



Bloom: A Story of Fashion Designer Elsa Schiaparelli

Kyo Maclear , Julie Morstad (Illustrations)

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A dazzling picture book biography of one of the world's most influential designers, Elsa Schiaparelli.

Elsa dared to be different, and her story will not only dazzle, it will inspire the artist and fashionista in everyone who reads it.

By the 1930s Elsa Schiaparelli had captivated the fashion world in Paris, but before that, she was a little girl in Rome who didn't feel pretty at all. *Bloom: A Story of Fashion Designer Elsa Schiaparelli* is the enchanting story for young readers of how a young girl used her imagination and emerged from plain to extraordinary.

As a young girl in Rome, Elsa Schiaparelli (1890–1973) felt “brutta” (ugly) and searched all around her for beauty. Seeing the colors of Rome's flower market one day, young Elsa tried to plant seeds in her ears and nose, hoping to blossom like a flower. All she got was sick, but from that moment, she discovered her own wild imagination.

In the 1920 and '30s, influenced by her friends in the surrealist art movement, Schiaparelli created a vast collection of unique fashion designs—hats shaped like shoes, a dress adorned with lobsters, gloves with fingernails, a dress with drawers and so many more. She mixed her own bold colors and invented her own signature shades, including shocking pink.

Bloom: A Story of Fashion Designer Elsa Schiaparelli is a stunning and sophisticated picture book biography that follows Schiaparelli's life from birth and childhood to height of success.

Kyo Maclear and Julie Morstad (creators of *Julia, Child*) have gorgeously interpreted Schiaparelli's life. Maclear tells a lyrical story with moments both poignant and humorous and Morstad's elegant imagery saturates the pages with Schiaparelli-inspired shapes and colors.

Informative backmatter and suggested further reading included.

Bloom: A Story of Fashion Designer Elsa Schiaparelli Details

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From Reader Review Bloom: A Story of Fashion Designer Elsa Schiaparelli for online ebook

Lynn Davidson says

A very interesting story about a girl who grew up to be an inspirational, inventive, talented fashion designer.

Stephanie says

Full disclosure, I am a HUGE Kyo Maclear fan and love everything she writes. Bloom is no exception. Throw in the fact it is illustrated by the magnificent Julie Morstad and you have a five star picture book on your hands.

Bloom is the true story about avant guard fashion designer Elsa Schiaparelli; miles ahead of her time and not afraid to be bold, outrageous, and creative. Honestly, after reading the book I fell down a Google rabbit hole, needing to know more information about this incredibly courageous woman. The drive to learn more about a subject is the mark of a fantastic book. This story will have your students/children, wanting to learn more. Bloom provides an excellent portrayal of Elsa Schiaparelli without being overly wordy and overly detailed. It's perfect for the 6-10 year old audience. I would even share it with those younger and older, especially as an anchor text to any discussion about perseverance and courage. Kyo Maclear gets to the heart of who Schiaparelli was and her impact on the world of fashion and the women's movement. Bloom is an incredibly timely book which provides encouragement to those out there who may feel less than. It is a study in beauty and how we define beauty in ourselves and in what we view in the world. Schiaparelli continues to be an example for all young people who strive to add a little colour and light to the world, to those just waiting to Bloom.

Janet says

It took me years to recognize fashion as an art form; while I myself am not fashionable, I can now appreciate the creativity behind clothing design. Kyo Maclear's BLOOM would make a great gift for young readers as well as older fashionistas who want to be inspired by the story of a creator with a singular vision: Elsa Schiaparelli. <http://www.avidbookshop.com/book/9780...>

Michelle (FabBookReviews) says

***Bold beauty. Quiet beauty. Hidden beauty.
By the age of seven, I wonder: What makes something beautiful?***

Canadian author and artist duo Kyo Maclear and Julie Morstad have worked together previously- on the delightful and beautiful picture book *Julia, Child*- and return here in *glorious* , vibrant and poetic fashion with *Bloom: A Story of Fashion Designer Elsa Schiaparelli*. A biographical picture book about the life of the

illustrious, rule-breaking and rule-bending designer Elsa Schiaparelli, *Bloom* takes readers through major moments, breakthroughs, and legacies in the designer's life.

Bloom is told in the first-person narrative of Elsa, and opens to a scene in which a newborn Elsa looks up to frowning parents who, we are informed, had been hoping to have a boy. As we soon learn, Elsa's older sister Beatrice- apparently favoured by their mother- is recognized as the *bella* in the family, while Elsa is called *brutta*- ugly. This harsh judgment of ugliness by her own immediate family seems to remain a relatively constant cloud in much of Elsa's early (and perhaps later) life. It is through a failed experiment involving flower seeds, as well as the encouragement from an innovative and kind uncle, that 'a seed of wild imagination' and artistry is planted in Elsa- something that moves her and propels her life and life's work to be 'daring, different, and whole...[to] plant a new seed of beauty'. With Maclear's beautifully melodic, empathetic storytelling style leading the way, Morstad's incredible, meaningful illustrations follow to highlight just some of Elsa's significant moments: her stirring time with artists such as Picasso and Dahli; her Trompe l'oeil design breakthrough; the mixing and making of her signature shocking pink; and 'why not' approach to making fashion for women extravagant, unusual, bold, colourful, talked-about- and unforgettable.

Overall, *Bloom: A Story of Fashion Designer Elsa Schiaparelli* is a gorgeous work that balances biography, lyricism, and art in picture book format. For readers who adore biographical picture books, or simply love Kyo Maclear's and Julie Morstad's respective (or joint!) work, *Bloom* is a sensorial feast whether read quietly or shared aloud. Those both familiar and unfamiliar with Schiaparelli's life and continuing influence in fashion will likely find something- or many things!- to appreciate and savour about *Bloom*. At the back pages, *A Note from the Author and the Illustrator* mentions that 'it is difficult to express everything [Schiaparelli] was and did in such a short book'; Maclear and Morstad have added a concise yet rich catalog of the designer's contributions, as well as a list of *Sources and Further Reading* for those interested.

I received a copy of this title courtesy of Penguin Random House Canada/Tundra Books in exchange for an honest review. All opinions and comments are my own.

Jason says

Not being remotely into fashion, I'm not the right audience for this book at all. I tend to think of older children as getting into fashion, so this seems to be missing its audience to some degree. It's really pretty and well told, though.

Patricia Gmitrovic says

Fashion designer Elsa Schiaparelli grew up feeling ugly. She planted a new seed of beauty with her fashion designs. Beauty is not about conforming to certain standards. Elsa was imperfectly perfect.

Julie says

Where were these books when I was a kid? Again, born at the wrong time.

Heidi Burkhart says

I must give this picture book four stars because the illustration is so lush.

The opening scene shows two disappointed parents looking down on their baby daughter. Of course the idea was that they wanted a son. They already had a daughter so the idea of having a son isn't too shocking. Many people would like a boy and a girl, and it doesn't mean that girls aren't valued. My concern with the text was that it made females look downtrodden, and that Schiaparelli succeeded despite many odds. Keep in mind that she came from an aristocratic family who had made a number of intellectual contributions.

I don't think that we want girls to get the message that they can only succeed despite great odds against them. It sets a tone that isn't helpful for an elementary student.

Linda says

An interesting look at fashion designer Elsa Schiaparelli the creator of shocking pink. Her non-traditional designs hit Paris by storm. This story serves to inspire readers to follow their dreams and don't be detoured by the obstacles you may face.

Milky Mixer says

The queen of Shocking Pink! This is discussed in the book right after she wears a shoe for a hat. I really bought this for the illustrations but it's a great little biography of her life, work, and contemporaries.

Lian says

Superb in every way.

Marianne says

Beautifully made and intriguing.

Becky B says

A picture book biography of Italian fashion designer Elsa Schiaparelli who didn't feel loved or lovely as a child, and didn't have quick success as an adult, but eventually became a famous fashion designer with unconventional styles and colors.

Most readers will know Elsa Schiaparelli best for the colors she introduced to the world, like shocking pink and ice blue. Her story is a little sad, especially the way her parents treated her growing up. But eventually Elsa's story is that you shouldn't give up. She wasn't a "success" until her late 30s, an age that will seem quite old to the target audience. Some readers will be enthralled most by her brave and unique sense of style. A bittersweet but in the end hopeful picture book biography.

Beth says

Stunning and inspiring!

Lola says

This certainly is a gorgeously-illustrated picture book.

But like the author herself says at the end of it, it's very hard to tell someone's story in such a small amount of pages, especially someone who was an important figure in the fashion world.

Elsa Schiaparelli was someone to be admired. From a very young age, she realizes she thinks and behaves differently than others. I mean, who would ever think of planting seeds on their faces and inside their bodies to see flowers grow and make them beautiful?

That's... wow. Seeing that I hadn't heard of this fashion designer before, everything in this book was new to me. I appreciate the narrator mentioning that not everything Elsa did became a success, and that not everything was handed to her on a silver platter even if she had help from many different people.

I wasn't enchanted by this story per se, although I did find it interesting, because it feels more like a series of facts placed in order than an actual story.

Regardless, I would definitely recommend this to little aspiring fashion designers.

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