



**IN WHAT WAY HAS
IMAGE
KEPT
CHANEL
CONTEMPORARY
FOR-100 YEARS?**

CHARLOTTE PELLETIER

ABSTRACT

The image that Gabrielle Chanel created has been carried out through her designs for the past 100 years. She has created a timeless brand that is the epitome of good taste, class, quality and luxury. Her image consistently refers to her traditions while still placing the Chanel brand at the peak of contemporary fashion.

In June 1998 Gabrielle Chanel was the only fashion designer to be named one of Time magazine's 100 Most Influential People of the 20th Century. "The clothes she created changed the way women looked

and how they looked at themselves. She mixed up the vocabulary of male and female clothes."

"Coco Chanel" allowed women to be both feminine and feminist." (*Sischy, 1998*)

"Fashion is not something that exists in dresses only. Fashion is in the sky, in the street; fashion has to do with ideas, the way we live, what is



IMAGE 1: VOGUE PARIS MARCH 1984: INES DE LA FRESSANGE

happening.”Coco Chanel said. (*Wolfendale, 2011*)

The image created in her designs by the use of simple styling, particular colors and symbols defines Chanel as a brand as does her unique choice of customized font, her interlocking double “C” logo, the ubiquitous white camellia, quilted handbag, chains and pearls. This image illustrates the story of Gabrielle Chanel's life.

According to the Chanel philosophy, simple understated elegance represents self confidence, success and sophistication. The Chanel image portrays a depth of cultural appreciation of contemporary society. By remaining faithful to the origins and traditions created by Gabrielle Chanel's story the Chanel brand has continued to demonstrate the timelessness of her values in its contemporary designs.

CONTENTS PAGE

ABSTRACT.....PAGE 2-3

INTRODUCTION/ START BODY OF PAPERPAGE 5

CONCLUSIONPAGE 29-30

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....PAGE 31-36

APPENDIX.....PAGE 36

INTRODUCTION

Gabrielle “Coco” Chanel is an icon of fashion who created a new look in the early 20th Century. 100 years later this look has developed into the Chanel image that is identifiable by its undeniable elegance and sophistication that continues to hold the same respect today as it did at its inception.

Gabrielle Bonheur Chanel was born on the 19th August 1883 in the Saumur western central France. Chanel's mother died when she was 6 years old, leaving her father with five other children whom he sent to live with relatives before sailing to America. Chanel and one of her sisters were sent to an orphanage in Aubazine where she learnt how to become a seamstress. At 18 years old, she left the orphanage and took up working with a local tailor. Her orphanage life was to become influential as a later inspiration in developing the monastic simplicity of design and colour schemes.

It was when she sang for a short time in cafes and concert halls that the name “Coco” was given to her by local soldiers due to her two popular songs “Ko Ko

Ri Ko” and “Qui qu’a vu Coco”. The seeds of the Chanel image were planted at this early part of her life.

In 1908 Coco started a relationship with a wealthy Englishman called Arthur “Boy” Capel where her talent for design developed into a lifelong career. Capel installed her in a Parisian apartment and financed the opening of her millinery shop at 21 Rue Cambon, Paris in 1910. The success of this hat shop “Chanel Mode” inspired Coco to expand to boutiques in Dauville in 1913 and then in 1915 to Biarritz where more holiday-appropriate casual, jersey clothes were sold in the resort towns introducing her

trademark stripey “marinière” blouse, polo shirts, jumpers and baggy trousers.

The clothes were convenient and “easy to wear and walk around in without encumbrance”. (*Charles-Roux, The*

World of Coco Chanel Friends Fashion

and Fame, 2005) They were made using

available fabric for a range of wartime

customers such as wealthy Spanish who had been exiled from their native



IMAGE 2: CHANEL WEARING THE MARINIÈRE TOP AND WIDE JERSEY PANTS

country and given the status of neutrality in France. There were also “the beautiful people”, “the wealthy dispossessed” (*Charles-Roux, The World of Coco Chanel Friends Fashion and Fame, 2005*) who had abandoned Paris with the onset of enemy forces. Coco remarked “I had no doubt that I was in attendance at the death of luxury, at the demise of the 19th Century, and also at the end of an era.” (*Charles-Roux, The World of Coco Chanel Friends Fashion and Fame, 2005*). What had previously been seen as luxury was no longer appropriate and Gabrielle Chanel had created a new image based on her own values.

Late in the Belle Époque period Gabrielle Chanel dressed women in stylish yet comfortable clothing which would become integral to the development of her image. She stripped women of corsets and large feather hats, bobbed their hair and introduced feminized menswear using stretch jersey previously used only in men's' underwear. She added elements of elegance such as the tweed suit, the little black dress and costume jewelry. Gabrielle Chanel had her muses who inspired some of these iconic elements: Marcel Proust inspired the white Camellia (he wore one in his buttonhole and “first highlighted it in his masterpiece novel *In Search of Lost Time*” (*Girard, 2013*)), Etienne Balsan (an

early lover and wealthy horse-breeder) the riding breeches and tiny knit ties, Boy Capel the blazers, cardigans and slipover jumper (the likes of which she borrowed from his wardrobe).

The 20th century became the era of Art Deco and modernism. Picasso, Diaghilev, Stravinsky, Cocteau, Jean Renoir, Visconti were all creative minds of the period whom “Coco” knew well and collaborated with. She worked alongside them developing Modernism in fashion.



IMAGE 3: AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN FRONT OF 31 RUE CAMBON TO BUY THE PERFUME CHANEL NUMBER FIVE IN 1945



IMAGE 4: CHANEL HEADQUARTERS AT 31 RUE CAMBON, PARIS, 2014

In 1919 Coco Chanel established a couture house at 31 Rue Cambon (still today's Chanel headquarters). She continued to design her new relaxed and elegant look which soon became very popular and in a post-war generation the idea of corsets seemed old-fashioned and impractical.

“Her master stroke was to feminize menswear while at the same time incorporating elements of dress completely at odds with early-twentieth-



IMAGE 5: GABRIELLE (LEFT) AND ADRIENNE (RIGHT) CHANEL AT VICHY IN 1906



IMAGE 6: IN MARCH 1917 LES ELEGANCES PARISIENNES MADE FULL PAGE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A NEW "FASHION" FABRIC; JERSEY. HATS AND DRESSES BY GABRIELLE CHANEL

century notions of elegance”.

(Karbo, 2009) Chanel wanted women to be able to cross their legs, cross their arms, to walk, run and move easily and comfortably as well as to look elegant.

The style that was thus created by the demands, restrictions and desires of the period was inspirational to the Chanel image and reflects the confident, independent spirit of Gabrielle Chanel. The Art deco era that emerged in the 1920s was nothing new to Chanel. Its simplicity, masculinity and smooth style

was already part of her image She acknowledged contemporary society in the Modernist era through her designs and her deep understanding of this society was gained through a wide collaboration with some of the greatest masters in their fields, many of whom she met through her love affair with Boy Capel and later with the Duke of Westminster and other well-connected members of contemporary society. Chanel was introduced to famous painters, composers, writers and dancers with whom she built strong relationships. She housed the Russian composer Stravinsky's family when they were in need of shelter during the process of obtaining their French citizenship. She financed Sergei Diaghilev, founder of the Russian Ballet.



IMAGE 1 CHANEL N°5 EVOLUTION

Through the Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich, Chanel met Ernest Beaux, a perfume chemist in Grasse, the perfume capital of the world. It was here that the idea of

creating her own perfume evolved. Chanel left the mixing of the ingredients to Beaux and after many attempts and trials she finally selected sample number 5, a perfume that reflected the image she wanted to portray. The iconic Chanel no 5 became “the unseen, unforgettable, ultimate accessory of fashion that heralds your arrival and prolongs your departure”. (*Mattern, 2013*) It is currently one of the biggest selling perfumes in the world with one bottle sold every 30 seconds. (*Gibbons, 2014*) The iconic No 5 bottle in its appearance has remained almost unchanged since its inception in 1921 and this could be said to be attributed to the fact that one cannot improve upon perfection.

In 1927, the playwright Jean Cocteau asked Chanel to design the costumes for his plays “Antigone” and “Le Train Bleu”. On “Antigone” she collaborated with Pablo Picasso in costume and set design as they both had previously used the theme of the Greek vase in their works. Together they were to create an authentic Greek atmosphere. In the “Train Bleu” her challenge was to design costumes that allowed dancers to move freely on the stage while portraying tennis, golf and swimming on the Riviera, once again allowing her work to reflect her personal life.

“Once more Chanel was influencing fashion with her thigh length, knitted bathing dresses with shorts just showing beneath, worn with a skull cap and earrings. Her tennis players outfit of white, loose fitting, knee length dress and headband, soon became the rage in fashionable circles, and no one was seen on the beach unless they

III.
LE TRAIN BLEU

CREATION
Opérette dansée en un acte
Scénario de Jean COCTEAU
Musique de Darius MILHAUD
Chorégraphie de I.A. NIJINSKA
Costumes de CHANEL
Décor de H. LAURENS

La même au passé sur une plage en 1924.

LA CHAMPIONNE DE TENNIS	M ^{lle} NIJINSKA
PERLOUSE	Léda SOKOLOVA
BEAU COSSE	MM. Antoine DOLINE
LE JOUEUR DE GOLF	Léon WOJZIKOVSKY

LES POULES :	LES CICOLOS :
M ^{lle} CHOLLAR, DEVALOIS, DOUBROVSKA, ALLANOVA, MAIKERSKA, NIKITINA I, CHAMIE, SOMAROKOVA I, ZALEVSKA, COXON, KOMAROVA, KRASOVSKA, NIKITINA II, SOMAROKOVA II, ROSENSTEIN, NEMTCHINOVA.	MM. ZVEREW, SLAVINSKY, SLAVINSKY, FEDOROW, PAVLOW, TCHERKAS, LIFAR, LAPITSKY, SAVITSKY, NIKITINE, SINGAEVSKY, KOCHANOVSKY, MICHAÏLOW, HOYER
	ooo

Orchestre sous la direction de M. André MESSAGER

IMAGE 7: 1924 "LE TRAIN BLEU" POSTER



IMAGE 8: (LEFT) CHANEL READY TO SWIM, (RIGHT) SWIMMING FOR WOMEN WAS A FASHION THAT CAUGHT ON ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY

were wearing the Chanel bathing dress.” (Hirst)

Coco Chanel gave an interview some time before her death in 1971 to the magazine *The New Yorker*, stating:

“I must tell you something of significance. Fashion is always of the time in which you live. It is not something standing alone” (Karbo, 2009)

The enduring image of Chanel that is one of simplicity, culture, understated elegance and luxury developed from the person herself. It is her origins, memories, personal struggles, strong beliefs, strict morals and individual personality that shine through into her designs.

Chanel's basic but significant colour palette is a major contributing factor to the endurance of the classic contemporary look. But the colours have not been chosen by accident and like the woman herself there is depth of thought and significance in this palette and every colour is inspired by an element of her own life.



CHANEL

IMAGE 9: THE COLOURS OF CHANEL, BLACK, WHITE, BEIGE, GOLD, RED

“Black wipes out everything else around” (*Picardie, 2011*) says Gabrielle Chanel.

It reminded her of the habits the nuns wore at the orphanage where she spent her childhood years. In 1926, she transformed black from being nothing more than servants’ uniforms and mourning attire to being the colour of elegance, most famously in “the little black dress”. She showed how black creates depth when combined with other colours and particularly stands out against a white background.

White is featured in her camellias and pearls. Chanel shows how it captures light and accentuates the face. It was said to remind Coco of the nun’s wimples or perhaps the communion dress given to her by her father.

Beige is the colour of the earth of Coco's native Auvergne and reminds her of the beaches of Deauville and Biarritz. As a colour beige appears neutral and balances the black and white combination.

Gold represents both the genuine and the imitation. Coco was given genuine gold by the Duke of Westminster and she delighted in inventing ways of displaying imitation gold in her costume jewelry. There is gold in the Chanel No. 5 bottle, her chains and many of the suit buttons. She remembered the gold of religious relics and the cleric's brocade robes from her childhood convent days. She also discovered the beauty of gold through the treasures from Saint Mark's Cathedral in Venice, the Byzantine Empire and the Baroque art that inspired her most particularly during the Art Deco period.

Red "is the colour of life, of blood" she says. "It is the colour of energy, passion and courage." (*Chanel I. , 2014*) Bright red on the lips became yet another of Gabrielle's signature statements and her declaration of goodness of spirit.

Finally, the union of black and white, "because one cannot exist without the other, they are in perfect accord." (*Chanel, 2014*) They are perhaps the most powerful signature of Chanel. The black and white appears on the Chanel logo, in any Chanel collection, in the décor of the Chanel boutiques, on the Chanel

carry bags, on the packaging of Chanel cosmetics. The iconic colour scheme continues to play an important role in portraying the true essence of the Chanel image.

The image that Gabrielle Chanel had created in 1914 needed very little in the way of marketing, publicity or advertising. Chanel's clients carried the message within their elite society, as if by "word of mouth". Chanel upheld its own unique image and for over 50 years it was this

kind of societal endorsement that maintained the star quality of the brand Chanel. In 1952 Marilyn Monroe, at the height of her stardom announced to the world that she "wears just a few drops of Chanel no. 5 to bed". (*Chanel I. , The Legend of Marilyn and Number Five, 2014*)



IMAGE 10: 1953 MARILYN MONROE IN AN UNPUBLISHED PHOTOSHOOT FOR MODERN SCREEN. A BOTTLE OF CHANEL NUMBER FIVE RESTS ON HER NIGHTSTAND.

The essential ingredients of celebrity support and traditional designs were taken to a new level with the arrival in 1982 of the current Artistic Director, Karl Lagerfeld.

Karl Lagerfeld was born in Hamburg in 1935 and moved to Paris at 14 years old.

At 17 he won a job with Pierre Balmain thanks to a successful submission to a coat designing competition. He has also worked with a number of top Paris fashion houses such as Jean Patou, Fendi and Chloe. When Karl Lagerfeld was asked to design for the Chanel label, he says “Everybody said ‘Don’t touch it, it’s dead, it will never come back.’ But then I thought it was a challenge.” He now says he was a “rude awakening” for the prestigious fashion house which had “grown dusty”. (*France-Press, 2013*) It has remained a mystery how Karl went about becoming Creative Director of Chanel.



IMAGE 11: MELBOURNE BUISNESS CARD GIVEN TO ME BY GORDANA PETROVSKI



IMAGE 12: PARIS BUISNESS CARD GIVEN TO ME BY LEILA NIDE

This mystery compelled me to use a travel opportunity and some networking skills to do some investigating of my own. During a visit to Paris in January 2014, I went to Chanel's headquarters at 31 rue Cambon to meet manager Leila Nide. I had been given her business card by Ready To Wear specialist Gordana Petrovski in Melbourne's new flagship boutique who I met through a friend who is a loyal Chanel customer. Both these specialist employees of Chanel were very kind and helpful in assisting me in my investigation into the enduring success of Chanel in today's competitive marketplace. My conversation in Paris with Leila Nide lasted more than an hour and a half over a glass of orange juice while sitting on tweed custom made sofas. During this conversation I asked what I couldn't find through available sources. I asked how Karl Lagerfeld came from working for other luxury fashion houses to becoming the Artistic Director of Chanel. Leila understood my curiosity for such an important change in Chanel's history. Chanel has been said to have been floating in some kind of wilderness between Gabrielle's death and the arrival of Lagerfeld. Unfortunately, even people working for Chanel do not know the details about this important transition. Leila explained ¹ that Chanel does not reveal private

¹ See Appendix "Interview"

affairs to the public or even employees. Karl Lagerfeld seems to have adopted some of Gabrielle Chanel's mystery. I was thrilled to leave however with my own valuable gift of a book "La Petite Veste Noir, Un Classique de Chanel Revisite" by Karl Lagerfeld and Carine Roitfeld. This book is a photographic collection of contemporary celebrities each portraying their unique style in Chanel's "little black jacket". The only

text in the book is an introductory poem by Roberto Juarroz, "*Il est des habits qui au lieu de s'user se font toujours plus neufs*" – (Roifeld, 2012) "There are clothes which instead of becoming

worn out, become more and more new". I thought this was a particularly relevant reference, not just to the Little Black Jacket but to the enduring quality of the Chanel style as a whole.

I have acquired a respect and understanding of elegance of style through the arts from my personal experience growing up in France. From an early age my education included an introduction to tradition and developing modernity in many forms of visual arts including fashion. My dual nationality has allowed



IMAGE 13: (LEFT) COVER OF LA PETITE VESTE NOIR, UN CLASSIQUE DE CHANEL REVISITE (RIGHT) INES DE LA FRESSANGE

me to maintain my connection to France through frequent visits and instilled in me a particular understanding of the French philosophy of elegance in everyday life.



IMAGE 13: CHANEL 1924 LITTLE BLACK DRESS AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA



IMAGE 14: LITTLE BLACK DRESS DESIGNED BY GIVENCHY FOR 1961 FILM BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S.



IMAGE 15: THE REVENGE DRESS BY CHRISTINA STAMBOLIAN IN 1994



IMAGE 16: CHANEL FALL 2013 READY-TO-WEAR COLLECTION WORN BY CARA DELEIVINGNE

In January 2014 I visited the *Art Deco Fashion* exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria. Here, Chanel's little *black dress* circa 1924 was on display. The curator of this exhibition Ms Di Trocchio said that "The most appealing and remarkable thing about it is that even though it was a concept born in the 1920s, the little black dress is still so relevant today and a part of contemporary wardrobes." (*Paola, 2013*)

Chanel's Little Black Dress first emerged in 1924 when Gabrielle Chanel

designed her mourning dress, following the death of her great lover Boy Capel. This wardrobe staple has remained evident not only in Chanel's' collections but those of many other designers' collections. While maintaining the traditional Chanel image the styling has developed in order to remain contemporary and modern.

The brand Chanel we see today is a unique blend of the traditions created by Gabrielle Chanel and a contemporary extension of the tradition placed upon it by Karl Lagerfeld.

Gabrielle Chanel's first boutique might have been in France, but the brand has since globalised. Chanel's

image has been

incorporated into different

cultures forming the base of

an evolving platform.

Originally the fashion capitals

were Paris, New York, Milan

and London. Now countries such as the Arab Emirates , Brazil, India, Japan and

China are embracing the brand. This demand has been responded to by the



IMAGE 17: CHANEL FALL 2013 READY-TO-WEAR COLLECTION

new 21st century Chanel. Karl Lagerfeld stated during the Autumn/Winter 2013-14 Ready-To-Wear show in Paris "It's about globalization of fashion- I wanted a global look, not a French look." "It's very simple. One hundred years ago Chanel opened its first boutique at Deauville, today 100 years after there are 300."

(Wires, 2013)

Chanel's international appeal has led to its becoming one of the most successful luxury brands in the 21st century fashion market. Karl Lagerfeld has continued Gabrielle Chanel's legacy by developing and creating contemporary designs while incorporating Chanel's essence. Lagerfeld says he "pushed" and "exaggerated" classic Chanel themes.



IMAGE 19: BLAKE LIVELY AT THE CANNES FESTIVAL, FRANCE, 2014. CHANEL SPRING 2014 DRESS USES NEW AND INTERESTING FABRICS.



IMAGE 18: ARTIST'S IMPRESSION OF THE NEW CHANEL 'BEACH BAG' 2013 SUMMER HULA-HOOP BAG

"I never bumped into Coco Chanel. It was better that way, she would have hated me." (France-Presse, 2013) "You have to respect things, but if you want to survive, you have to change them." (France-Presse, 2013) Karl Lagerfeld is the force constantly reviving and adapting the 100 year

old Chanel brand. His textiles are truly modern and he has created and incorporated fabrics made with cotton, fibreglass, nylon, polyester, plastic, paper and silicon, creating weightless garments with incredible visual effects.

Lagerfeld explains “You see those- even bulky looking things- you touch them, there are feathers.” (*Choi, 2011*)

Lagerfeld told an audience of hundreds of French college students at a master class in Paris that “Some people say elegance is dead. They’re wrong. It has a new face. It’s up to us to adapt to the changing times and not the other way around. What counts is today.” (*Post, 2013*)

What we know as the classic Chanel are the designs created by Chanel herself during the early-to-mid-twentieth-century. “It is not only fashion the way Coco intended, it consists only of garments made with Chanel’s own nicotine-stained fingers.” (*Karbo, 2009*) The classic Chanel celebrates the iconic emblems such as the tweed jacket, costume jewellery, the squared quilted bag, the little black dress, simple hats, two tone beige and black pumps, the long strands of pearls and the camellia.

In modern terms this is the antique, collectible Chanel. People now own private Chanel Classic collections just as people own private Art collections.

Lagerfeld’s contemporary Chanel incorporates the Classic Chanel’s essence through his own innovative and modern designs. As Creative Director he has introduced drama and exaggeration to the Classic Chanel. He incorporates

quilting, cardigans and two-tones shoes accessorised with a light bulb pendent on a thick gold chain, quilted biker clothes and biker boots, quilted ankle purse and black feathered, face covering cage hats. "Still the man is no fool. The face-covering cage hat gained him ink, while the variation on the still-pretty tweed suit gained him customers." (*Karbo, 2009*) The spectacular quarterly fashion shows given by Chanel command the attention of buyers with these extravagant and quirky takes on the original Chanel at the same time as they showcase the new seasons' fashions.

Celebrity endorsements have remained an integral part of the marketing for Chanel throughout its history with such contemporary stars as Nicole Kidman, Keira Knightley and Brad Pitt appearing both in advertising campaigns and on red carpets wearing outfits from the latest Chanel collection.

Brand Chanel's customers may be celebrities and millionaires but there has now developed a "style Chanel", that is a style inspired by Chanel which is behind many pieces of clothing we consider as elegant. A jacket over a pair of jeans, a black dress, an A-line or knee-grazing pencil skirt, a pair of ballet pumps are frequently found in a well dressed and modern woman's wardrobe. These items evoke the image created by Chanel along with practical pockets,

twin-sets, short evening dresses, and sportswear and statement accessories.

They are all Chanel inspired and have become ubiquitous in many of today's fashion brands

Like so many prestigious goods Chanel has seen a growing number of copies.

Whilst Chanel once said "Imitation is the highest form of flattery" (*Murciello, 2012*) and she delighted in being copied, it was the best way to be

remembered, she said. She was referring to being copied by other great designers of her time such as Yves St Laurent, Christian Dior and her greatest nemesis Paul Poiret.

There are now mass-market copies of Chanel's creations, "fake Chanel" which without discretion display the interlocked C's logo and brand name "CHANEL", pouring out of Chinese factories and retailing in department stores all over the world. These counterfeit products are little more than gimmicks and Chanel would no doubt have been astounded at the extent to which her brand has been imitated in such a wide range of products, techniques and presentations. They nevertheless aim to achieve the image and the level of respect achieved by Chanel.

Innovations that uphold the elegance and good taste of Chanel have been largely introduced by Karl Lagerfeld. Lagerfeld is more than Chanel's current designer; officially he is Artistic Director and has a multi-faceted background in photography, costume design, political cartoonist, illustrating, writing and film directing and decorative arts. His incredible creative skills compel him to present his fashion designs in a very contemporary and innovative way. Karl Lagerfeld prioritises diverse marketing and publicity of the brand.



IMAGE 20: CHANEL DECADE BY DECADE
"MET MUSEUM" POSTER BY KARL
LAGERFELD

Today Chanel is much more than the little black dress and No 5. Lagerfeld creates fashion parades as if they are theatrical productions, he puts on exhibitions and produces and directs films, video clips and social media

websites all dedicated to the development of the brand Chanel in the 21st century.

Chanel's beautifully designed website not only provides all information on all products, but also includes Chanel's news, videos of current fashion shows, backstage preparations of shows and celebrity interviews, creating an easy connection for the public to the brand. The webpage also introduces short films directed and produced by Karl Lagerfeld. Eleven short films have been created as Chapters from "Inside Chanel". Karl has also released 30 minute films recreating events of Chanel's past and the life of VIC's (very important customers) incorporating celebrities and internationally famous models, such as Keira Knightley and Cara Delevingne.



IMAGE 21: FRONT ENTRANCE OF CHANEL MOBILE ART IN TOKYO



IMAGE 22: CONTEMPORARY ART CONTAINER

In 2011 from April to October, Chanel's Mobile Art set a new direction for the label.

It presented Chanel as never before using the media of Architecture. The Mobile Art Pavilion was donated by Chanel to the Arab World Institute and designed by Iraqi-British architect Zaha Hadid. This futuristic stage was inspired by Chanel's simple and legendary quilted bag. This stage showcased designs by 20 international designers. All elements found in the building were inspired by "the elements that give the emblematic quilted bag from Chanel its identity" as briefed by Zaha Hadid. All designs that were exhibited interpreted various elements of Chanel. From a Japanese artist, placing graphic images on the screen of a "blackhole" in order to represent the mystery and secrets held within

the bag's inner lining, to a Russian artist displaying piles of plain cardboard boxes with "films of naked women chasing after, hitting with, and body-boarding on Chanel handbags projected on them." (*Theme, 2010*) This presentation is modern and unique yet respects the elements that identify the Chanel brand.

CONCLUSION

Contemporary Chanel has remained loyal to the image that was created by Gabrielle Chanel through acknowledging, respecting and never losing sight of the origins of the person behind what is the essence of this iconic brand. We are reminded of the Coco Chanel story through the constant use of her emblems, her colours and her unique style. The Chanel philosophy of simple understated elegance representing self –confidence, success and sophistication and portraying a depth of cultural appreciation of contemporary society remains as valid today as it did 100 years ago. The times have changed as has the society in which we live and consequently fashion has developed the Chanel designs over the years, but Gabrielle Chanel's image endures.

“Fashion is not something that exists in dresses only. Fashion is in the sky, in the street; fashion has to do with ideas, the way we live, what is happening”.

COCO CHANEL

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Image 1: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND ONLINE, *Vogue Paris March 1984: Ines de la Fressange*, 27/08/2014
https://www.google.com.au/search?q=ines+de+la+fressange+chanel+1984&espv=2&es_sm=93&source=lms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ei=ZbT9U8iSCNajugSVqYC4Bw&ved=0CAgQ_AUoAQ&biw=1280&bih=642#facrc=_&imgdii=_&imgsrc=UJPSAflwgyb5xM%253A%3B9lwCzUJwYG_XjM%3Bhttp%253A%252F%252Fwww.porce-lainista.net%252Fwp-content%252Fuploads%252F2014%252F04%252FMAR84A.jpg%3Bhttp%253A%252F%252Fwww.porcelain-ista.net%252F%253Fp%253D5059%3B1203%3B1600

Image 2: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND IN BOOK, Charles-Roux, E. (2005). *The World of Coco Chanel Friends Fashion and Fame*. United Kingdom: Thames & Hudson.

Image 3: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND ONLINE, *Amercian soldiers in front of 31 rue cambon to buy the perfume chanel number five in 1945*, photographer: Serge Lido http://inside.chanel.com/pt/timeline/1945_gis-love-chanel

Image 4: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND ONLINE, Chanel Inc. 31 rue Cambon 27/08/2014
http://inside.chanel.com/en/timeline/1918_31-rue-cambon

Image 5: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND IN BOOK *Gabrielle (Left) And Adrienne (Right) Chanel At Vichy In 1906* CHARLES-ROUX, E. (2005). *THE WORLD OF COCO CHANEL FRIENDS FASHION AND FAME*. UNITED KINGDOM: THAMES & HUDSON.

Image 6: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND IN BOOK *In march 1917 les elegances parisiennes made full page announcement of a new "fashion" fabric; jersey. Hats and dresses by gabrielle chanel* CHARLES-ROUX, E. (2005). *THE WORLD OF COCO CHANEL FRIENDS FASHION AND FAME*. UNITED KINGDOM: THAMES & HUDSON.

Image 7: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND IN BOOK 1924 *"Le train bleu" poster* CHARLES-ROUX, E. (2005). *THE WORLD OF COCO CHANEL FRIENDS FASHION AND FAME*. UNITED KINGDOM: THAMES & HUDSON.

IMAGE 8: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND IN BOOK Image 8: (left) *Chanel ready to swim, (right) swimming for women was a fashion that caught on only with difficulty*. CHARLES-ROUX, E. (2005). *THE WORLD OF COCO CHANEL FRIENDS FASHION AND FAME*. UNITED KINGDOM: THAMES & HUDSON.

Image 9: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND ONLINE *The Colours of chanel, black, white, beige, gold, red* 2014
<http://thechromologist.com/5-colours-chanel/>

IMAGE 10: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND ONLINE *1953 Marilyn Monroe in an unpublished photoshoot for modern screen. a bottle of chanel number five rests on her nightstand* (CHANEL I. , THE LEGEND OF MARILYN AND NUMBER FIVE, 2014)

Image 11: PHOTOGRAPHED BY ME *Business Card: 1st August 2014*

Image 12: PHOTOGRAPHED BY ME *Business Card: 1 August 2014*

Image 13: PHOTOGRAPHED BY ME *La Petite Veste Noir* Roifeld, K. L. (2012). *La Petite Veste Noir Un Classique Revisite*. Germany: Steidl.

Image: 14 PHOTOGRAPH FOUND IN BOOK *A little black dress designed by givenchy for 1961 film breakfast at tiffany's*. moseley, rachel (2002). GROWING UP WITH AUDREY HEPBURN: TEXT, AUDIENCE, RESONANCE. MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY PRESS. P. 119. RETRIEVED 16 MAY 2011.

IMAGE 15: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND ONLINE *The revenge dress by christina stambolian in 1994*, Rebecca Adams 2013, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/01/princess-diana-black-dress-revenge_n_3528843.html

IMAGE 16: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND ONLINE *Chanel fall 2013 ready-to-wear collection worn by Cara Delevingne* HEARST MAGAZINES UK 2014 IS THE TRADING NAME OF THE NATIONAL MAGAZINE COMPANY LTD, 72 BROADWICK STREET, LONDON
<http://www.elleuk.com/catwalk/chanel/autumn-winter-2013>

Image 17: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND ONLINE *Chanel fall 2013 ready-to-wear collection* PUBLIC ACCESS
<http://www.public.fr/News/Photos/Photos-Vanessa-Paradis-debraillee-pour-assister-au-defile-Chanel-380672>

Image 18: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND ONLINE *Artist's impression of the new chanel 'beach bag' 2013 summer hula-hoop bag* Telegraph Media Group Limited 2014
<http://fashion.telegraph.co.uk/Article/TMG9584480/1182/Karl-Lagerfeld-explains-Channels-hula-hoop-beach-bag.html>

Image 19: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND ONLINE *Blake Lively at the cannes festival, france, 2014. Chanel spring 2014 dress uses new and interesting fabrics*. MAY 19, 2014 amber bourke <http://the-collectiveonline.com/blake-lively-cannes-film-festival/>

Image 20: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND ONLINE *Chanel decade by decade "met museum" poster by Karl Lagerfeld 2014 The Metropolitan Museum of Art*. <http://store.metmuseum.org/posters/karl-lagerfeld-chanel-decade-by-decade-poster/inv/02029767>

Image 21: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND ONLINE *Front entrance of Chanel Mobile Art in Tokyo*
<http://hypebeast.com/2008/6/chanel-mobile-art-exhibition-tokyo> Nov 2008 Hypeblast

Image 22: PHOTOGRAPH FOUND ONLINE *Contemporary Art Container* oct 20, 2008 Gabriel Bell REFINERY 29 <http://www.refinery29.com/innerspace-racked-trip-to-the>

INTERVIEW:

(Leila Nide) conducted (09/01/2014) *31 rue Cambon 75001 Paris, France*

APPENDIX

INTERVIEW

EXTRACT FROM INTERVIEW WITH MANAGER OF CHANEL HEADQUARTER '31 RUE CAMBON'
LEILA NIDE (PARIS, FRANCE) - TRANSLATION IN ENGLISH

What do you think has kept Chanel so contemporary and timeless?

It has to be because of Karl Lagerfeld, if he hadn't recovered the company in 1982 I don't think Chanel would still exist.

How did he manage this?

He has introduced so many new designs and has the most innovative and creative ideas, contently renewing its products. However Chanel is still there, Coco I mean. Her essence is still present, Karl seems to like playing around Chanel's' iconic elements.

How did Karl Lagerfeld actually arrive at becoming Artist Director at Chanel?

That is a mystery. I wish I could tell you, but the truth is I don't know, none of us employees know how exactly he arrived. Details like these are always kept private; it's what makes Chanel so exclusive.

- *I was very disappointed when I saw Karl Lagerfeld drive off as I left the building, he must have been downstairs while I was conducting this interview.*