

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

Kenzo portrays duality of femininity, power in Spike Jonze-directed fragrance effort

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Video still from Kenzo's "My Mutant Brain"

By SARAH JONES

French fashion label Kenzo is weaving an energetic tale of spontaneity and creative expression to launch its latest scent.

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Inspired by the brand's eye insignia from its fall/winter 2013 collection, Kenzo World is the first fragrance envisioned by Kenzo co-artistic directors Carol Lim and Humberto Leon. To celebrate the launch, the design duo tapped their friend filmmaker Spike Jonze to capture the free-thinking, spirited layer of the Kenzo woman in a colorful, feverish short.

"I think the video perfectly captures the perfume's irreverent personality," said Michael Miraflor, senior vice president, global head of futures & innovation at [Optimedia Blue 449](#).

"The first minute or so paints a bland, conventional world which Kenzo World looks to disrupt with Margaret Qualley's surreal choreography," he said. "I take it as a metaphor for the fragrance industry; it's good to see a Kenzo really looking to inject excitement and unpredictability into the equation."

Mr. Miraflor is not affiliated with [Kenzo](#), but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Kenzo](#) was unable to comment directly before press deadline.

Breaking out

Mr. Jonze's "My Mutant Brain" features actress and dancer Margaret Qualley as the protagonist. The start of the film finds the star seated at a table in a banquet hall listening to a droning speech, struggling to feign interest in the speaker with a plastered smile.

She whispers to one of her companions to excuse herself and gets up from the table. Once out in a hallway, she takes a few relaxed steps in her layered green dress in silence.

Suddenly, as a percussive soundtrack created exclusively for Kenzo by Sam Spiegel featuring Assassin begins to play, Ms. Qualley's eyes dart around and blink in rhythm. The rest of her face gets in on the fun, as she contorts her

mouth to the beats.



Still from My Mutant Brain

Unable to control her energy, she begins to shimmy and then sets off down the corridor, kicking as she goes to choreography by Ryan Heffington. Finding herself in front of a series of mirrors, she performs a duet with her body double, pausing to stroll casually as she passes the solid walls in between the looking glasses.

Letting loose, Ms. Qualley licks a statue's face, charges up a staircase in heels and mock fights with a tuxedoed fellow guest who is taking a phone call.

Possessing superhuman powers, the actress begins shooting lasers of light at the walls, ceiling and a standing vase, creating a dust storm in her wake.

Pausing from her haphazard movements, the dancer performs a series of ballet-inspired turns on a stage before doing a trust-fall into the orchestra pit. From there, she leaps out the door and across a courtyard.

Eventually, the actress is face-to-face with a figure of an eye made out of flowers. She is magically lifted up and through the pupil, raining down pieces of the eye around her as she reaches the ground.

Kenzo World - The new fragrance

In addition to the three-minute film, Kenzo has split the effort into shorter chapters, allowing for the pieces to be more easily digested on social media.

The bottle for Kenzo World is shaped like the scent's inspiration. Made of frosted glass with pink and gold detailing that reflects the materials of Kenzo's The Eye jewelry line, the bottle features an eyelid fashioned of black rubber.

Kenzo World's box is a continuation of the theme, with embossed concentric circles forming an optical illusion. This fragrance is Kenzo's first to feature Braille on the box.



Kenzo World ad campaign

Developed by perfumer Francis Kurkdjian Kenzo World is designed as a "floral burst" of notes including peony, Egyptian jasmine and ambroxan.

Kenzo World is available exclusively at Bloomingdale's in the United States and at Kenzo's ecommerce site for France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

Layered leading ladies

Not wanting to limit women to one role, a number of brands have urged them to break out of stereotypes or typecasting with the help of scent.

For instance, U.S. fashion label Carolina Herrera is showing that being virtuous all the time is overrated to launch a seductive scent.

To introduce its Good Girl perfume, the brand created a sultry campaign featuring model Karlie Kloss, who proves the supernatural power in a pair of sky-high heels as she draws attention on a New York street. Portraying a duality of being female, this campaign is likely to resonate with consumers, as they can see a bit of themselves in both good and bad ([see story](#)).

Similarly, 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](#)).

Taking a cinematic approach can have benefits for a marketing campaign's reception on social media.

"The video is so dynamic that it definitely has legs beyond Kenzo's existing base," Mr. Miraflor said. "Much will depend, however, on the brand's willingness to amplify the content beyond owned social channels.

"Organic social reach is always a limiting factor, and there are several targeting angles available to maximize paid support including but not limited to Spike Jonze and his films, dance and the musical artists involved in the project."