

The 2.55

Business



“ A girl must be two things. Classy and fabulous.” So said the famously elegant and independent fashion designer Gabrielle Chanel.

Not only her clothing and designs reflect this statement, but also her attitude towards life, and her own vivacious and resolute personality and ideas. One of her most famous and iconic designs that best represents her is a purse, the two point five-five. Her ideas about independence and practicality are flawlessly embodied into this bag. For you, the two point five-five may just be a number. But as Bazaar Magazine represents, for thousands of people working in the fashion industry, it is an icon.

A symbol that the wearer has a comfortable income, an active lifestyle, leans towards a classic look, and also has a sense of style. Yes, all this from ‘ just’ a purse. Or, so you think. But to all those people who are in the industry, it is an icon, and a symbol for comfort and modesty. To show how this is, you have to have a bit of background about the concepts which brought it to life, the craftsmanship and fame, and finally, its influence on today’s society, and that of many years ago.

Gabrielle Chanel. Does that ring a bell? Probably not. But I am sure you have heard of the Number five perfume, the ‘ little black dress’ and have seen fake pearls, either on the runway, or in life. All of these were popularized or created by the fashion designer Gabrielle Chanel. In a time when every element of living, including clothes, was seemingly designed to restrict women, Gabrielle Chanel stood as the voice of reason. Her words were ‘ independence,’ ‘ practicality,’ and, heaven forbid, ‘ comfort.

' These words and her belief that women could BE something more than a housewife reflected in the clothes she designed, specifically in the two point five-five. Of all her many ageless classics, this one purse embodied flawlessly her beliefs, and her background. To understand this, I will give you a brief explanation of how she got to the fashion world. Gabrielle Chanel was born an orphan on August 19, 1883 in France. She grew up in a convent, and when she left, she made a pittance singing at nightclubs.

She had taste, but little talent. She began working at a dressmaker's shop, where she discovered her true talent, not in replicating the frivolous fashions of the time, but in flattering women's bodies. She quit, and started a hat shop, and, with a little funding, began making clothes. From there, she began her way up into fame, wealth, and one of Times magazine's top one hundred most influential people of the twentieth century. Quite a lot for a club singer. She applied her own words to her work, " For one to be irreplaceable, one must always be different.

" When you apply this to her work, and compare her to the popular designers that she overcame, it is apparent that Gabrielle Chanel was not afraid to be different. While they favored a corseted figure, troublesome trains, long hair and dew-white skin, Chanel's lines were simple; her fabric comfortable, and her own hair was chopped short, and she popularized the tan which remains in ' style' today. She valued costumers' opinions; a friend and patron tells of her eavesdropping on her costumer's conversations, eager to unearth exactly what they wanted. From all of this, her values of giving women what they want, even if they don't know they want it, emerged. Comfort and practicality. (TORONTO STAR, " The Chanel look lives on, by DEREK CHETTY)
<https://assignbuster.com/the-255/>

Throughout the design of the purse, you can see pieces of Chanel, scattered throughout.

The two point five five is exquisitely made of Lambskin leather, with as much devotion and care as you would put into a piece of art. It takes two hundred and forty minutes, and uses one hundred eighty different craftsmanship skills. It is made as a rectangle, with a thin width, and quilted. This pattern of simple decoration was original at the time, but now it is copied everywhere, in other purses, and in knockoffs. But the first bit of Chanel you find is it's fastener. It's closure is a flap, and this is fastened by a turn clasp, nicknamed the "mademoiselle lock.

" This is rather nicknamed after Gabrielle, it is due to the fact that she, with many suitors including the Duke of Westminster, never married. She said, " There have been many Duchesses of Westminster. There is only one Chanel." She wanted independence. The strap, or the way of holding it, is a long chain, which easily hangs on your shoulder.

Gabrielle Chanel noticed how the purses of the time were also restricting, as they required hands to hold them. She thought that hands need to be free, so that they can be busy, and she designed this aspect of the purse with that in mind. Thirdly, there is a back pocket, which is where she kept cash, for her convenience, and then shared this convenience with the world. Also, this where she allegedly stashed her ' secret love letters.' These three ' practicalities' clearly echo the designer's thoughts about the role of women.

In February 1955, the bag was released, and named after that day, 2. 55. It became a timeless classic. On January 10, 1971, Gabrielle Chanel died. But her legacy and line lived on.

The thought that a woman should flatter her body, and listen to her own thoughts, and voice her own opinions, did not die with her. And through this, she lives on. Today, the line is carried on by the illustrious Karl Lagerfeld, who still has HIS first Chanel bag. The two point five-five has been carried by many stars, such as Madonna, Marilyn Monroe, Audrey Hepburn, and Grace Kelly. However, you don't often see Chanel advertisements for the purse.

This is because the purse sells itself. There is no 'celeb freebies' or flamboyant advertisements. In the true fashion of Chanel, others seek it out for its practicality, simple charm, and uniqueness, and taste. It still is eagerly bought, by young girls, and old women. Sarah Casselman, market editor at Fashion Magazine, said that "A woman covets a bag at 16-or 60." This quote was brought on by an observation.

She was in France, and a young girl caught her eye. She could have been no older than nine, and wore a smug, happy smile. In one hand, she carried a shopping bag from a Chanel store. Draped across her body was a blue two point five five. (FASHIONOFFICE.

ORG -Trends in fashion) Indeed, the bag is loved throughout time, and through the ages. It has been 'reborn' several times. Though the bag now comes in a charming variety of shades, from bright pinks and blues, to the shiniest metallics, Karl Lagerfeld has never drastically changed it. Speaking

on the subject, he said, “ Only timeless classics can be reborn time after time. This is the miracle of the Chanel bag.

” (The Chanel Bag” The Times ARMSTRONG LISA) Though Gabrielle Chanel might have died, her ideas have not, and her fashion has certainly not. And neither has the two point five five. Through discovering her life, and the concepts she lived by, the bag itself, and finally, what it is today, I hope you have learned much more about the purse. And also, more about the opinion of what fashion is. About how it’s expressing yourself, being free and comfortable, but still be beautiful and classy. Still can be.

This is the treasure of the two point five five. Of Chanel, who showed that fashion fades, but style remains the same, and being yourself is the best way to be desired. She would know. As she said, and as I quoted earlier, “ A girl must always be two things: Classy and fabulous.”