

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

Chanel celebrates centennial of N 5 with dreamlike film

October 30, 2020



100 years of Chanel N5. Image credit: Chanel

By ELLEN KELLEHER

French fashion house **Chanel** is ringing in the 100th anniversary of its iconic N 5 with a mesmerizing short starring the fragrance's new ambassador.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

In the film, French actor and singer Marion Cotillard dances across the streets of Paris and onto a lunar landscape in a gold sequin lace gown inspired by Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel, who launched N 5 in 1921. The campaign casts a surreal light on the fragrance, which remains Chanel's signature product, as it marks its birthday centennial.

"We need whimsical content like this Chanel No. 5 campaign to escape the world's unfortunate realities," said Dalia Strum, educator at **The Fashion Institute of Technology** and founder of the branding agency **Rethink Connect**, New York. "I think this content has the opportunity to go viral through TikTok or Reels on Instagram to continue the brand messaging."

Golden girl

Ms. Cotillard plays a mysterious woman whose elegant gold gown is draped in a black shawl. The opening scene is pure romance as she walks across a snow-covered bridge in Paris looking wistfully up at a full moon.

The film also stars Jrmie Blingard, a former dancer for the Paris Opera ballet.

As she walks, she is suddenly transported to a lunar landscape along with her handsome lover, who is played by Jrmie Blingard, a former dancer for the Paris Opera ballet.

While the song 'Team' by the New Zealand singer Lorde plays, the pair stage a passionate dance across the surreal gold speckled craters of the moon.

"The moon we love like a brother, while he glows through the room," sings Lorde.

In a fit of passion, they fly off again and are transported back to Paris together where Ms. Cotillard's dreams are converted to a gauzy reality.

"We're on each other's team," Lorde sings softly. "We're on each other's team."

A bottle of Chanel N 5 is the last shot the audience sees before the short, directed by Swedish director Johan Renck, fades out.



Marion Cotillard and Jmie Blingard dance on the moon. Image credit: Chanel

N 5 has been at the centerpiece of Chanel since the fragrance was developed by master perfumer Ernest Beaux in 1921, so its upcoming 100th birthday marks a grand occasion.

In 1937, Ms. Chanel was the first face of the fragrance as she graced advertisements in *Harper's Bazaar* magazine. Today, that distinction has shifted to Ms. Cotillard, who joins an illustrious group of predecessors including Ali McGraw and Catherine Deneuve.

Redesigned by Jacques Polges in 1986, N 5's synthetic aldehydes are used to create its complex smell. The perfume also boasts notes of jasmine, citrus, rose and bourbon vanilla.

As part of the centennial festivities, a N 5 holiday collection will also be unveiled, which includes body creams and shower gels.

Spotlight on N 5

As arguably the world's most iconic perfume, N 5 is rarely the centerpiece of Chanel campaigns but when it is, the brand makes an impact.

In 2012, Chanel invited fans to learn the intimate history of its N 5 fragrance through a video featuring Marilyn Monroe in the second chapter of its Inside Chanel series ([see story](#)), which continues to this day.

The fashion house teamed with director Baz Luhrmann for film campaign with model Gisele Bndchen for fragrance in 2014.

"The One That I Want" is a film that embodies the modern woman, the woman who makes her own decisions and struggles to balance her priorities in daily life. Ten years earlier, Mr. Luhrmann directed a Chanel N 5 film with actor Nicole Kidman about a woman who was breaking free from it all and returned to reality renouncing her desire ([see story](#)).

"These strategies aren't about product sales; they're about relevancy and staying top of mind," Ms. Strum said. "The more Chanel creates content that viewers appreciate, the longer it stay relevant with current and potential clientele."