

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

Guerlain exudes timeless femininity in reimagined fragrance campaign

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La Petite Robe Noire. Image credit: Guerlain

By NORA HOWE

French beauty label Guerlain has reinvented and reimagined its iconic La Petite Robe Noire perfume in an inspiring and artistic new campaign.

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In 2012, the French parfumeur created La Petite Robe Noire as a tribute to the Parisian woman. Now, it is celebrating the story behind the iconic character and fragrance by reinterpreting the heart-shaped bottle with a black and pink ombr overlay, featuring the little black dress that originally inspired the fragrance.

"This update, featuring a gradient fading from black to brand's traditional powdery pink is designed to evoke the 'mischievous and resolutely irresistible wake' of the fragrance itself," said Sheri L Koetting, founder and brand strategist of beauty branding agency **MSLK**. "The darkness conveys the richer, deeper tones within the scent and product experience."

The story behind an icon

When Guerlain initially released La Petite Robe Noire eight years ago, Parisian artists Olivier Kuntzel and Florence Deygas were asked by the French label to bring the perfume to life. They hand-designed a series of unique illustrations that reflected the essence of the fragrance while paying homage to the inspiration behind the fragrance, la Parisienne.

"Historically, drawing was always important to Guerlain," Olivier Kuntzel says in the interview. "We wanted to create an illustrated character."

They created a unique character by bringing the brand's iconic little black dress silhouette to life.

"I think it was the first time that a campaign had a muse that was illustrated," Mr. Kuntzel continues.

"The little black dress is a timeless concept," said Ms. Koetting. "By reducing La Petite Robe Noire's muse to an illustration, the brand is allowing every woman to see themselves within the brand profile."

Kuntzel and Deygas on La Petite Robe Noire

As part of the new campaign, Guerlain released a video interview in which perfumers Thierry Wasser and Delphine Jelk discuss the process of discovering and combining the right scents to create the olfactory experience of La Petite Robe Noire as well as the meaning behind the illustrated muse.

"To embody La Petite Robe Noire, we needed a strong image that incarnates the chic Parisian woman," explains Mr. Wasser.

"She has the lightness of a sketch, and the strength of a brushstroke," Ms. Jelk continues.

Thierry Wasser and Delphine Jelk on La Petite Robe Noire

While the bottle has been reinvented with a modern touch, the fragrance itself continues to carry rich notes of black cherry, rose, black tea and patchouli, woven together to create a feminine and timeless scent.

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A post shared by Guerlain (@guerlain) on Oct 13, 2020 at 10:...

Fusion of art and luxury

Since 1828, Guerlain has been inspired by art and nature, consistently incorporating these elements into its brand and products. While craftsmanship has always been at the forefront of luxury design, brands have recently expressed a greater emphasis on art as a source of inspiration.

Swiss watch manufacturer Audemars Piguet introduced its newest line of timepieces in collaboration with one of Switzerland's most renowned artisan enamelers Anita Porchet.

For the project, Ms. Porchet was drawn toward the Paillone technique, which involves cutting and shaping gold leaf to gradually create a simplistic yet abstract piece of art. The handcrafted enamel dials pay homage to the 18th and 19th century masterpieces from the Valle de Joux ([see story](#)).

Prada-owned Miu Miu featured a number of crafty elements in its spring/summer 2020 collection, including paint-splattered fabrics and mismatched buttons, calling to mind homemade fashion. For the ad campaign, the brand chose to depict a cast of models creating works of art that relate to the designs of creative director Miuccia Prada ([see story](#)).