

MEDIA/PUBLISHING

Coco Chanel's inspirational life and career illustrated in new biography

August 22, 2016



Coco Chanel by Zena Alkayat and Nina Cosford; Chronicle Books

By STAFF REPORTS

Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel is the subject of a new biography that tells the late designer's life story through colorful illustrations.

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The tome, published by Chronicle Books, was released in the United States on Aug. 19, the late designer's birthday. The facts and myths surrounding Ms. Chanel's life have become indistinguishable, giving biographical authors plenty of material to work with, such as how she earned the nickname Coco and her torrid love affairs.

Illustrating Chanel

Part of the "Library of Luminaries" series written by Zena Alkayat and illustrated by Nina Cosford, "Coco Chanel" tells Ms. Chanel's story through short paragraphs, quotes from the late designer and colorful illustrations.

Ms. Alkayat and Ms. Cosford's Library of Luminaries series focuses on the narratives of inspirational women with books dedicated to artist Frida Kahlo and authors Virginia Woolf and Jane Austen.



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The Coco Chanel book touches on subjects well-versed Chanel enthusiasts know well, such as how after her mother's death, Ms. Chanel and her siblings were split up, with her brothers sent to a rural family and herself and sisters being placed at a convent-run orphanage.

A main focus in the illustrated biography is of course Ms. Chanel's career as she worked to establish her fashion house. Always of interest to fans of Ms. Chanel, her affairs with Nazi soldiers, British and Russian aristocrats and the man often said to be her soulmate, Boy Chapel.



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The latter topic has been an underlying theme of many marketing campaigns for Ms. Chanel's brand.

For example, Chanel paid tribute to the influencers found in Ms. Chanel's life through a collection of named lipsticks.

The five lines that make up the collection include Lovers in red, Family in nudes, Muses in corals, Best Friends in pinks and Artists in plum shades. Lovers include Arthur and Dimitri while Family features Louise and Adrienne. Muses represent Catherine and Misia while Best Friends features Olga and Vera. In Artists, there is Elise and Ina ([see story](#)).

Coco Chanel by Ms. Alkayat and Ms. Cosford can be purchased on [Amazon](#).