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SELL IT TO ME

MEET THE CREATIVES

Art directors & photographers reveal the inspiration behind their award-winning ad campaigns

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1 Jean-Paul Goude, photographer and art director, shot this image, *La Maison*, for Galeries Lafayette in 2002, providing a characteristically eccentric take on interior decoration advertising. Image © Jean-Paul Goude.

Advertising is a team effort, but there are some true creative visionaries behind the many of the most innovative, trend-setting campaigns. **Diane Smyth** profiles six of the world's best, talking to them about the ideas behind their award-winning ads, where the industry is going, and how photography fits in to the new multi-media environment

MEET THE CREATIVES

Jean-Paul Goude

"I regularly ask myself about the status of my work and the classification of what I do," says Jean-Paul Goude. "How relevant is my work, and does it correspond to the life of an artist – even as I conceived it? Is it art or something else? I still don't know if I'll ever find an answer."

Who can blame him? Jean-Paul Goude is an eccentric talent, and he's turned his skills to many different applications over the years, including art direction, photography, moving images and even performance art, by way of his formidable former girlfriend and muse, Grace Jones.

Goude was born in 1940 in a small suburb of Paris to a French father and American mother who had both been involved with showbiz in New

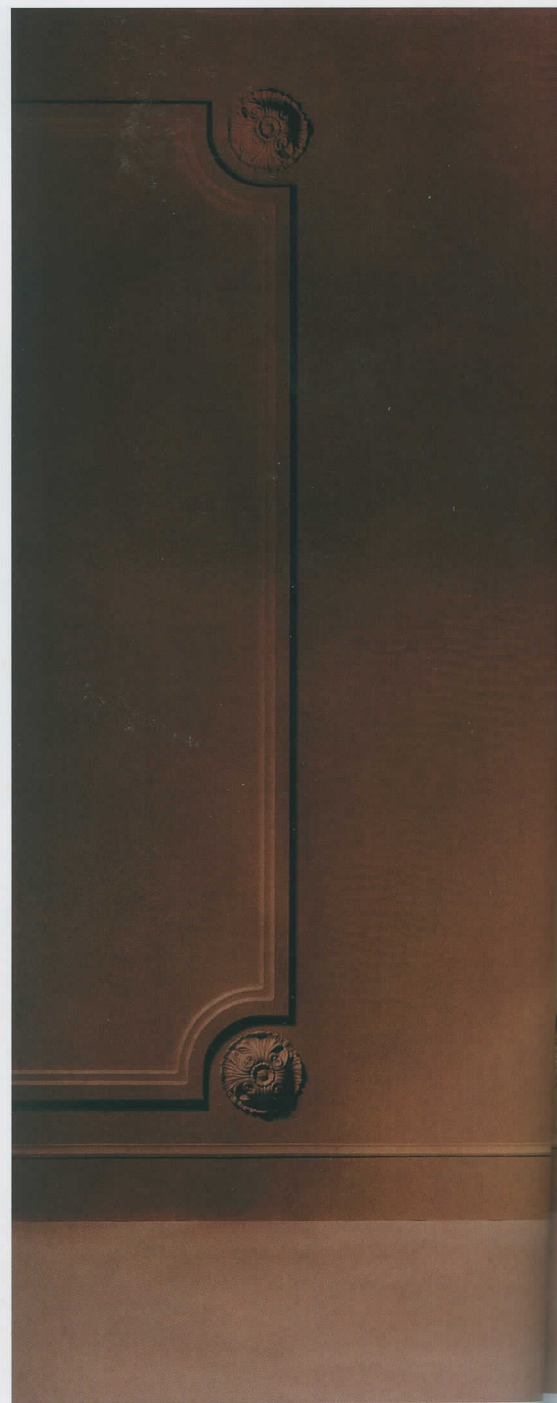
York. His mother ran a dance school, preparing the ground for a lifelong obsession with the dynamism of movement and form, and his precocious talent for drawing became apparent early on. He studied at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris and embarked on a career as an illustrator before fate came knocking on his door in 1968 in the shape of Harold Hayes, editor of *US Esquire* from 1963-73. He asked Goude to art direct a special edition of the magazine to celebrate its 75th issue. But Goude soon started to work full time, becoming art editor despite having little experience of layouts. Aged just 25, he was already one of America's creative elite.

Then he ran into Grace Jones on New York's disco scene and became her manager and lover, stage-managing outrageous live shows and creating

groundbreaking album covers. A keen proponent of retouching long before computer manipulation, he depicted her in an impossible pose for her *Island Life* album.

"I photographed her in a variety of positions, which I combined into a montage that made it possible to show her simultaneously full-frontal and in profile, like an Egyptian bas-relief," he says. "Then, having transferred the montage to photographic paper, I used it as the preliminary sketch for a painting meant to give the photographic illusion that she alone, like a contortionist, could assume the pose, though on a closer look you can see that from a strictly anatomical point of view the pose is impossible to achieve."

It's an approach Goude has adopted with many of his muses, adapting their images to show what



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he describes as his real conception of their beauty, not the one directly visible. It's got him into hot water because his idealised women have sometimes followed rather cartoonish racial stereotypes, and the name of his first book – *Jungle Fever*, published in 1982 – also attracted criticism. He argues he's a man of form, and that his work tackles a political problem in an aesthetic way. He's certainly nothing if not even-handed – when asked to create a parade for the anniversary of the French revolution in 1989, he doused the British contingent with water (because "everyone knows it always rains in England"), and asked Senegalese tribal dancers to interpret *Swan Lake*.

Goude's first ad was a TV spot for Lee Cooper jeans in 1982, which he tackled in typically irreverent style, creating a 10-minute mini opera

set to Stravinsky's *Rites of Spring*. He's also shot TV ads for Kodak, Azzedine Alaïa, Perrier, Cacharel and Chanel, to name just a few, putting Vanessa Paradis in a birdcage for the latter because he thought she looked like Tweety-Pie.

Galleries Lafayette

His most celebrated print campaigns have been for Galleries Lafayette, the leading Parisian department store he's worked with for more than 10 years. The company is no stranger to strong art directors – previous campaigns were directed by Jean Widmer (a student of Bauhaus teacher Johannes Itten) and Peter Knapp – but with access to "Mr Galleries Lafayette himself", Goude has been given considerable creative freedom. He's opted to shoot the ongoing adventures of "a comic book character, half

way between Herge's *Tintin* and a heroine of an early Pearl Buck novel".

And perhaps that's the point. With Goude you don't get reality, you get a slice of his singularly creative mind. As a child, he says, his father would try to teach him the difference between fact and fiction, while his mother would argue, "Let the kid dream". Then his father would say, "No, this is ridiculous. This child has to know what's right and wrong; what is fantasy and what is reality". And with that "my mother and I would start crying". Luckily, he never quite got the hang of it. *BJP*

Jean-Paul Goude is represented by Hasted Hunt Kraeutler.
www.hastedhunt.com

So Far So Goude (ISBN: 978-0-500-51240-1) and *The Goude Touch – A Ten Year Campaign for Galleries Lafayette* (ISBN: 978-0-500-51486-3) are both published by Thames & Hudson, priced £40.
www.thamesandhudson.com