

Robert Bergman Defines Luxury Beauty of L'Oréal Professionnel and Shu Uemura

Designer Robert Bergman divides his time between his agency, Bergman Associates, and an office at L'Oréal's midtown New York headquarters. Last year, he was working on five L'Oréal brands simultaneously while also running his own agency. Prior to redefining the brand new hair styling lines for L'Oréal Professionnel and Shu Uemura, Bergman revamped L'Oréal's Maybelline brand.

For Maybelline, L'Oréal's CEO, Jean-Paul Agon, asked Bergman to redesign, upgrade, and modernize his global brand. Bergman first redesigned the typography and shape on all Maybelline packages because the brand previously had hundreds of sub-brand logos in different styles, fonts, and typographic personalities.

Then Bergman standardized the logos across all Maybelline promotional material signage and worked with Maybelline's advertising agency to modernize the brand's photographic style, typography, and ad layouts. "It was a super-exciting challenge to redesign the world's No. 1 cosmetics brand," says Bergman. "The products touch so many people—bringing design directly to so many lives—it was a creative director's dream project."

Bergman's objectives for the Maybelline redesign were to achieve maximum quality with simplicity and modernity, to achieve greater brand strength and continuity, and to maintain respect for the brand's heritage. Bergman's creative vision for the brand's redesign is based on strict unification of all typography using exclusively upper-case letters for headlines and product names.

Bergman explains that the choice of uppercase reflects Maybelline's new initiatives highlighting the great potential that woman have in our society. "Maybelline is developing several international programs supporting empowerment of women, and it makes sense that the world's largest cosmetics brand should stand up for women, in all ways," says Bergman, crediting Agon's trailblazing spirit. "Jean-Paul is an incredibly passionate marketing genius—and better yet, he's a great advocate of design."



L'Oréal Professionnel's New Line

Two directions at once

For Shu Uemura, Bergman was asked to invent two distinctive and revolutionary packaging directions—modernizing Shu Uemura's signature minimalist packaging and creating the brand's first hair care product lines. Bergman also directed the launch advertising campaign, photo shoots, and the design of all collateral and promotional material for the brand.

Bergman designed the products under personal approval of Uemura in Tokyo. The products' boxes all bear Uemura's signature and the following quote from Uemura: "Creating something that is universally beautiful, that is art." Bergman also worked with French industrial designer Christophe Pillet to create the unique silhouette of the shampoo and masque packaging. The new lines consist of

35 luxury shampoos, conditioners, masques, treatments, styling products, and accessories.

For Shu Uemura's advertising photo shoots, Bergman assembled a Japanese crew and created a unique vision of beauty including hairstyles that featured the Geisha-hair-dressing tradition—but modernized. "Finding a Japanese classically trained hairstylist who could bring the styles up-to-date was actually a great challenge," Bergman says. "We had to test and pass on many hairdressers from Japan, Europe, and the U.S. In the end, the photos clearly echo the spirit of the brand—extreme luxury and true modern beauty."

Textures with depth

Pierre Lampert, U.S. general manager of the L'Oréal Professionnel lines, explains that the Texture Expert line was conceived to expand their reputation in color care to the hair styling products category. According to Lampert, the primary message of the packaging should be "L'Oréal Professionnel is the Hair Texture Expert" in the context of "Haute Couture Styling Effects."

The "te" abbreviation of Texture Expert on the new packaging is a brand evolution from the Tec Ni Art line of a previous generation. Bergman believes the modernity of the



New Shu Uemura Packaging

new packaging is a fashion-forward message, because in fashion image is everything. "If you neglect the image in a beauty brand, you're really not taking advantage of the marketing potential," says Bergman.

Being a brand new line of 18 SKUs for the "A" salons only, the packaging had to make an "announcement" of sorts. "It had to be bold enough, strong enough, and powerful enough," says Bergman. Finding the right color combinations was time-consuming, as the goal was to both separate and unify the lines for three hair types—fine, medium, and thick.

Lampert believes the colors are luxurious and Champagne-like, looking expensive but also possessing equilibrium. Chuck Pollard, v.p. of L'Oréal Professionnel's creative team, was also involved in developing the image of the brand and its merchandising. Pollard made sure the glow of the designs and colors would have maximum impact in different environments, such as on mirrored in-store displays.

Consumer testing showed that the designs and colors hit the mark on haute couture and stylishness, and over 90% of subjects said that they would try the product just on the basis of the impressive high-end packaging. Lampert says that packaging for the hair styling category has to be more edgy, fun, or artistic because hair styling is more about inspiration and creativity. "We wanted the packaging to communicate haute couture styling with an edge," Lampert says. ■