

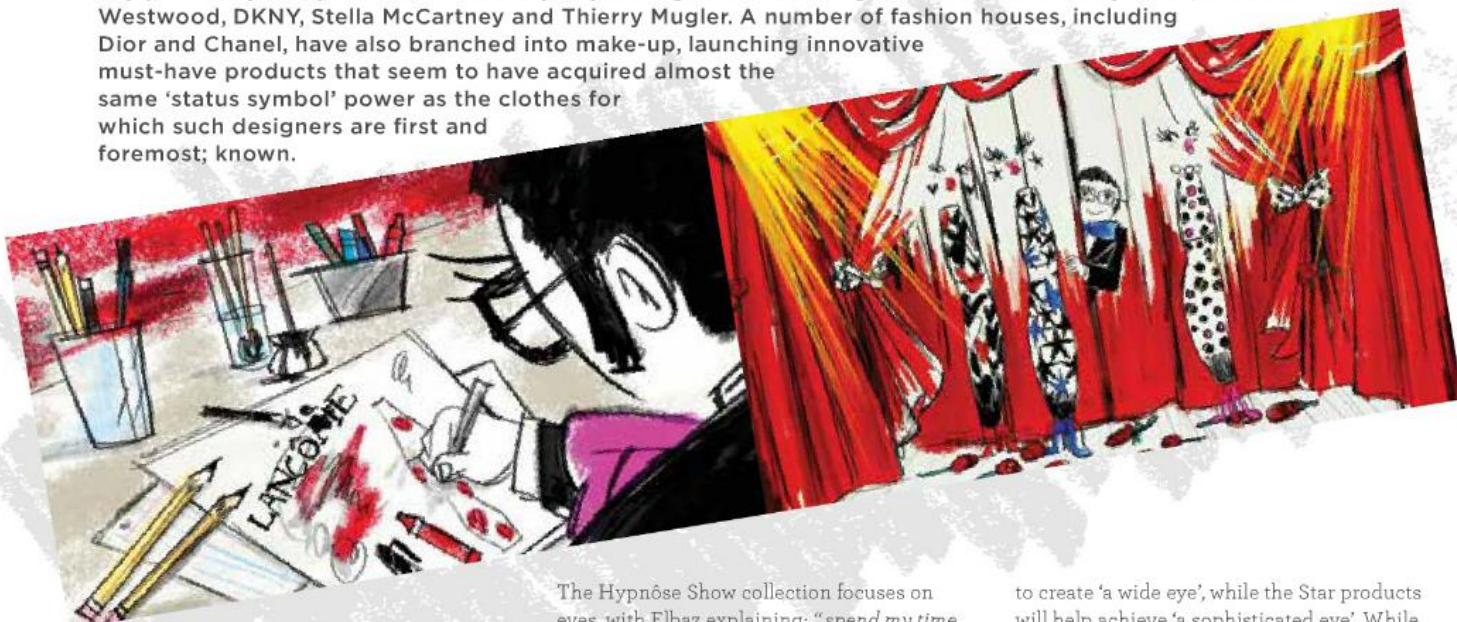
WORDS | Jennifer Parkes

A FASHION UNION

ALBER ELBAZ AND LANCÔME



The crossover between fashion and cosmetics is long-established; take a look at the perfume shelves of any pharmacy and you will find the majority of fragrances boasting names such as Jimmy Choo, Vivienne Westwood, DKNY, Stella McCartney and Thierry Mugler. A number of fashion houses, including Dior and Chanel, have also branched into make-up, launching innovative must-have products that seem to have acquired almost the same 'status symbol' power as the clothes for which such designers are first and foremost; known.



But, sometimes, the union of fashion and beauty is presented slightly differently – like the recent collaboration between Alber Elbaz and Lancôme Cosmetics, which utilises Elbaz's artistic talents and Lancôme's standing within the industry to create limited edition products that are at once cosmetically and aesthetically covetable.

The collaboration, Hypnôse Show, sees the various tubes and tins that house Lancôme's best-sellers fittingly given a face-lift with Elbaz's illustrations. Elbaz is the creative director of Lanvin, one of the world's most revered fashion houses thanks to Elbaz and his fusion of the brand's rich heritage with his own unique style. While no stranger to teaming up with other brands – Elbaz designed the hugely popular H&M for Lanvin line in November 2010, which fans queued through the night to buy – this is his first foray into the world of make-up alongside Lancôme president Youcef S. Nabi.

The Hypnôse Show collection focuses on eyes, with Elbaz explaining: "I spend my time backstage at the Lanvin shows, and when I come out at the end, all I see are people's eyes... It all stems from the curvaceous mascara bottles. The moment I saw them, I thought of women's bodies. In Elbaz's eyes, then, 'Eyes are the new fashion accessory... The eye is there to last. It's also a symbol of authenticity. People say the mirror of the soul is the eyes. I think eyes are really deep'".

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The collection consists of four main themes based on Lancôme's best-selling mascaras, Définition, Doll, Drama and Star, each draped in decorative 'dresses' and intended to create a different effect. For example, the Dolly Eyes mascara and eyeshadow palette are designed

to create 'a wide eye', while the Star products will help achieve 'a sophisticated eye'. While many consider the world of cosmetics and beauty products to be frivolous or superficial, Elbaz considers that, for women, "It's never just a piece of makeup. It's something a bit deeper than that".

At the same time, the collection is intended to be fun and deliberately frivolous; 'I think that we're in a time today that we're turning into an industry of power. Power creates fear. I feel it—the time and stress... [Youcef] wanted to go back to something that is totally happy and cheerful and colourful.' Ultimately, this sums up the function of almost all art, be it a painting, a catwalk collection, or the drawings on a mascara tube; art is there to be admired, to be beautiful and aesthetically appealing, but will always have an inspiration or message within it that may or may not be immediately visible. Yes, Elbaz and Lancôme have created a fun collection of make-up pieces dotted with hearts, eyes and stars, but no matter how playful and light-hearted the end design, the meaning is inarguably still there if you are willing to look for it, behind the doodled eyes.



HYPNÔSE STAR EYES PALETTE
BY ALBER ELBAZ - £38.00



HYPNÔSE DOLL EYES
BY ALBER ELBAZ - £23.00



OMBRE HYPNÔSE DRAMA EYES
BY ALBER ELBAZ - £18.50