

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

## Chanel celebrates 100 years of celebrity with inspiring voices

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*Hung Huang, Lil Buck and Marie-Agnes Gillot for Chanel. Image credit: Chanel*

By NORA HOWE

French fashion house Chanel is honoring the centennial of its classic N 5 fragrance with a portrait series of celebrities in various industries.

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Chanel N 5 has not only represented the exemplary nature of perfumery, but has been a symbol of innovation and inspiration for the brand. In a new film series dedicated to N 5, Chanel introduces six inspiring voices from the worlds of film, academia, media and dance who reflect on the phenomenon that is celebrity and how the next 100 years will continue to shape creativity, culture and society.

100 years of celebrity

According to the [Oxford English Dictionary](#), celebrity is defined as a famous person or the state of being famous, and fame as the state of being known and talked about by many people.

However, Chanel is exploring these terms beyond their definitions: how they are perceived in present culture, what they entail and how they shape society.

In six short filmed portraits, Chanel presents Academy Award-winning actress and brand ambassador Marion Cotillard, American dancer Lil Buck, psychologist Laurie Santos, Chinese television host Hung Huang, French ballet dancer Marie-Agnes Gillot and Canadian journalist Graydon Carter.

*Leaders in their industries, six individuals discuss the power of celebrity*

The first in a series of six videos features Ms. Cotillard, who views celebrity as timeless creativity.

"The greatest kind of celebrity is that which stands the test of time," she says in her interview. "It is based on creation, the way in which we share what we create, the way in which we share who we are."

The second vignette features Lil Buck, an innovative movement artist and choreographer who popularized a form of street dance known as "jookin." He admits that, as a kid, celebrity simply meant getting out of Memphis.

"I wanted people to know I existed, and for the world to see what I had to offer it," he says. "I want to inspire the kids

in Memphis, and show them that they can have a career in street dance."

The third portrait explores the mind of Mr. Carter. Having served as the editor of *Vanity Fair* and founder of *Air Mail*, the journalist has overseen some of the most iconic stories influencing celebrity culture. He discusses Hollywood culture, working closely with photographer Annie Leibovitz and remaining authentic.

"Don't change every time the sand shifts," he said. "Stay where you are, be who you are that is your best chance at having a long, celebrated run in this world."

The fourth short film highlights Ms. Gillot, a distinguished ballet dancer and choreographer who is the first in-house female dancer to choreograph for the Paris Opera Ballet and the youngest dancer to have joined its corps at the age of 15.

"In my mind, Nureyev, Nijinsky and Pina Bausch are idols, muses and great geniuses that never leave me, that I can imagine and visualize," the ballet dancer admits. "They invented a language.

"Their fame, their genius, their charisma guide us," she says. "They give off so much energy and power."

The fifth focuses on Ms. Huang, a champion of women's empowerment, an advocate of the Chinese fashion industry and one of the most influential media figures in China.

"What we need is more female celebrities who fully understand that popularity and social responsibility are on equal footing," she says.



*Ms. Huang has played a significant role in supporting emerging Chinese fashion designers. Image credit: Chanel*

The final episode of the series features Ms. Santos, psychologist and professor at Yale University, who claims celebrity goes back, beyond historical references, and may be ingrained in our DNA.

"As a psychologist, people ask me whether I think celebrity is a good or bad thing," she says. "It really depends on how we're relating to celebrities.

"We tend to copy what we see celebrities doing, we pay attention to them, so ultimately they will affect our behavior," she continues. "It really matters what celebrities are doing."

In March, Chanel shed light on the N 5 fragrance in an iteration of its "Inside Chanel" video series, taking audiences through the history and influence of the storied perfume ([see story](#)).

Previous "Inside Chanel" episodes focused primarily on the literature, music and dance that inspired founder Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel, but this episode re-centered the spotlight on the product.

#### Purposeful branding

Over the past year, many consumers have turned to fashion for inspiration, and luxury fashion houses have responded with meaningful, contemplative messaging.

British fashion house Burberry questioned the idea of love and freedom in an introspective film, shot before its autumn/winter 2021 menswear presentation.

Filmed by Marc Isaacs, "At a Distance" captures various individuals on the street, in staircases and in courtyards near the brand's flagship store in London. Throughout the short, each person is prompted to answer and reflect on questions regarding freedom and love ([see story](#)).

Italian fashion house Prada opened the conversation in a campaign, encouraging consumers to answer and reflect on profound questions.

Prada's spring/summer 2021 "Dialogues" campaign examined the influence of technology and how fashion echoes the realities of a contemporary society, with an assist from user-generated content. As technology shapes modern life, it continues to redefine how human beings see themselves and others ([see story](#)).

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