

PRESS RELEASE

AVA DE LA FLOR “CHANEL GENERATION KILL” RE-INTERPRETED & RE-MASTERED

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I chose to focus on the theme of fashion as it is frequently used in its positive sense as a synonym for, as Chanel put it, “glamour, beauty and style.” However rather than concentrating on its rigid ideological and stereotypical codes and conventions, I focused on addressing the widespread mania around fashion. By challenging, poking fun at & manipulating society's most dominant perceptions of precious items, revered brands, fashion consumerism, consumption and commercial imagery. My main body of work focuses on the Chanel brand, one of the most established and all time recognizable brands of the fashion industry. Although there are many other brands such as Gucci and Prada that offer distillations & interpretation of luxury & style. There is no other brand that matches & maintains the quintessential and high-end image quiet like Chanel. It's basic designs and creations have lost nothing of their appeal, due to their timeless and iconic status, remaining constant from generation to generation.“ After all where would fashion be today if it had not been for the luxury styling of *Coco Chanel!*” Generally speaking the concept of my work could have been applied to any brand in mind. Take as an example also French *Louis Vuitton* that primarily focuses on flashy coatings, highly decorative multicolour patterns and fine design details. Nevertheless it was Chanel's aesthetical minimalism of “less is more” & distinctive vision – “to replace luxuriously decorative pieces with items that conveyed simple elegance” that proved to be the ideal combination as it was the easiest & simplest to be replicated & repeated.

My vision was to re-interpret and re-expose Chanel in a superficially enlarged and fictionally exaggerated manner. Trying to switch the context of the brand from the everyday to the dangerous. I envisaged a concept entitled “Chanel - Generation Kill (CGK)”, a marketing campaign / generation of Chanel products geared to offer an alternative service to Chanel consumers. Undermining that every product has the potential to harm. After establishing the main function & ideology of CGK, I employed a unique form of DIY and embarked upon the creative process of building a fictional series of Chanel Generation Kill products (entitled “Chanel Creations & Constructions”). Making the products consisted of a short period of intensive work: painting & sticking (Chanel logos), modifying (small significant details) and re-touching (gold, black and white coatings) onto already existing objects that stereotypically symbolized and invoked negative connotations i.e razors, knives & cigarettes. With the use of a process that is as chillingly simple as the design, and haunting considering the woman behind the brand herself. I was able to replicate and mimic Chanel's characteristic composition & styling. Originally made out of only a few roles of newspaper, duck tape & sticky black plastic. One of my most favourite pieces in the CGK collection is “Chanel Terrorism - The Little Black Bomb”. A satirical piece that plays on the codes and conventions of the iconic “little black dress”. “An essential rule & garment of fashion to complete every wardrobe that can be dressed up or down depending on the occasion.” Put into the context of fashion, the little black bomb becomes the height of the “Chanel generation kill” collection. Being able to be equipped, dressed up or dressed down with cables and extras for every occasion.

CGK's polysemic approach juxtaposes & touches upon many genres. From communicating a luxury fantasy & insight into a fictional world where Chanel sells items beyond the stereotypical realms of what is more traditionally considered as fashion. To CGK satirizing typical Chanel seasonal collections which focus primarily on material possessions & the importance of a brand name. The cannon of work shows how upon viewing this work we are throughout invoked with a mixed combination of messages and ideologies. Paradoxically being both enticed & repelled by a fashion brand that's proud of it's killing practices, yet at the same time identifying with a sense of style, glamorization & recognition. On the other hand the body of work questions the rules of fashion addressing why guns and other callous objects can't be seen as items of style? Why fashion designers & brands have to stop creating beyond the territory of clothes, perfume and shoes? After all, isn't everything considered an item or an element of fashion in its own time, place and trend? Indeed the great Coco Chanel herself stated, “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..” Furthermore behind the exclusiveness and luxury of these hand made products & photographs we can encounter confusion and disillusionment. It is unclear & difficult for viewers of my work to know whether I really worship these objects or if they are merely instruments used to satirise a society that idolizes Chanel, style and material goods. This is what I leave deliberately unanswered. By doing so, I have developed a formal idiom that is much more complex and disconcerting than it might seem upon first viewing.