

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Gucci, Ssense join to document youthful creativity

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The short documentary Youth Mode follows Ms. Olsen's departure from Recens Paper. Image credit: Gucci

By DANNY PARISI

Italian fashion house Gucci and online fashion retailer Ssense have teamed up for a short documentary chronicling young creative Elise By Olsen's departure from the magazine she founded as a teenager.

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In the short documentary, titled "Youth Mode," Ms. Olsen speaks about the founding of Recens Paper, a magazine by and for young people, and her decision to resign from her position as editor-in-chief. The project shows Gucci and Ssense's willingness to branch out of traditional video content and create more campaigns that can live on their own as standalone films.

Youth Mode

Gucci's latest effort is a short documentary produced in collaboration with Ssense called Youth Mode.

The documentary follows Ms. Olsen, one of the youngest media entrepreneurs in the world.

Ms. Olsen founded the youth culture magazine Recens Paper when she was just 13 years old. For five years, Recens Paper grew, becoming an influential force in the world of youth culture and establishing itself as a pillar of alternative fashion.



Ms. Olsen. Image credit: Gucci

This was attributed largely to Ms. Olsen's iconoclastic vision for Recens Paper along with the many writers, editors and photographers who helped make the magazine a reality.

But as Ms. Olsen turned 18, she no longer felt comfortable being in charge of a youth magazine, likening it to "a teacher editing a student magazine."

Instead, Ms. Olsen decided to voluntarily resign her position to make way for someone younger than she who could authentically represent the voices and ideas of people under 18.

The documentary makes use of atmospheric visuals of Ms. Olsen wandering her native Norway, undercut with the former editor's voiceover explaining her decision and a lo-fi indie soundtrack.

Recens Paper

An interesting strategy taken by Gucci and Ssense is that their branding does not appear in the documentary in any way.

Instead, the documentary itself is a piece of standalone content meant purely for viewing, while Gucci and Ssense's attachment to it in the production role is the only thing tying the project to the brands.

For a film about shedding artifice and the fleeting search for authenticity of youth, it is refreshing for Gucci and Ssense to exercise restraint and not turn the film into just another ad.

The radical progressive politics underlying Recens Paper have also been echoed in some of Gucci's other recent efforts. For example, Gucci took a poignant approach to support the gender that gives its pieces life in an International Women's Day initiative.

Youth Mode

As part of Gucci's "Chime for Change," a campaign to strengthen education, health and justice for women and girls around the world, the brand is developing a series of artworks in support of women's equality. Gucci's new pieces and imagery will feature words penned by poet Cloe Wade ([see story](#)).

While Italian brands have a strong heritage and tradition, they should also focus on innovation and creativity to drive growth, according to a new report from WPP and Kantar Millward Brown.

Luxury brands dominate the Italian-focused BrandZ rankings, with seven of the country's top 30 most valuable brands, led by Gucci. Italy has a reputation for producing fine foods, fashion and cars, leading to a heavier concentration of premium producers among the nation's top brands than is seen in most other countries ([see story](#)).

Gucci and Ssense's short documentary shows Gucci at its most innovative as it seeks to create a genuine piece of film divorced from the intrusive branding of normal brand content.