

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Stella McCartney teams with photojournalist for emotional breast cancer documentary

October 26, 2020



Twelve women are profiled in Stella McCartney's campaign. Image: Stella McCartney

By ELLEN KELLEHER

British fashion house Stella McCartney has unveiled an emotional documentary series to honor women with breast cancer during Breast Cancer Awareness month.

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Shot during the lockdown by Pulitzer Prize-winning photojournalist Lynsey Addario and the filmmaker Alice Aedy, "A Letter to My Loved Ones" features a group of British women struck by the cancer who reveal their stories through a series of vignettes. The release of the film and photos underlines Ms. McCartney's commitment to battling the disease, which took her mother Linda.

"Showing the women run through a range of emotions and to have this paired down storytelling lens seeing the women navigate through their lives, being with their children and navigating their new normal show these women as survivors who have taken agency of their own lives," said Kimmie Smith, co-founder of **Athleisure Mag**, Atlanta. "Stella McCartney's brand is highlighted without overshadowing these women and their narratives."

Dedication to a cause

The early detection and prevention of breast cancer is something of a passion for Stella McCartney.

This year, a portion of the sales of the brand's pink Whitney Popping lingerie set, will be sent to the Stella Cares Foundation, which supports breast cancer research around the world. The designer is also giving away a number of Louise Listening bras for women recovering from mastectomy surgery to women afflicted by the disease.

.@LizziEngland was diagnosed with breast cancer at 29 years old and 15 weeks pregnant. Shot by @LynseyAddario in our #NoLessAWoman series, read the letter she wrote to her daughter Violet.

Discover our #BCA campaign: <https://t.co/PoNK7Sx30f> #StellaMcCartney #StellaCares [pic.twitter.com/6IIZkHOENE](https://pic.twitter.com/6IIZkHOENE)

Stella McCartney (@StellaMcCartney) **October 22, 2020**

The film is simple, but profound.

A number of the women wear Stella McCartney bras to cast attention on their mastectomy scars as they tell their harrowing tales. In other shots, the women are topless and recoveries from different surgeries are featured as well.

*The documentary series is the work of Lynsey Addario and filmmaker Alice Aedy*

"It really scared me and then I just felt fear," was one middle-aged woman's reaction to her diagnosis. "I did struggle to look at it because it was such a drastic change," was another's post-surgery lament.

The vignettes relay a feeling of resilience and solidarity as the women are turned into the centerpiece of Ms. McCartney's commitment to this campaign.

"I think it was so hard to hear these stories, but the recurring theme was that every woman was so incredibly optimistic, resilient and really had tried to find a kind of strength in their cancer," said Lynsey Addario, the photojournalist who did the filming, in a statement.

Accompanied by a photo series, the 12 women of various ages and backgrounds are also profiled on Stella McCartney's website. Similarly, they bare their scars in the shots and post letters they sent to mums and daughters describing their fears.

A number wear the brand's Louise Listening or Adidas sports bras suited for mastectomies.

The letters are touching and focus on how cancer has created a new normal in these women's lives.

Lizzie England, who was diagnosed while 15 weeks pregnant at 29, writes in a letter to her daughter Violet that when "she found out, her whole life stopped. She fell apart."



*Lizzie England was diagnosed at 29. Image: Stella McCartney*

For her part, Caroline Boore, who was first diagnosed at 34, says the experience has made her stronger and more confident.

In a letter to her mother, who also fought the cancer, she says the last few years have been some of the most challenging she has ever faced.

"I have changed so much from the person I used to be," she wrote. "Seeing you fight cancer so gracefully head on, like you do with everything in your life, gives me strength and courage. You are a warrior. You are my warrior."

Pink power in October

From Jimmy Choo to Ralph Lauren, luxury brands are rolling out a suite of pink products and donations this month.

The yearly campaign for Breast Cancer Awareness encourages brands and retailers to market a range of all things pink and proceeds from sales are put towards breast cancer research. October has become the month for brands to embrace a solid cause and show how philanthropy can coexist with business.

As luxury consumers become more values-conscious, it is critical for brands to share their philanthropic sides including raising funds for breast cancer research and awareness organizations ([see story](#)).

Breast cancer awareness is not the only cause which luxury brands have embraced to showcase their values.

To support girl power and equality between the sexes, a number of luxury brands have gotten behind feminist causes and come out in honor of International Day of the Girl.

Marking the occasion, Cl De Peau Beaut and Chlo have entered partnerships with UNICEF while other brands remain more focused on female empowerment ([see story](#))

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