

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Versace enlists special guest to celebrate Donatella

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Donatella Versace has dressed some of the most glamorous people in the world. Image Credit: Versace

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Italian fashion label Versace is bringing fans into its family and giving an intimate look at the life of artistic director Donatella Versace in a cinematic push.

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The brand released a video sharing Ms. Versace's life story to celebrate her latest honor, the 2018 International Award from the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA). The biographical short is playfully narrated by Ms. Versace's admiring "creative collaborator" and dog Audrey Versace.

"Donatella is an international fashion icon who has worked with quite an assortment of celebrities, so the CFDA had a strong message that aligns with their mission that they were able to communicate in an attention-grabbing manner," said Dalia Strum, educator at [The Fashion Institute of Technology](#), New York.

"The humanization of Donatella from a dog is an ironic moment that is easily embraced while not taking away from her iconic achievements and place in fashion history," said Kimmie Smith, celebrity fashion stylist and co-founder/style director of [Athleisure Mag](#).

Ms. Strum and Ms. Smith are not affiliated with Versace, but agreed to comment as industry experts. [Versace](#) was reached for comment.

Versace's golden girl

The film opens up with Audrey giving a tour of her Milan home, before Ms. Versace interrupts and clarifies that it is in fact her home. Audrey restarts her tour, being sure to highlight Versace decor and accessories in the home.

Alongside archival images and video, Audrey lists Ms. Versace's accomplishments, from being the artistic director for five brands to being widely considered a fashion icon. Audrey presents Ms. Versace as a true "boss."



Donatella Versace's story is told from her dog Audrey's perspective.

Ms. Versace also talks directly to fans of the brand in a sit-down interview. She dispenses valuable advice for women in the fashion industry.

"They need to fight, they need to suffer," Ms. Versace says in the video. "But never give up on your dreams."

In an introspective moment, Ms. Versace also reflects on the legacy of her late brother, Gianni Versace.

"In a time when fashion was safe, he went completely unsafe," Ms. Versace says in the film.

Versace created a video to celebrate Donatella Versace's CFDA award

As a tribute to the label's founder, Versace ran a limited-edition T-shirt series, an off-shoot of its ready-to-wear spring/summer 2018 collection. Ms. Versace selected meaningful archival prints that she created alongside her brother to celebrate his life ([see story](#)).

Audrey steers the conversation back to Ms. Versace's own accomplishments since she took over the family business. Among these are her 20th anniversary at the helm of Versace and co-hosting the 2018 Met Gala.

The film ends with Ms. Versace striking a powerful pose, as Audrey reiterates how busy and accomplished the artistic director is. With Audrey seated next to her and a smile on her face, Ms. Versace waves goodbye to her fans.

Woman's best friend

This tribute video is not the first time Ms. Versace has used her Jack Russell terrier Audrey to show her softer side.

To mark the 2018 Lunar New Year the Year of the Dog Audrey was featured in a special-edition collection for men and women. The collection included hand-stitched patches, a handbag, a clutch, T-shirts and a keychain ([see story](#)).

"The benefit of sharing Donatella's story from Audrey's perspective is a whimsical spin from her most trusted confidant," FIT's Ms. Strum said. "It's a creative strategy to story-tell accomplishments and highlights from a non-beneficial party."

"A dog is a man's best friend, as well as being known to discern whether a person is good or bad," Athlesiure Mag's Ms. Smith said. "Audrey shares facts from a place of authority, affection and devotion. Her commentary lends itself to having intimate knowledge."

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