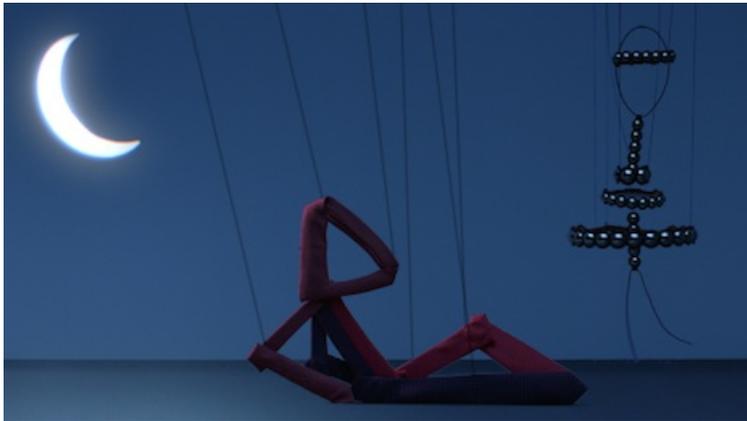


APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Herms personifies gift ideas in poetic play

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Herms' "Little Theater of Gifts" puts products in the lead roles. Image credit: Herms

By SARAH JONES

French house Herms is putting on a show to put itself top-of-mind as a gifting destination.

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The brand's "Little Theater of Gifts" casts accessories such as scarves, jewelry and ties as the main characters, using animated goods to tell a love story. This short film reflects the label's whimsical personality, maintaining a consistency despite the seasonal push.

"The deviation from traditional holiday themes for this holiday-timed video is interesting but strategic," said Isabel Kieszowski, digital media strategist at [Blue Moon Digital](#), Denver, CO. "The unique story of The Poet told without any holiday context gives the products a season-less connotation.

"The video never mentions gift, 'holiday' or presents,' and allows the wallets, jewelry and belts to shine," she said. "The video anchors the desirability of the products on the strong brand that is Herms."

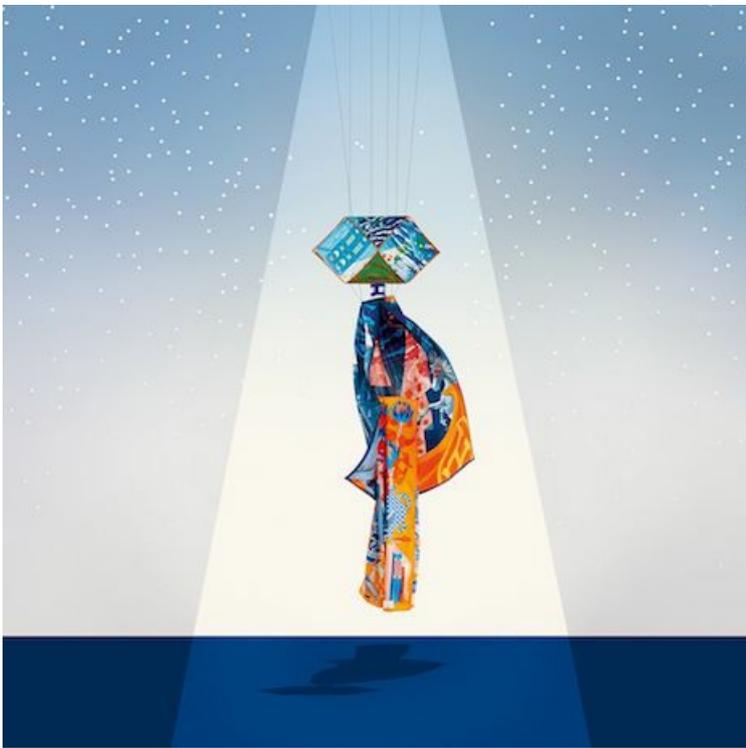
Ms. Kieszowski is not affiliated with Herms, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Herms](#) was reached for comment.

Retail theater

Herms' theater resembles a puppet show, with products maneuvered by strings. Opening with a percussive soundtrack, the brand's short film begins as a "magician, storyteller and artist" made of scarves appears on "stage."

This character begins to narrate a story about a poet's dream. The poet, represented by a stick figure made of ties, imagines his "queen," played by a twirling stack of jewelry.

When he wakes, he realizes his love has disappeared and rushes to find her. On his way, he runs into a helpful robot constructed of small leather goods.



Herms' animation of the magician. Image credit: Herms

The poet builds a staircase to find his queen in the clouds, but only manages to find air. He falls back down to earth. Further on his journey, the poet encounters a charming punk and a matador, who challenges him to a duel. The poet, quick on his feet, leaps over his opponent made of a belt and muffler and escapes.

Finally, the poet is reunited with his love, who appears unshaken by her disappearance. The narrator explains that it is unclear whether the poet dreamed of her exit or return.

This magician leaves the viewer with the image that the poet and his queen were last seen on their toes dancing.

Herms' Little Theater of Gifts

On Herms' Web site, this video is accompanied by a gift guide, which lays out ideas that correspond to the characters seen in the narrative.

"I believe Herms is reminding consumers that the brand has a diverse accessories offering apart from its notable scarves," Ms. Kieszowski said. "Herms carries many different luxury accessories which may be within reach to a wider range of consumers.

"The ties, for example, which are featured as the focal character of The Poet, are \$180," she said. "That is an attainable price point for consumers beyond those who exclusively shop from high end brands.

"The video short also features two jewelry collections that have a wide price range."

Alternative approach

While holiday marketing can sometimes turn to the cutesy or traditional, a number of brands are proving that efforts do not have to play by preconceived notions of accepted themes.

Italian fashion house Prada is giving its gifting push a filmic flair through a social video series.

Prada's The Postman's Gifts effort for the holiday season features vignettes around its accessories, including a quartet titled "The Postman Dreams 2" serving as a sequel to the brand's 2015 series of the same name. While eschewing traditional holiday themes, the short films capture the spirit of gifting and generosity through surreal narratives ([see story](#)).

Herms' marketing often leans on whimsical themes. On a number of occasions, this has meant products coming to life on screen.

The brand previously demonstrated how mismatched porcelain tableware can be chic and stylish through one such effort.

As millennials move away from traditional tableware sets that tend to only be used for holidays, if at all, home interior brands have had to be creative to interest the demographic. In a series of short videos, Herms looks to spur interest in its Tie Set tableware line by presenting the collection as laidback and casual, unlike the usual association with high-end china ([see story](#)).

"There are so many gift guides out there that releasing one is becoming mundane," Ms. Kieszkowski said. "The video Herms released is a collection of gifts hiding in plain sight behind animation and storytelling.

"They even dubbed it a 'Theater of Gifts,' differentiating the collection even more during this busy holiday shopping season," she said. "Additionally, they created personas for each product category, instead of messaging for him' and for her' buckets. The way Herms presented its gift collection is an elevated version of the standard gift guide."

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