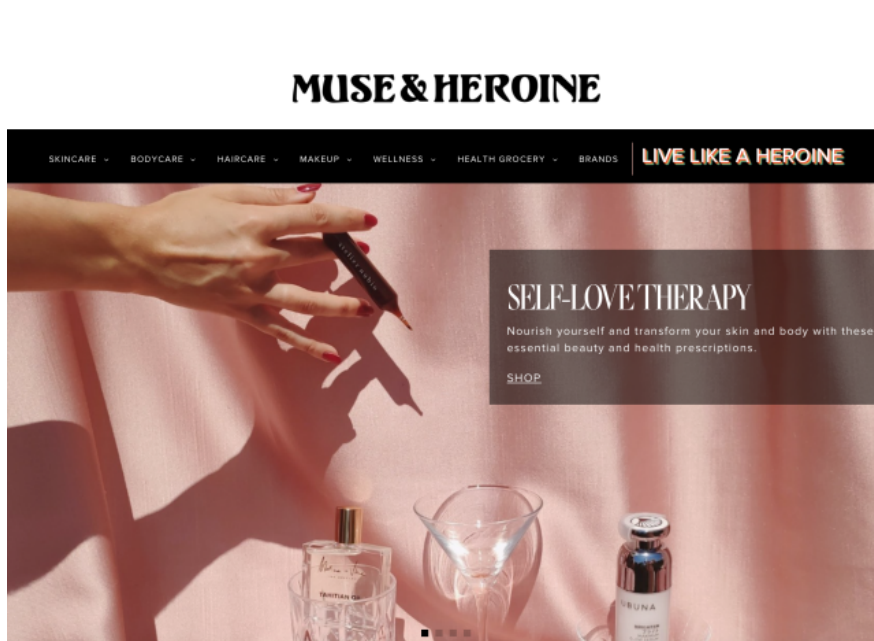


Muse & Heroine to Expand Consumer Reach

Developed during the lockdown, the platform will be dedicated to clean beauty brands and unveiled on July 19.

By [Sandra Salibian](#) on July 17, 2020



Muse & Heroine's online platform. Courtesy Photo


MILAN — The [Muse & Heroine](#) sales agency is the latest [beauty](#) player adopting a direct-to-consumer approach.

Founded in 2018 by [Janine Knizia](#) and counting physical showrooms in Milan and Paris, the agency will launch an online store on July 19 to offer its signature cherry-picked selection of emerging clean [beauty](#) brands.

“The current COVID-19 crisis has served as a call to action for self-care, well-being health. We are what we consume. Now more than ever, customers want to be sure [about] what they’re buying and whom they are buying it from and that’s why it’s the perfect moment to launch my direct-to-consumer platform,” said Knizia.

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The founder toyed with the idea for a long time, but she said trying to fit the implementation of the platform in her hectic life was no easy task.

“Pre-coronavirus, I was almost traveling three weeks out of a month and I didn’t have time for any additional projects. But as soon as the lockdown was announced at the beginning of March and all my retailers — apart from e-commerce ones — had to close their stores in Europe, I put together an amazing team and we worked full-speed over the last months to realize everything,” she said. The development proceeded smoothly as “the full project was already designed in my mind, I knew exactly how I wanted it to look, what the mission will be and who I want to work with.”

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The company’s overall goal is to inspire and empower women to live a healthier and self-loving life, guiding them in a discovery journey of indie beauty labels.

[As reported, last year Muse & Heroine teamed with European distributor Brama.](#) Knizia said their collaboration will continue, while the online platform will stand separately with its own warehouse and logistics procedures covering worldwide shipping.

According to the founder, the direct-to-consumer approach won’t undermine the agency’s relationship with its high-end retail partners across Europe, including LuisaViaRoma in Florence, Antonia in Milan and Montaigne Market in Paris, among others.

“I believe the relationship will even benefit from this,” said Knizia, pointing to additional visibility the brands will gain, as she already witnessed a heightened attention and willingness to collaborate from buyers and press after a brand is posted on Muse & Heroine’s Instagram account.

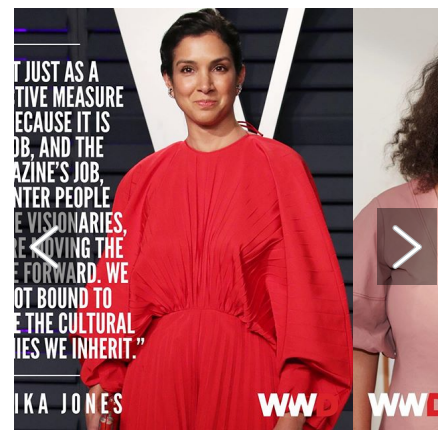


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Report: Kathryn Hopkins

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In particular, if the agency represents 15 labels, including Le Prunier, Marine and Vine, Julisis and Henua, the online assortment will be expanded to showcase 35 names, comprising Macrene Actives, African Botanics, Kypris, Susanne Kaufmann, Nazan Schnapp and Agent Nateur, to name a few.

The latest additions in Muse & Heroine's portfolio include San Francisco-based In Fiore, Cecilia Holistic Beauty and Seed to Skin, which just launched a pop-up at Le Bon Marché in Paris, too.

Beauty supplements, infusions and other kitchen pantry products will be also available to purchase, including those hailing from Anima Mundi, Ancient & Brave, Atelier Nubio, Alexis Smart and Activist.



Muse & Heroine's founder Janine Knizia. Courtesy Photo

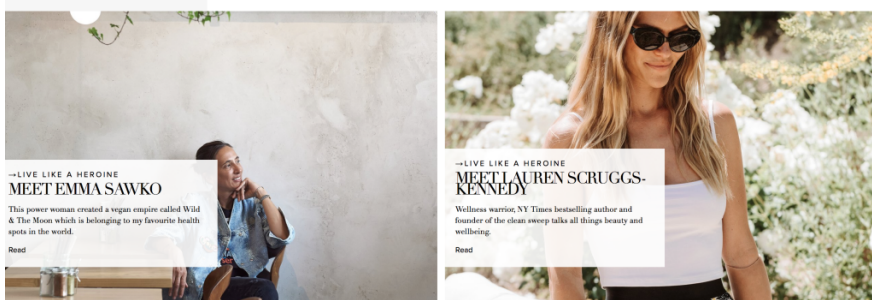
Noticing a gap in the European market is what encouraged Knizia to establish the business in the first place. After her frequent travels to Los Angeles, where she used to buy products at Credo and The Detox Market, she realized she couldn't find the same labels in Europe and therefore decided to create a bridge between the continents.

Compared to two years ago, Knizia noticed that the attention toward clean beauty increased in the region, but there are still margins of improvement.

"I think that too many brands without true value, knowledge and passion launched [recently] as they are thinking it's easy and cool to work in this business, but in the post-coronavirus everything will change again and customers as well as retailers will focus more on the real, authentic brands," she said.

Another element she stressed was the need to communicate and educate consumers more. For this reason, offering more than a mere marketplace was key for Knizia. Defined as a lifestyle destination for industry leaders, influencers and beauty aficionados, the platform will feature the "Live Like a Heroine" blogzine and editorial contents about travel destinations, spiritual places and holistic retreats as well as interviews with beauty experts and inspiring women and recipes for healthy food.

"I always had this idea in my mind, especially because I come from a sales and marketing background and I have experienced what it needs to sell really well. Nowadays it's not enough to just show a picture with a little description on a side, you need to create a real authentic community, a full lifestyle platform with like-minded and passionate people who are potential clients," she said.



LIVE LIKE A HEROINE
BECAUSE YOU ARE MADE OF MAGIC.

A teaser of the editorial contents that will be featured on the Muse & Heroine online platform. Courtesy Photo

This approach will also mark the unveiling of the project since a range of live virtual sessions with international health and wellness experts will be hosted on the agency's Instagram account. Dubbed "Super self-love Sunday," the initiative will see some of the brands' founders take over the channel to talk about themes ranging from botanical skincare and anti-aging remedies to fasting methods.

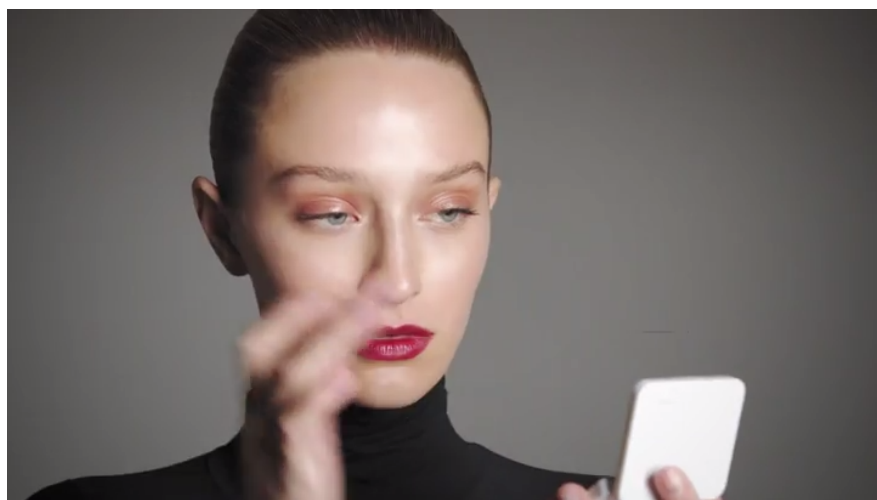
Scouting remains an essential activity for Knizia, who is keen on discovering efficient formulas wrapped in appealing and sustainable packaging and backed by a strong storytelling.

"I personally can't live without eye products, such as creams, serums, oils and masks, and I think there is still so much to improve. I'm missing some specialized brands focused on this area where we see the age first," she said, also mentioning body care products as a category to be further bolstered. "Most of the clean beauty brands focus on face and skincare as they hear that you can make much more money there, but I truly believe that body care will be huge."

Asked about future trends, Knizia predicted that clean beauty combined with science will be increasingly relevant for customers more and more demanding for results and clinical studies.

Businesswise, Knizia's digital venture might not be over as she's also eyeing the launch of a virtual showroom where international retailers "can discover my brand portfolio and get all the info they need in a single spot."

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