Mr. Muellner said.

"It even goes so far to appeal to a powerful women's desire to be coveted by multiple men, adding to the potential appeal of women buyers," he said.

Scent profiles

Fragrance campaigns often lend themselves to the dramatic, as brands try to personify the intensity or attraction of a scent.

Italy's Giorgio Armani is illuminating the rules of attraction by intensifying the codes of its men's fragrance offering.

New for 2016, Armani has launched Armani Code Profumo, an offshoot of its Armani Code men's cologne, with a campaign that builds a narrative of seduction to capture consumer interest. Offering an intensified version of a fragrance may appeal to a different segment than the original and gives the brand an opportunity to explore the variations of its ideal Armani man ([see story](#)).

Italian fashion label Ferragamo is portraying the many roles a Signorina woman plays in her life through a dramatic campaign.

"My Life is a Play" centers on a short film in which model Grace Hatzel embodies all three personalities of the Signorina fragrance line in four minutes, demonstrating the range of interactions that the scents can inspire. Tied to the launch of Ferragamo's latest women's scent, Signorina Misteriosa, this effort enables women to explore the scent personalities through performance ([see story](#)).

"It has become cliché, but short video is increasingly the currency of marketing, driven by social media," Mr. Muellner said. "While this single video is a strong effort, the creative could be even more impactful, reaching and engaging even more consumers, if it was customized and amplified on each specific social channel.

"Facebook could see a teaser, the full video and even behind the scenes, going deeper on the stars and the fragrance and using ad dollars to boost and target more broadly," he said. "Instagram could see a series of shorter clips over time, driving more reach and engagement with each new clip and then, again, using ad dollars to boost and target.

"Lastly, it seems that Snapchat is not yet part of the Versace social effort, and it should be if it's trying to reach and appeal to this audience with short video. Snapchat has very quickly become a very important platform for reaching younger audiences who consume massive amounts of video on the app.

"They created a great asset, they just didn't complete the effort by truly capitalizing on the marketing opportunities around them."