

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

Armani brings together successful women for S Women's Circle 2017

April 26, 2017



Armani's S Women's Circle celebrates empowered women

By DANNY PARISI

Italian fashion label Giorgio Armani brought together a panel of intelligent and accomplished women for its annual S Women's Circle campaign, supporting and emphasizing that women can and should be an accepted element of any industry.

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The Armani Beauty campaign is primarily experienced through four videos the brand has produced, interviewing the featured women about their backgrounds and the importance of normalizing women in the workforce. Armani is emphasizing not just the women in the luxury industry, but outside of it as well.

"There's an over-arching message in Armani's 'Si' series that speaks to something bigger than a catchy slogan for a designer fragrance," said Cassie Schultz, media strategist at [Blue Moon Digital](#), Denver, CO. "To say 'Si,' is a much more important statement than an expensive treat, it's much more than a testament to whether one deserves luxury.

"Armani's message doesn't give women permission to better themselves, it stands together with women to demand better. This campaign never shows a product, but rather showcases people who made an impactful choice to stand tall.

"Each woman featured has her own catchphrase, 'every day is a new day, or you can only get what you reach for.' Each woman embodies a choice to say 'Si,' to demand in her own voice the life she deserves."

Ms. Schultz is not affiliated with Armani but agreed to comment in an expert capacity.

Say S

The S Women's Circles gets its name from a campaign Armani ran called "The Courage to Say S," celebrating the women who said "yes" to their lives and their ambitions and pursued them even in the face of adversity. The campaign was a video featuring Cate Blanchett, the face of Armani's Si fragrance, along with several other influential women speaking about their experiences.

That video grew into an annual panel of women from different industries who come together at Armani's behest for

a video campaign where they talk about the challenges they have faced and the importance of facing those challenges head on.

This year, the S Women's Circle has women from a variety of industries, from art to activism to tech. Four videos give an intimate look at a few of the women and how they got to be where they are today.

The first is Amy Sall, an adjunct professor of Culture and Media Studies at the New School in New York. Ms. Sall is currently working on editing a journal of African affairs and focuses her work on human rights and other causes.

In her video spotlight, she talks about her love of fashion and the importance of expression and confidence that needs to be instilled in young girls.

Nicole Warne for Armani's S Women's Circle 2017

Rachel Sklar, another profiled woman, is a lawyer who founded two networking collectives for women in the business world to meet and support each other.

Ulla Engeström, a Finnish-American entrepreneur, got her start at a small tech start-up she founded in Finland before making her way to the head of a Palo Alto, CA firm specializing in 360-degree technology.

Finally, Nicole Warne is an Australian businesswoman who leveraged her status as a popular Instagram influencer to open the first online vintage fashion shop in 2009.

These women each bring a unique perspective to women in the working world, highlighting the importance of supporting other women and making industries more egalitarian.

Throughout, each woman is shown dressed in Armani clothes.

Women's Circle

Armani is not alone in the luxury world in empowering women through highlighting their successes. Kering has run a similar campaign for women in film called Women in Motion.

Now in its third year, Kering launched Women in Motion in 2015 to focus attention on the role women play in film, both behind and on camera. Kering dedicates much of its corporate social responsibility efforts to women's causes, whether it be fair and equal treatment in the workplace or initiatives to build awareness for domestic violence ([see story](#)).

This commitment to women extends to other companies as well, such as LVMH which ran a similar campaign for International Women's Day in March.

Amy Sall for Armani's S Women's Circle 2017

For Women's Day, LVMH established a new series of internal awards to recognize houses that are working to promote gender equality. A decade after the group began its EllesVMH program to promote female upward mobility within its organization to leadership positions, the conglomerate is asking brands to pitch their ideas ([see story](#)).

Armani is highlighting the successes of women when they are given the chance to learn and compete as equals with their peers. Hopefully, these types of campaigns will be less necessary in the future.

"The choice to incorporate powerful women into a branding campaign accomplishes much more than aligning with any one cause," Ms. Schultz said. "It leads by example.

"Armani could have told a story that reads political or parodies protestors and feminists (stories that, when executed by other brands who shall not be named, have been complete PR disasters). Instead Armani takes the narrative high road and seamlessly demonstrates the moments that inspired each character to live her own version of 'Si.'

"Women in these stories are human beings with real problems, real accomplishments and valuable perspectives. Armani puts these women in the spotlight, and in a subtle nod to sisterhood, tells us 'show this to your daughters.'"