

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Schiaparelli makes moves into accessories, ready-to-wear to modernize

October 25, 2018



Schiaparelli's Story #1 campaign. Image credit: Schiaparelli

By SARAH JONES

French fashion house Schiaparelli is launching its first handbag design as part of the label's efforts to contemporize couture, bringing its craftsmanship and codes to a new category.

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Dubbed The Secret of Schiaparelli, the purse is part of Schiaparelli's inaugural edition of its Story concept, which branches out to offer "prt-couture" pieces and accessories. Today, accessories are the bread and butter for many luxury labels, but while many brands are taking a more accessible approach to handbags and leather goods, Schiaparelli is keeping its extension rooted in couture.

"Schiaparelli decided to incorporate handbags into their collection because fashion is continuously evolving and they needed to adjust with the current climate," said Dalia Strum, educator at [The Fashion Institute of Technology](#), New York.

"Accessories are a large opportunity for designers to garner market share because they're incorporated into outfits more frequently," she said. "As they are typically recognizable, they have also become a form of a status symbol."

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

Couture meets carryall

Established in 1927, Schiaparelli's foundations are in couture. The Secret of Schiaparelli maintains this artisan approach, with a construction that uses traditional techniques.

Made in France, the handbag is infused with a number of nods to house founder Elsa Schiaparelli's frequent design details.

For instance, the couturier often used the shape of a padlock for buttons, embroidered details or jewelry. Translating this, the handbag features a working yet decorative gold padlock closure.

The superstitious Ms. Schiaparelli was fond of the number four, which found its way into the bag's quartet of colors,

four-sided buckle and four studs.

Inside the handbag, the designer's iconic "shocking pink" is used for the lining.



The Secret of Schiaparelli. Image courtesy of Schiaparelli

The Secret of Schiaparelli is available at the brand's salon-boutique at 21 Place Vendme in Paris, which was opened in September.

This launch is part of Schiaparelli's Story concept that brings the brand's spirit of collaboration to today. The brand founder used to work with Salvador Dal and Jean Cocteau, infusing her designs with input from artists and other creatives.

The first in the series, Story #1, centers on Schiaparelli's frequent collaborator Man Ray. Spanning ready-to-wear, jewelry and accessories, the collection features motifs such as the padlock and pierced hearts.

Story #1 - Schiaparelli x Man Ray

Future Story efforts will bring in guest creatives for collections that do not adhere to the traditional fashion seasons.

"The prt-couture aspect will provide [Schiaparelli] an opportunity to compete in this market as the collection is limited and won't be as accessible within mass markets," Ms. Strum said.

Beyond 21 Place Vendme, Schiaparelli is bringing its Story #1 collection to Bergdorf Goodman. The brand's debut New York pop-up, opened Oct. 18, marks the first time the label has been sold outside of the Paris boutique since 1954, when the label shuttered.

In addition to the pop-up on the fourth floor of the store, Bergdorf Goodman is celebrating the partnership through a cover feature of its holiday magalog, window displays in collaboration with Man Ray Trust and in-store placements, including a shocking pink visual trail leading shoppers to the pop-up.



Schiaparelli's pop-up at Bergdorf Goodman. Image courtesy of Schiaparelli

"For this very first time outside place Vendome, we could not dream of a better place than Bergdorf Goodman that used to carry Schiaparelli in the 1930s through the 1950s," said Delphine Bellini, CEO of Schiaparelli, in a statement. "We wanted Schiaparelli to travel to New York, to have 21 place Vendome come to 5th Avenue, to have our iconic Maison housed in a legendary store whilst keeping the essence of Schiaparelli mixing art, fashion, elegance, sophistication and emotion."

Apparel and art

Schiaparelli often keeps its founder's vision close for its current efforts.

The creative relationship between Ms. Schiaparelli and surrealist Mr. Dal was the subject of a recent exhibition at The Dal Museum in St. Petersburg, FL.

Opened Oct. 18, 2017 the "Dal & Schiaparelli" exhibition was the first dedicated to the creative relationship and works of Ms. Schiaparelli and Mr. Dal, who were close friends and collaborators. Presented in collaboration with The Dal Museum and Schiaparelli Paris, the exhibition featured haute couture gowns and accessories, paintings, drawings and other objects by the avant-garde couturier and artist ([see story](#)).

Schiaparelli also reissued the astrology-themed jacket designed by house founder Elsa Schiaparelli in 1938 with a modern silhouette.

The original jacket was designed by Ms. Schiaparelli as part of her Astrological collection. Creative director Bertrand Guyon updated the jacket for today's consumer, but replicated the piece's signature space motifs such as the sun, moon, stars and the 12 zodiac symbols ([see story](#)).

Through handbags, Schiaparelli will be able to continue its artsy approach.

"The artistic qualities that handbags offer to outfits definitely provide the value necessary for forward-thinking luxury brands to survive," Ms. Strum said. "It's also a strong strategy to connect with a new clientele within the U.S."

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