

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Dior gathers female perspectives for photography project

March 23, 2017



*Dior's spring 2017 campaign*

By SARAH JONES

French fashion house Christian Dior is putting a feminine lens on its spring/summer 2017 ready-to-wear collection to mark the milestone of its first female artistic director's debut.

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#TheWomenBehindTheLens gave nine photographers carte blanche to shoot the season's fashions in their own way. Making their work more personable, the women were captured on film talking about their art for Dior as well as their feminist observations and opinions.

"I think Dior decided to launch this female-centric photography project around this collection debut because Maria Grazia Chiuri really connects with the idea of giving a point of view that speaks about women with other women," said Dalia Strum, professor at the [Fashion Institute of Technology](#) and founder of [Dalia Inc.](#), New York.

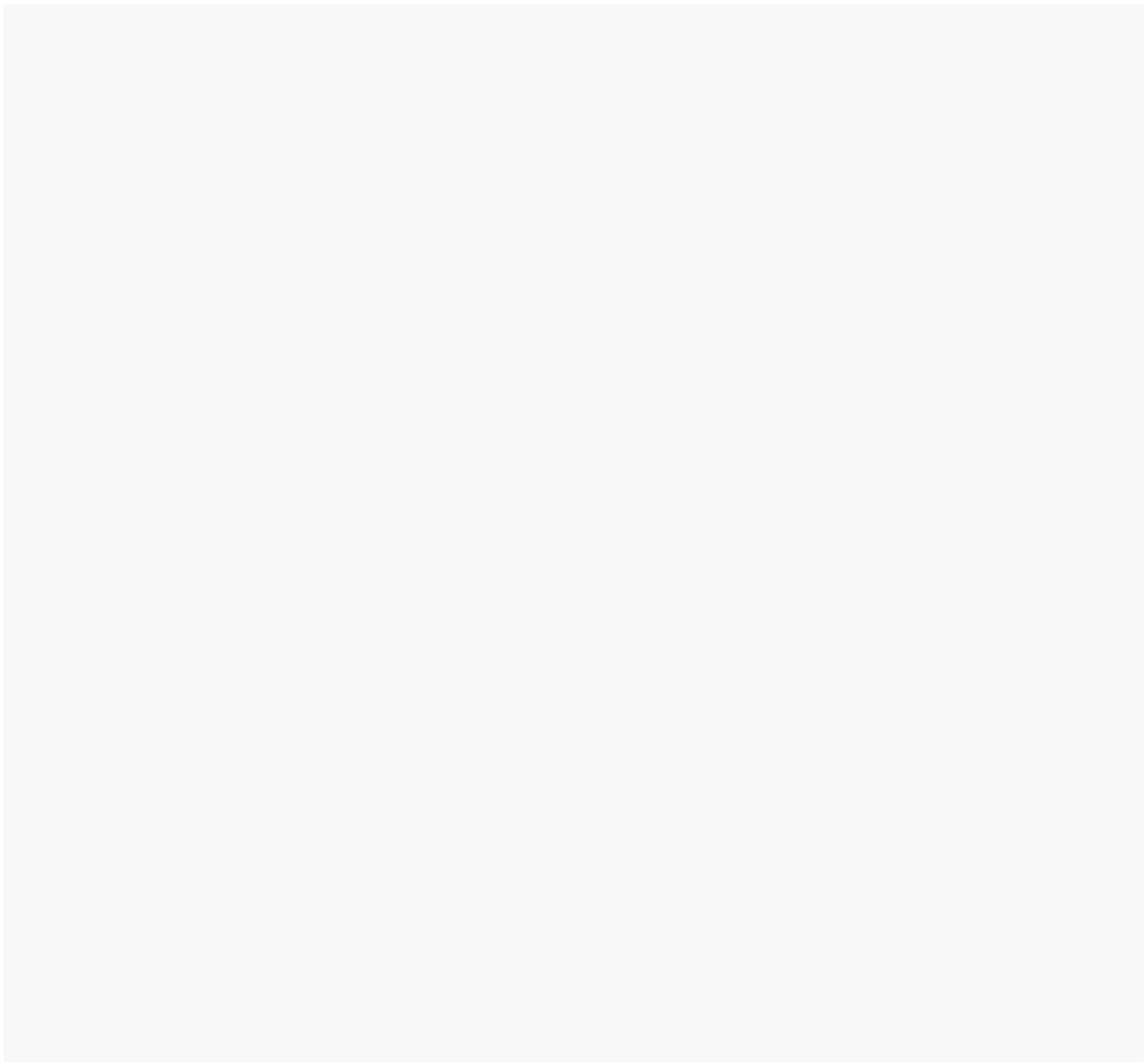
"Dior is positioned as a feminine brand, and following the Women's March along with the highly relevant conversation including music lyrics in Beyonce's anthem 'Flawless' that is happening, it's extremely important for them to invest in building these extremely relevant and impactful relationships," she said.

Ms. Strum is not affiliated with [Dior](#), but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Dior](#) was reached for comment.

On film

Dior's series is featured on its blog DiorMag. The women's photographs are displayed in individual galleries, with a video interview accompanying the shots.

The first of the nine women profiled is Maripol. The photographer went backstage for her minimalist images, preserving the models and the fashions through her preferred Polaroid camera.



Introducing #TheWomenBehindtheLens, a project initiated by our Artistic Director #MariaGraziaChiuri in which 9 women photographers each offer their own take on her first collection for Dior. Discover the unique work of Maripol here, animating the Polaroids she took backstage at our Spring-Summer 2017 show with drawings and sounds for the project. @Maripolarama, music @LeonardLasry #DiorSS17

A post shared by Dior Official (@dior) on Mar 21, 2017 at 6:23am PDT

In her interview, Maripol discusses meeting house artistic director Maria Grazia Chiuri, and talks about working with her. She also explains the unique relationship that occurs between two women on set, where any sexual overtones are eliminated and she can get her collaborator to open up their soul.

Also featured is Brigitte Lacombe, who shot the brand's spring advertising campaign featuring twins Ruth and May Bell ([see story](#)). The artist discusses her collaboration with Ms. Chiuri, who allowed her to do what she wanted, rather than dictating to her.

Ms. Lacombe also shares her thoughts on the typically sexy way women are portrayed, which to her seems "fake."



### *Dior's spring/summer 2017 campaign*

Brigitte Niedermair was also tapped by Dior. The photographer was inspired by painter Domenico Gnoli and chose to focus on details in the construction of the garments, including their color and curves.

The artist explains her love of ambiguity, which she says the slower pace of her 4 by 5 inch camera helps to achieve. She also discusses her preference for female assistants and her desire to find balance not only in art, but between men and women.

### *#TheWomenBehindTheLens: Brigitte Niedermair*

Feminine focus

Dior also ushered in a new design era in dedicated bricks-and-mortar environments.

To launch the debut collection by its recently appointed artistic director Maria Grazia Chiuri, Dior is staging a series of pop-up boutiques, using the temporary store format to create a dedicated retail story around the apparel and accessories.

Representing modern femininity, models walked in everything from reimagined fencing uniforms to frothy tulle dresses. Some looks included a slogan t-shirt reading "We should all be feminists."

Evoking this pro-female message in the Paris boutique, Dior tapped feminist artist Tracey Emin. Her piece, crafted exclusively for this location, is a neon sign reading, "Should love last," in yellow ([see story](#)).

Making its creative transition the main event, Dior has also chosen to focus on Ms. Chiuri's arrival at the house through film.

Dior is taking consumers behind-the-scenes of its atelier, using documentary-style content to acquaint its community with its inner workings under newly installed creative director Ms. Chiuri.

The label's online content hub DiorMag is providing a closer look at the designer's debut couture collection, while Dior gave a camera crew access during the preparations for Ms. Chiuri's first runway show, with the resulting footage running as a two-part event on Britain's Channel 4. Letting consumers in during this transition period will help make the switch at the top more seamless ([see story](#)).

"This is their time to reinvent the past to pave the road for the future and focus on positioning themselves as experts within the space," Ms. Strum said. "They should be investing in relationships with their target market, engaging with them and highlighting their successes.

"As long as they can maintain a strong brand identity and simultaneously strengthen these relationships, they have a strong opportunity to continue their trajectory as market leaders."