

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Prada plays to Gen Z with new Galleria effort

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Euphoria's Hunter Schafer for Prada. Image credit: Prada

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Italian fashion label Prada is putting a youthful spin on its classic Galleria handbag with an imaginative and playful film starring model and actor Hunter Schafer.

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Mx. Schafer stars as a relatable daydreamer in a vignette directed by Xavier Dolan. The Galleria handbag, introduced in 2007, is seen in different contexts through a series of micro-narratives.

"Prada has an opportunity to build brand equity with a new generation of consumers, considering Hunter's large social audience," said Dalia Strum, founder of [Rethink Connect](#) and professor at [The Fashion Institute of Technology](#), New York.

"The campaign is interesting because it's a flashback in time, almost like a time capsule with the older television, the clear phone that was a trend in the early 90s, the decor between the wallpaper and the floral bedspread and the classic Galleria handbag, standing the test of time in any setting and time period," she said.

New classic

In a nod to Prada's heritage, the film opens with a rendition of the Italian aria "Casta Diva" as the soundtrack. The camera pans across the colorfully cluttered room typical of a teen movie, revealing a television showing a grainy Prada ad and a corded telephone playing a dial tone.

Finally, the camera lands on a gray-blue Galleria handbag. The silhouette recalls medicine-style handbags from the mid-twentieth century and is named after Prada's historic flagship, the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II.

The Prada Galleria campaign is an imaginative look at the fashion industry

The next frame shows Mx. Schafer trying on earrings and dolling herself up in the mirror. Static sounds begin to emit from the television before the scene is transitions, showing Mx. Schafer laying on their bed.

Now, the model-turned-actor is dressed in a cardigan instead of the colorful print dress from the film's opening. She is seen speaking on the phone before the camera zooms out to reveal a film set.

As the score's tempo speeds up, so does the pace of the visuals. Mx. Schafer is seen wearing more glamorous outfits, posing with different Galleria bags for a fashion shoot, alternating with frames of them daydreaming in their onset bedroom.



Hunter Schafer has earned praise for her acting and activism. Image credit: Prada

In one sped-up sequence, Mx. Schafer wears a light pink dress and is picking up their laundry and filling a hamper. Then the frames slow down, emphasizing the movement of the dress.

A final set of black-and-white visuals is introduced with Mx. Schafer dressed in a mod-inspired outfit and posing for another fashion shoot. The snippets of the different scenes continue to alternate while showcasing the Galleria bag before the film concludes with a final musical crescendo.

Gen Z takeover

Only 22, Mx. Schafer began her career as a runway model for labels including Dior and Miu Miu before landing her first acting role on the HBO series "Euphoria." Mx. Schafer is also a trans woman and has become a prominent activist.

Other luxury labels have also recruited Gen Z celebrities to diversify and energize their marketing.

For the pre-fall 2020 iteration of its #MeAndMyPeekaboo campaign, Italian fashion house Fendi gave full creative control to R&B duo Chloe x Halle.

American sisters Chloe and Halle Bailey have risen to prominence among Gen Z celebrities and are known for their activism and acting, in addition to their Grammy-nominated music careers. For the Peekaboo campaign, the pair were able to hand select their creative team a first for Fendi ([see story](#)).

In another move, Italian fashion label Valentino named actress Zendaya, Mx. Schafer's "Euphoria" costar, as its new face.

Valentino creative director Pierpaolo Piccioli handpicked the 24-year-old actor, who won an Emmy Award for starring role on the series. The brand marked her debut in the role by featuring her in photos carrying its Roman Stud Nappa Chain bag ([see story](#)).

By working with Mx. Schafer, Prada is continuing this trend of highlighting Gen Z talents.

"Hunter is an ideal collaborator for Prada as the star of a highly-talked-about show that has a younger, highly engaged audience," Ms. Strum said. "This gives Prada an opportunity to create awareness to a different clientele.

"She's an ideal role model as a fashion model, actress and LGBTQ rights activist."