



## Why the L'Oréal Paris-Mugler makeup collab is a win-win

The French fashion house is teaming up with L'Oréal Paris to launch a limited-edition range of colour cosmetics inspired by the Mugler archives, before it opens a new chapter with creative director Miguel Castro Freitas.

By Laure Guilbault



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Mugler is returning to makeup after a 15-year hiatus, through a limited-edition collection with L'Oréal Paris.

Mugler, whose fragrance business includes blockbusters like Angel and Alien, hasn't produced makeup for years. Thierry Mugler launched a makeup line in 2008, which was discontinued in early 2010. L'Oreal Group acquired Mugler (both the fashion business and Mugler Parfums) in 2020.

The new makeup collection, which includes a cushion foundation (in 10 shades), a liner, a mascara, lipsticks, radiance sticks and eyeshadow palettes, will be available to shop on Monday in the US, China, Europe, Latin America and Africa. "It's a way to push the envelope in two major areas: L'Oréal Paris's mission of accessible luxury and creativity, with both extraordinary looks and product innovation," says Olivier Monteil, SVP of global image and content at L'Oréal Paris. Among innovations are the cushion foundation — a liquid foundation soaked into a sponge-like cushion within a compact case, a format popular in Asia — and the lipstick, which features hyaluronic acid. This aligns with the market's shift towards 'skinification', or skincare-infused makeup that hydrates and protects, according to Monteil.

With this collaboration, L'Oréal Paris renews its tradition of fashion-makeup tie-ups. Previous collabs were with Balmain (2017), Isabel Marant (2018), Karl Lagerfeld (2019) and Elie Saab (2021). "Each of these collaborations allow us to present one aspect of the brand's DNA," says Monteil. "With Mugler, we are exploring this idea of elevation and transformation. The power of L'Oréal Paris is to transform women through skincare, hair colouring, haircare and of course makeup, which is undoubtedly the most





extreme tool of expression. And Mugler is an extremely transformative brand that empowers women visually and emotionally.”

It helps that Mugler is part of the L’Oréal Group portfolio. “But if it hadn’t been a creative no-brainer, both for Mugler and for us, it wouldn’t have happened,” says Monteil.

Mugler managing director Adrian Corsin echoes the sentiment. “There are many similar values between Mugler and L’Oréal Paris: femininity, empowerment, diversity, transformation,” he says. It’s also good timing, Corsin adds. New Mugler creative director Miguel Castro Freitas will make his debut during Paris Fashion Week. “As the makeup collection focuses on Mugler’s codes such as the power of glamour and metamorphosis, and the Muglerian archetypes — the femme fatale, the siren, the fantastical butterfly creature — it makes a perfect transition before the house starts a new story on 2 October.”

The makeup collection is supported by a campaign film shot by Colin Solal Cardo and starring L’Oréal Paris global ambassador Kendall Jenner. (Jenner walked the L’Oréal Paris runway show during Paris Fashion Week last year in a Mugler look.) Three looks worn by Jenner in the campaign are part of Mugler’s Re/Edit capsule, a collection of re-edition Mugler looks from the archives, slated for release in September: 1998’s tailleur lingerie, 1997’s tailleur chimère and 1998’s corset Jeu de Paume. The fourth campaign look features the fourreau papillon, the butterfly dress from ‘Les Insectes’ collection in 1997.

The Re/Edit capsule was somewhat of a transition collection between the departure of previous creative director Casey Cadwallader in March and the arrival of Castro Freitas. “We’ve celebrated the archives. We see these Re/Edit and makeup collections as a very strategic move: closing this chapter of revisiting the past, because starting in October, we’ll be focusing on the future,” says Corsin.

L’Oréal Paris’s global makeup artist Harold James, who was appointed in April, conceived Jenner’s beauty looks for the campaign (including applying Mugler’s galactic blue from the Midnight eyeshadow palette at the inner corner of the eye to resonate with the butterfly wings), as well as additional looks for the L’Oréal Paris website. “The collection was created to be worn both day and night. The idea is really to be able to express yourself, to play with this transformative aspect each time,” says James. “If you want to go really far and take it to the extreme by mixing textures and layering, you can, but if you just want to have a little bit of Mugler’s runway in your hands, you can have that, too.”

Prices range from €14.99 for the liner to €24.99 for the eyeshadow palette, or cushion foundation. The distribution strategy is focusing on e-commerce, including TikTok Shop globally (Douyin in China), Zalando, Chinese platform Tmall, and European beauty e-tailer Notino. “We’re following a drop model, with limited quantities and instant availability,” Monteil says, noting that the media plan is also focused online.

The capsule is small considering the scale of L’Oréal Paris, whose revenue passed the €7.5 billion mark in 2024, according to estimates by Kepler Cheuvreux analyst Charles-Louis Scotti. (L’Oréal Group doesn’t break out sales for individual brands within the consumer products division.) But it’s a significant project as it contributes greatly to the brand value, according to Monteil.

L’Oréal Paris strongly believes in collaborations, and could expand beyond fashion tie-ups in the future. “I think we are going to open up the field of possibilities. Other universes inspire us greatly — maybe tomorrow it will be a totally unexpected collaboration in the entertainment industry, but always with this idea of expressing aspects of L’Oréal Paris in an enhanced way, or even revealing them when they are less known,” says Monteil.

As for Mugler, Corsin says collaborations are a way to test and learn. “We made shoes with Jimmy Choo; then we launched shoes. We collaborated with Gentle Monster on eyewear; then we launched eyewear. We always see it as a way to test new categories and see how our audience reacts,” he says.





This is adding to the bigger push into cosmetics from fashion and luxury houses. Most recently, Louis Vuitton made a splash when it entered the makeup arena. Despite some headwinds, the global colour cosmetics market is projected to reach \$91.8 billion by 2027, up from \$76.9 billion in 2024, according to Euromonitor. At a time when the fashion industry is navigating a downturn, Euromonitor forecasts 6.8 per cent growth in the colour cosmetics market between 2025 and 2026.

“When it comes to makeup, there’s nothing set in the calendar, but we never know what the future holds,” Corsin says.

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