

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

'A.B.C. Dior' podcast explores premonitions, superstitions and celestial house codes

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The series' most recent episode details how deeply superstition is woven into the house's history, focusing on three main symbols. Image credit: Dior

By AMIRAH KEATON

French fashion house Dior is delving into celestial house codes in the latest episode of the "A.B.C. Dior" podcast.

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An exploration of the letter "S" sets viewers on a journey through the various superstitions and astral motifs that have influenced all corners of the maison, from ready-to-wear and couture collections to handbags, fragrances and home dcor. The brand's audio production references a number of archival themes and outlines their respective origins, all stemming from the fantastical interests of founder Christian Dior.

"When [looking] at heritage houses, you're always looking at elements that are core to the brand and how over time they have either evolved or continue to be used in different ways," said Kimmie Smith, cofounder and creative director of [Athleisure Mag](#), New York.

"Understanding why certain images, motifs and aesthetics are used and how they got there is so important to convey as it lends itself to why the house approaches its design in the way that it does," she said. "It allows people to understand that these items are archival in nature and continue to carry the feelings and sentiments that they had from their first placement through their ongoing appearances."

Celestial start

Dior's "A.B.C." series, which debuted in May 2021, shares stories of timeless savoir-faire while unveiling the life and unmitigated impact of its couturier.

Today's episode details just how extensively superstition remains intimately woven into the house's history, by focusing on three symbols of reverence and repetition for Dior.

The lily of the valley flower; the star; the four-leaf clover each center Dior's styles in a unique way.

A podcast video lends audiences a visual reference, helping to paint a picture of Monsieur Dior's impenetrable

connection to constellations and celestial iconography. Per its narration, Monsieur Dior's celestial obsession began in 1919.

Dior's latest podcast episode seeks clarity on the roots of Christian Dior's superstitious beliefs

During a charity fair benefitting soldiers, the founder sold an assortment of palm reader paraphernalia. Later, the clairvoyant figure would offer her services to Mr. Dior, informing the designer that, of his future, poverty was certain, and that women would be his saviors.

The video describes her words: "Through them, you will achieve success."

"You will make a great deal of money out of them, and you will have to travel widely," the narrator reads.

These words would serve as the foundation for a superstitious existence, once where happenstance and fate were indubitably linked.

In one 1946 example, upon strolling the street, Mr. Dior stumbles upon a metal star. The object, representative of a guiding star to the designer, would subsequently never leave the couturier's side, and snowballed into many a luxury creation on behalf of his successors.



The lily of the valley flower, the star, the four-leaf clover each center Dior's styles in a unique way. Image credit: Dior

Thus, "l'toile" is an integral part of Dior's house codes to this day.

Dior's "Bonne Etoile" dress, part of a 1952 spring/summer collection, stands strong in the house's heritage by prominently featuring stars amid its design.

Former artistic director Gianfranco Ferré brought the motif up-to-date, building upon the designer's vision as evidenced by "Etoile Du Dior," a trouser suit unveiled as part of Dior's fall/winter 1990 presentation.

Current creative director Maria Grazia Chiuri continues to play with the pervasive theme.

Psychologically, by proxy of its definition, superstition is slightly unreasonable, not based in practicalities, if at all.

Some of the iconic symbols used in Dior creations like the star, the lily of the valley, and the four-leaf clover, stemmed from Monsieur Dior's superstitions, and were believed to bring him luck. Tap on the card to discover more of these ethereal charms.

Dior (@Dior) [November 1, 2022](#)

"There is a fine line between custom and superstition," Ms. Smith said.

"The idea of what a talisman can be for someone can take many forms," she said. "The fact that these items can be created in such a way that they are distinctly their own and identifiable to the brand and/or those that wear them shows how these pieces can be interpreted in various ways.

"At the end of the day these pieces become a signature and it's something that you may look to see in terms of a specific item or the way that they bring that essence into their style."

The early aughts

Dior's marketing materials reveal an interesting aspect of fashion theory heritage brands with founding designers

that live longer into the tenure of the brand tend to display a greater range of house code expression, with access to a greater number of references or archives with which to work.

For example, Christian Dior spent 11 years with the brand since its founding in 1946 and his 1957 death vs. a Cristbal Balenciaga, who spent 52 years with the brand since its founding in 1919 and his death in 1972.

One reason Dior could be focusing so closely on this celestial arena could be the fact that this limited subject range represents most of what its founder left behind.

Strategically, tapping house history for storytelling exercises, and carrying those themes through collections, has proven airtight for luxury brands.

Italian fashion label Gucci's Savoy collection serves as a portal into the unknown and a nod to the brand's heritage in #GucciValigeria, a luggage campaign titled in a nod to the brand's well-traveled origins. The term "Valigeria," meaning "leather goods store or factory" in Italian, speaks to Florentine founder Guccio Gucci's humble beginnings as a porter at The Savoy hotel in London at just 17 years of age ([see story](#)).

French fashion house Chanel tapped Charlotte Casiraghi, only daughter of Caroline, Princess of Hanover, and Italian industrialist Stefano Casiraghi, for the first episode of the "Les Rendez-vous littéraires rue Cambon" series, a project perpetuating Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel's and Karl Lagerfeld's love for literature and women's liberation.

Mr. Lagerfeld was friends with Ms. Casiraghi's mother, in a full circle moment for the brand and its acting ambassador ([see story](#)).

"Understanding the why of any brand is important," Ms. Smith said.

"It's what draws you in, it establishes why it is the price point that it is and how it continues to be relevant," she said. "It is so easy to look at a house and see the assortment, the spokespeople, the fabulous shows, but sometimes you do need to break the elements down so that you can have more respect and pay attention to how powerful the components are individually so the picture has more depth when it is brought together."