Quang Huynh

Humanities Opp 4

Mrs. Schrader

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A Design Genius Who Modernized Fashion

He was a visionary who permanently altered the face of fashion. One of the most well-known designers of the 20th century, Christian Dior, the man behind the namesake fashion house. He reinvented femininity and elegance with his ground-breaking designs, presenting a new viewpoint in a society still rebuilding from the effects of war. Dior's influence on the fashion world was unmistakable, from his iconic New Look to his extravagant and opulent creations. His emphasis on the hourglass figure, lavish fabrics, and use of elaborate details have subsequently come to represent his legacy. Since the debut of Dior, the fashion industry has seen significant changes as his creations have profoundly influenced designers, models, and fashion enthusiasts. So, buckle up and get ready to learn about the man who put the "Haute" in haute couture.

In terms of fashion, Christian Dior's 1947 introduction of The New Look was innovative. It had a different silhouette from the boxy, macho forms of wartime apparel, with a small waist and a voluminous skirt (Campbell). The use of opulent materials like silk and satin accentuated the feminine nature of the style. The hourglass body was emphasized by Dior's designs, which highlighted curves in a novel way (Cooper). The 1950s were defined by the New Look, which soon gained popularity and influenced many designers. It offered a new viewpoint in a post-war society by reclaiming femininity and elegance. One of the most recognizable trends in fashion history is still the New Look. Dior's creations gained popularity rapidly, inspiring other designers and influencing 1950s fashion trends. The New Look established Dior as a leader in the fashion world and transformed the direction of women's fashion (McDowell). One of the most influential fashion movements in history, the New Look, may still be reflected in today's trends. It is important to remember that the New Look affected culture and society in addition to the fashion business. It symbolized post-war optimism and a return to femininity and glamour (Campbell).

In 1905, Christian Dior was born in Granville, France. He was raised in a nice home as the second of an affluent family of five children (Christian Dior). Dior began sketching patterns and going to museums at an early age, displaying an early interest in art and fashion. When Dior was just five years old, one of his earliest challenges was the passing of his mother. He was deeply affected by her loss, and he frequently referred to his recollections of her in his works (McDowell). Dior's father intended for him to become a diplomat and disapproved of his son's passion for fashion. Due to the resulting tension in their relationship, Dior was compelled to take on odd jobs to sustain himself while pursuing his passion for design. Before starting his gallery in 1929, he worked for several fashion businesses while attending the École des Arts Décoratifs in Paris (Cooper). Surrealism and other contemporaneous aesthetic trends greatly influenced early Dior designs. The beauty of flowers also moved him, and many of his works used floral elements. Dior had a strong interest in fashion and used it to further his artistic vision. Despite these challenges, Dior finally rose to become one of the most significant fashion designers of the 20th century, thanks to his love and talent for the industry. He became a leader in the fashion industry. He was known as a master of haute couture thanks to his creative designs, meticulous attention to detail, and use of opulent fabrics.

The death of Christian Dior in 1957 signaled the end of an era in fashion, but the House of Dior and its subsequent creative directors carried on his legacy. After Dior passed away, Yves Saint Laurent took over as head designer of the House of Dior and ushered in a more laid-back and modern look (Dudbridge). The fashion business was modernized by Saint Laurent's designs, which broke away from Dior's more formal and rigid aesthetic. Marc Bohan succeeded Saint Laurent as head designer in 1960 and continued to work for the House of Dior until 1989, after Saint Laurent was enlisted in the French military (McDowell). Bohan combined new and avant-garde fashions with the richness and refinement of the House of Dior. Moreover, Gianfranco Ferre took over as lead designer in 1989, leading to a more modern and innovative style for the time period. Ferre's creations contributed to the House of Dior and the fashion business adopting a new viewpoint. When John Galliano took over as creative director in 1996, the House of Dior adopted his lavish and extremely theatrical style (Christian Dior). Widely acclaimed, Galliano's creations contributed to the House of Dior's continued prominence in the fashion world. Galliano, however, was fired from Dior in 2011 after making anti-Semitic comments that profoundly affected the House of Dior and the fashion business as a whole.

After being named creative director in 2012, Raf Simons brought a minimalist and a modern aesthetic to the House of Dior (Dudbridge). The House of Dior was re-established as a leader in the fashion world thanks to Simons' creations, which also laid the foundation for the brand's future success. Maria Grazia Chiuri, who in 2016 became the House of Dior's first female creative director, now leads the company with an emphasis on empowering women and spreading activism via fashion (Campbell). The House of Dior's succession of creative directors significantly impacted the business and the fashion industry as a whole because each new designer introduced new ideas and perspectives that assisted in the evolution and modernization of the brand.

On October 23, 1957, at the age of 52, the renowned French fashion designer Christian Dior passed away. Many well-known figures from the fashion industry attended his funeral, which was held in the St. Sulpice Church in Paris (Christian Dior). The Archbishop of Paris presided over a regular Catholic liturgy during the occasion. Many of his close friends, coworkers, and sister Catherine Dior, who participated in the resistance movement during World War II, attended the funeral (McDowell). The House of Dior was left without its primary creative force after his passing, but it carried on under the direction of the designers who had collaborated with Dior. Former Dior assistant Yves Saint Laurent was promoted to head designer for the House of Dior (Dudbridge). In addition, Dior was buried at the Cimetière de Callian (Campbell). He brought fresh looks and methods that assisted in keeping the business current with the ever-evolving fashion industry.

Long after Dior's passing, his designs influenced fashion designers worldwide. The House of Dior is one of the most well-known and reputable fashion houses in the world, and fashion aficionados all around the world adore its creations. The work of many modern designers shows Dior's influence, and his legacy has contributed to the development of the fashion industry as we know it today. Many of his iconic looks, like the "New Look" and the "A-line," are still in vogue today and frequently copied by fashion designers (Cooper). Dior is known for his charity efforts and achievements in the fashion industry. He was a fervent lover of the arts and used his success to contribute to many worthwhile charities. The House of Dior upholds the high standards of quality and craftsmanship that Dior established even today, continuing to commemorate his legacy. The house remains one of the most notable names in the fashion industry, and its creations still represent luxury and elegance.

In conclusion, Christian Dior's burial was a good remembrance of a man who permanently altered the fashion industry. His imaginative creations continue to inspire innumerable designers today, as well as the work of the House of Dior. Dior will never be forgotten as one of the best fashion designers.

With an environment rich in art and culture, Christian Dior was raised in France and became inspired by the environment around him. His early memories of the botanical gardens in Granville, where he spent his summers, served as an inspiration. In addition to the Renaissance artwork that Dior witnessed in Parisian museums, the 18th-century historical attire also impacted him. Dior's fascination with the clothes worn by the women in his family inspired him to become interested in fashion at an early age. Dior developed his design abilities and was influenced by the grace of that era's fashion while he was employed at the couture house of Robert Piguet (Cooper). Dior was inspired by the contours and lines of the female figure when he founded his fashion brand in 1946 (McDowell). His "New Look" fashion transformed women's fashion and significantly impacted the fashion industry. Dior swiftly rose to prominence as one of the most renowned fashion designers thanks to his designs, which combined classic couture techniques with a contemporary, feminine look. Despite his early success, Dior continued being influenced by his surroundings and included novel materials and design aspects in his collections. He is still regarded as one of the most important 20th-century fashion icons, and his work continues to influence designers even today.

Dior was drafted into the military during World War II and served in the French army from 1940 to 1942 (Cooper). He spent two years as a POW in a camp after being seized by the Germans. He was later released from the French army because of health issues (McDowell). After being freed in 1942, Dior returned to Paris and started working for the Lucien Lelong fashion house. He founded the House of Dior, his own fashion house, in 1946. The war profoundly impacted Dior's life and work. He became preoccupied with beauty and luxury throughout his years of detention as a way to escape the difficulties of war. His "New Look," which included long skirts, nipped waists, and a return to femininity after the utilitarian wartime styles, made him famous.

Christian Dior had health problems throughout his life, including chronic asthma and nervous exhaustion (McDowell). Despite these obstacles, he pursued a profession in the arts and eventually rose to prominence as one of his era's most well-known fashion designers. Dior's health problems affected his work by requiring him to take pauses from his hectic schedule and motivating him to concentrate on developing beautiful and comfortable creations. The waist and hips were highlighted in Dior's designs, which also featured opulent fabrics and elaborate detailing (Campbell). His dedication to aesthetics and ease contributed to his prominence in the fashion industry. Although Dior's health problems hampered his physical activity, they did not stop him from producing classic works of art that still inspire designers today. Overall, Dior's health problems influenced his design philosophy, emphasizing the value of comfort and beauty in clothing. His distinct aesthetic and creative vision still influences the fashion industry, and his legacy inspires designers worldwide.

A significant factor in the development of Christian Dior's artistic vision was the opening of his art gallery in Paris in the 1930s. The exhibition exposed Dior to contemporary art movements like Surrealism and Cubism and included works by a number of artists, including Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró, and Salvador Dal (Dudbridge). The artwork on view in the gallery had a significant influence on Dior's artistic vision and sparked his avant-garde fashion design methodology. Dior was especially drawn to surrealist art, which highlighted the subconscious and dreamy features, and incorporated these themes into his creations (Campbell). For example, Dior's first collection, the "New Look," featured intricate details, such as ruffles and bows, that were inspired by the surrealist emphasis on irrational and dreamlike elements (McDowell). The line caused a sensation and made Dior a major player in the fashion industry. The art gallery gave Dior the chance to network with other creatives and thinkers and gave him chances to work with artists on initiatives like fashion shows and art exhibitions. Overall, the Christian Dior exhibition had a significant role in his artistic growth and helped him become a trailblazing figure in the fashion industry. Dior's work was significantly influenced by the gallery, which encouraged him to experiment with conventional fashion design and produce classic pieces of art that still influence designers today.

Christian Dior was born in Granville, France, the son of wealthy parents, in 1905. From a young age, he was passionate about fashion and art. Dior was conscripted into the military during World War II and later put in prison. After being freed, he went to work for the fashion business Robert Piguet and gained knowledge of the fundamentals of haute couture. He established his own fashion company bearing his name in 1946. Focusing on femininity, richness, and opulence was a defining feature of Dior's designs. He employed various materials and hues, including lace, florals, and soft pastels. Dior's "New Look" collection, which included long skirts and nipped waists, transformed women's fashion in 1947. His experiences probably informed Dior's drive to produce opulent, decadent creations during the war, notably the scarcities and limitations. He was inspired by various things, such as his love of gardening and the outdoors. The particulars and decorations of Dior's creations, such as the elaborate beading and embroidery, were also informed by his personal experiences. Throughout his career, Dior pushed the limits of fashion and questioned conventional notions of femininity and beauty. Dior passed dead in 1957, but the fashion company he built carries on his legacy. The House of Dior still creates fashion today in keeping with its devotion to innovation, luxury, and femininity. Christian Dior's impact on the fashion world remains significant and enduring despite his untimely death. Many of his personal experiences led to him becoming a significant influence on the fashion industry.

The 1940s and 1950s saw women's fashion undergo a revolution thanks to the great fashion designer Christian Dior. His renowned "New Look" line, which emphasized femininity and included long, full skirts and small waists, made him famous. Dior had an impact far beyond the field of fashion because of the numerous artistic, design, and cultural trends that were influenced by his creations. He is acknowledged as one of the 20th century's most creative and influential designers. As his designs continue to influence modern designers and as his legacy is honored by fashion businesses and museums all over the world, Dior's influence can still be felt in the fashion industry today. He also contributed to making Paris the fashion capital; the city is still one of the most significant hubs for fashion design today. Dior's legacy has had a tremendous impact on the cosmetics industry in addition to fashion. He pioneered the use of high-end cosmetics and made makeup widely accepted as a means of enhancing and completing a woman's inherent beauty. Christian Dior has had a significant and long-lasting impact on the world. His pioneering designs, dedication to femininity and beauty, and influence on the fashion and cosmetics industries are still honored and cherished today.

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Annotated Bibliography

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Biography.com is a well-established and reputable website that provides biographical information on a wide range of individuals. The website is owned by A&E Television Networks, a subsidiary of A+E Networks, which is a media company that owns and operates a variety of cable television channels, including the History channel. The website is known for providing accurate and reliable information on a wide range of subjects, including historical figures, celebrities, and other notable individuals. The articles are written by professional journalists and researchers and are fact-checked for accuracy. Additionally, the website is regularly updated with new information, ensuring that the information provided is current and up to date. Furthermore, Biography.com is a trusted source for many people, it has been online for over 20 years, it has an extensive archive of biographies, and it has a broad readership, which all together makes it a reputable website. In summary, Biography.com is a reliable and trustworthy source of information on a wide range of individuals due to its accuracy, credibility, and reputation. This article provides a detailed and comprehensive overview of Christian Dior's life and career, from his early life and education to his rise to fame as a fashion designer and the establishment of the House of Dior. It also provides information on Dior's designs and their impact on the fashion industry. The article is well-researched and well-written, making it a valuable resource for anyone interested in learning more about Christian Dior and his contributions to the fashion world. I intend using this article to write about Dior’s life and background and his major influence on the fashion world.

Campbell, Heather. “Christian Dior.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., https://www.britannica.com/biography/Christian-Dior-French-designer.

Heather Campbell was a senior editor at Britannica and has been editing for various articles and

publications. She edited for ABC-Clio and taught French to undergraduates at the University of

California. Moreover, she has a master’s and bachelor’s in French. This means that she is very

trustworthy in her knowledge about Christian Dior and French fashion. The article gives a brief

summary about Dior’s life and experiences. For instance, it dwells into Dior’s family life, his

origins and his background. Moreover, the article describes the fashion style during Dior’s time

and how World War II influenced fashion in France. After Dior’s death, he had successors that

continued on Dior’s legacy and ambitions. I will use this article and information to write about

Dior’s family life at home and his life during work. In addition, I will write about how

environmental factors such as war had a big influence on Dior’s “New Look”.

Cooper, Leah Faye. “How Christian Dior Pioneered 75 Years of Feminist Fashion.” *Vanity Fair*, 1 July 2022, https://www.vanityfair.com/style/2022/07/christian-dior-feminist-fashion.

Vanity Fair is a trustworthy and reliable magazine and website that has been in publication for over 100 years. It is known for its in-depth reporting and high-quality journalism, covering a wide range of topics including politics, entertainment, culture, and fashion. The magazine and website have a team of experienced and professional journalists who conduct extensive research and fact-checking to ensure the accuracy and credibility of their articles. They also have a rigorous editorial process in place to ensure that all content meets their high standards for quality and integrity. Additionally, Vanity Fair is part of a larger media organization, Condé Nast, which is a reputable and well-respected media company that owns a number of other high-profile publications such as The New Yorker, Vogue, and GQ. In addition, Vanity Fair is also a well-respected source among its peers and is often cited as a source by other reputable news organizations and publications. Indubitably, Vanity Fair is a trustworthy and reliable source due to its long history, professional journalism, and rigorous editorial process, as well as its reputation and its association with Condé Nast media company. This article gives a detailed look at how Christian Dior, one of the most iconic fashion houses, is incorporating feminist ideals into its collections and branding. The author praises the efforts of the brand's Creative Director, Maria Grazia Chiuri, in infusing feminist messaging into the brand's designs in a way that feels authentic and meaningful. The article is reliable as it is written by a reputable source and provides detailed information about the brand and its efforts. I plan to use this article to write about Dior’s process and style and his inspirations.

Dudbridge, Saxony. “Christian Dior Biography.” *Catwalk Yourself*, http://www.catwalkyourself.com/fashion-biographies/christian-dior/.

Saxony Dudbridge studies International Fashion Marketing and had a big role in The Catwalk

Yourself’s History and Designers Biography sections. She has the skill and practice to write

reputable biographies about the history of large individuals involved in the fashion field. The

article speaks on Dior’s interests and has more written about Dior’s successors and what they

did after his death. It goes into detail about each of Dior’s successors and their impact in the

fashion world. I intend to use Dudbridge’s article on my paper to write about the successors of

Dior after his death and what they did to continue Dior’s legacy. Furthermore, this information

of Dior’s successors is very useful because it has affected the fashion industry and makes high-

end fashion the way it is in the modern day.

McDowell, Colin. “Christian Dior (1905-1957).” *The Business of Fashion*, The Business of Fashion, 18 Nov. 2021, https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/news-analysis/christian-dior-1905-1957/.

Colin McDowell is a British writer who has very extensive knowledge on fashion and design. He

has titles, MBE and FRSA, appointed by the monarch of the United Kingdom and Royal School

of Arts. McDowell has years of experience writing about fashion and has wrote for The Sunday

Times, The Observer, and The Guardian. McDowell is very passionate in art and fashion, as he

argued authentic criticism in contemporary fashion journalism is now more difficult to find.

McDowell writes a detailed look into Dior’s life, including what influenced Dior and what made

Dior who he is. Dior’s father opposed Dior going into the art field, and wanted Dior to join the

Diplomatic Corps. After studying in Paris, Dior met many of his inspirations and those who

played a big role in his success. The article speaks about Dior’s struggles and how he overcame

them, and Dior’s process on how he completed his big accomplishments and collections. I will

use McDowell’s article, Christian Dior (1905-1957), to show Dior’s obstacles and individuals

who inspired him. People who had a big influence on his fashion and work. This will show

where Dior’s ideas and success came from.