

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Dior creates works of art in moody spring campaign

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Still image from Dior's spring/summer 2021 collection campaign. Image credit: Dior

By NORA HOWE

French fashion house Christian Dior has unveiled its spring/summer 2021 ready-to-wear campaign through ornate imagery reflecting painting styles from the Renaissance and Baroque periods.

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Celebrating excellence in savoir-faire and art in all forms, from Virginia Woolf to Lucia Marcucci, the campaign captures the collection through the power of painting. Designed by creative director Maria Grazia Chiuri and captured by Elina Kechicheva, the striking campaign promulgates artistry through dramatic framing, lighting and romantic poses.

"Fashion is continuously influenced by art, music, current economic climate and it's extremely important as a major point of inspiration," said Dalia Strum, founder of [Rethink Connect](#) and professor at [The Fashion Institute of Technology](#), New York. "There's still so much to learn and embrace from each industry with opportunities to stay inspired and apply some strategies cross vertical."

Painting Dior

Inspired by Caravaggio's mastery of chiaroscuro, the campaign imagery highlights silhouettes with an aura of mystery, similar to icons in a painting, emphasized with shades of blue, red and gold.

"The Renaissance/Baroque inspiration on the campaign is a nod to a different time with a combination of luxurious and whimsical materials and accessories," Ms. Strum said.

The spring/summer 2021 ready-to-wear collection combines delicate embroidery with paisley motifs and floral designs that adorn dresses and pants, as well as classic Dior totes.

The Dior spring/summer 2021 campaign takes inspiration from art

In the editorial images and accompanying film, models are dressed in pleated skirts, sheer dresses and woven separates, and positioned among rich fabrics and stylized fruits.

"Many companies have been exploring innovative ways to showcase their newest collections and this video

highlighted a combination of slow moving product shots, styled images, along with a touch of street style," Ms. Strum said.

For the SS21 collection, Ms. Chiuri drew inspiration from female poets, intellectuals and authors who used their writing to illuminate life and emotion. With every collection, the creative director aims to create designs to accommodate the bodies of the women who wear them, as well as reflect societal transformations and current events.

Even before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ms. Chiuri set out to combine couture with wearable fashion a quest that has only grown stronger as lockdowns have accelerated a changing fashion landscape.



The Dior SS21 debuted at the show in September 2020. Image credit: Dior

In researching for the collection, Ms. Chiuri rediscovered the work of artist Lucia Marcucci, whose collages from the 1960s played with the media's portrayal of women versus voices of liberation.

The spring/summer 2021 collection and campaign aim to serve as a declaration on the essence of fashion, fit and femininity.

Feminist manifesto

From campaign themes and collections conceptualized by Ms. Chiuri to philanthropic efforts, Dior has made concrete efforts to showcase how women inspire the world of fashion, among other industries.

Since 2017, the brand's Women@Dior initiative has coached and inspired thousands of young women around the world. Through the program, students are trained and educated by leaders and stakeholders with a focus on gender equality and women's leadership, as well as core values of autonomy, inclusion, creativity and sustainability.

Last summer, the program launched its first online platform for nearly 500 students worldwide. Once the participants complete the year-long coursework, they are invited to put theory to practice with the creation of a "Dream for Change" project that supports the empowerment of young girls ([see story](#)).

In July 2020, the brand reinterpreted the female body through a singular prism of a fashion doll with its fall/winter 2020-21 haute couture collection. In a nearly 15-minute film broadcasted live on its digital channels, the campaign drew inspiration from the work of artists such as Lee Miller, Dora Maar and Jacqueline Lamba, veering toward less conventional versions of femininity ([see story](#)).