

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Prada captures Mod state of mind in eyewear project

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Image from Prada's Mod eyewear effort

By SARAH JONES

Italian fashion label Prada is portraying a freethinking mentality through a digital effort for its Mod eyewear collection.

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In a series of films, model Vanessa Moody is cast as the leader of a girl gang in which she and her posse traverse a landscape of repurposed factories and underground clubs. When watched as a unit, the films spell out a hidden message, giving viewers incentive to tune in for the entire set.

"The concept for this collection of films was to create the suspense and social media attraction during the launch of eyewear line," said Anna Szubrycht, founder and president of **Chic Being**, a Santa Monica, CA-based luxury brand consultancy.

"Consecutive movies tell the entire story from the life of a modern Prada customer in order to discover the hidden message," she said. "Splitting the story into parts and diversification of the content is very important in this strategy.

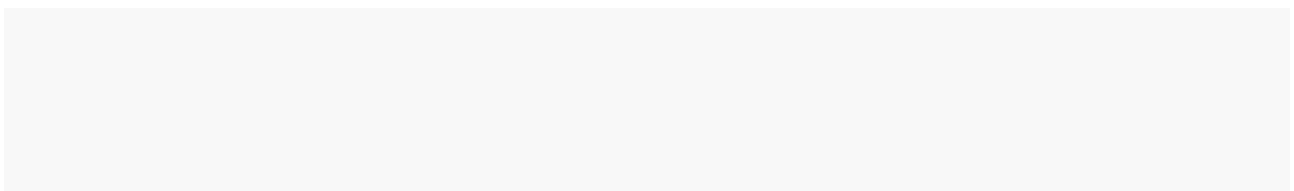
"Social media message lives only one day nowadays, sometimes even shorter. So the luxury brand has to give the reason to keep the interest of customers for a longer time."

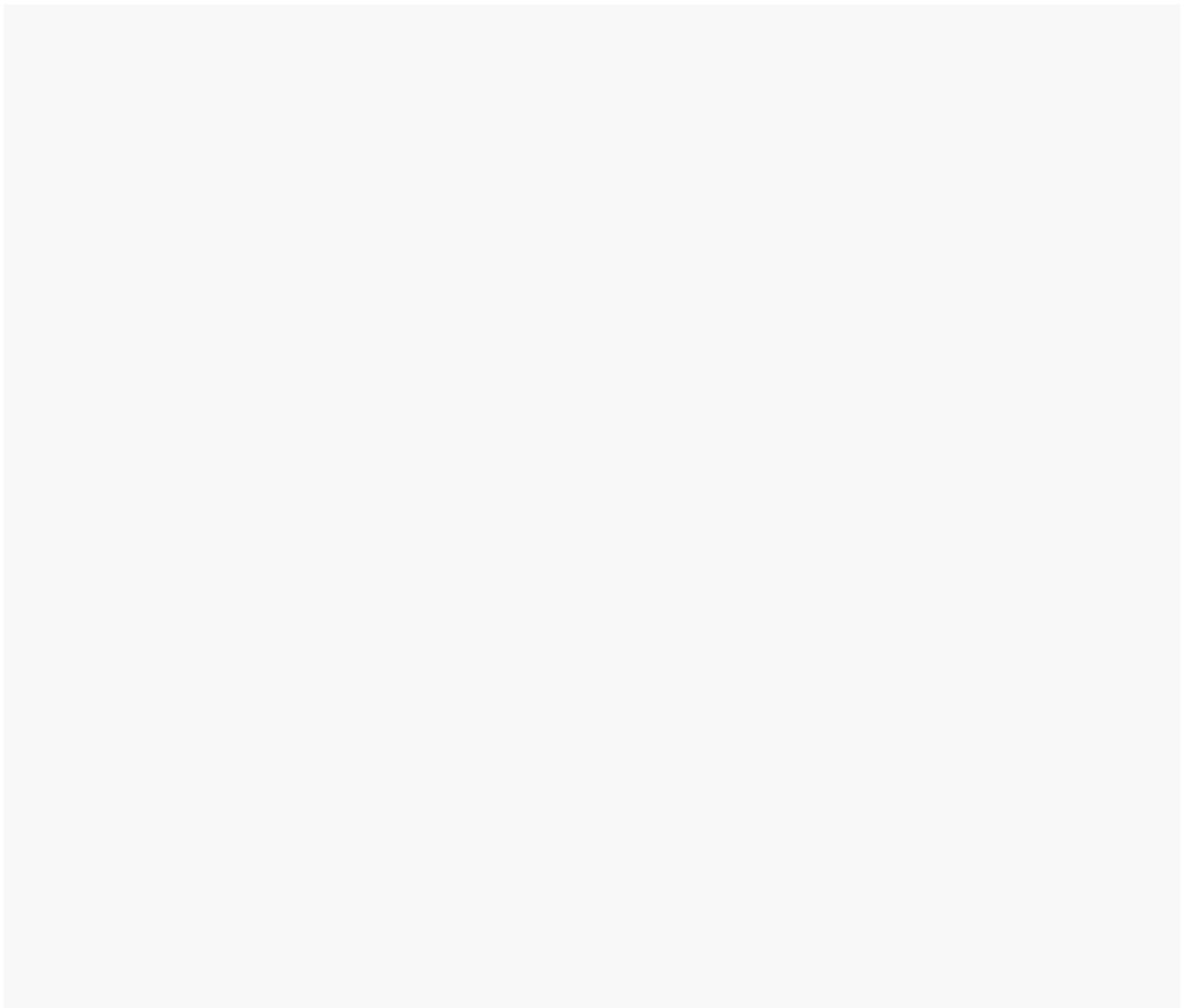
Ms. Szubrycht is not affiliated with Prada, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Prada was unable to comment directly.

Cracking the code

Prior to the launch of the project online, Prada teased the effort, splicing together footage from the different films and asking consumers if they could piece together the message.





Launching Today. Now You Can Unravel the Hidden Message in the Prada Mod film. Go to Prada.com
#pradaeyewear #pradamod

A video posted by Prada (@prada) on Jun 28, 2016 at 10:57am PDT

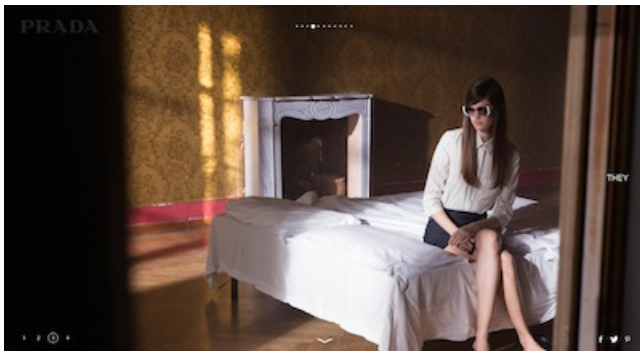
On a dedicated page of Prada's Web site, consumers can explore the videos in order, scrolling down to view the films paired with corresponding stills from the filming.

Prada was inspired by a quote from Alan Sillitoe, which reads, "Whatever people say I am, that is what I am not." The brand's interpretation, "Whatever they think I am, that is what I am not," is spread among eight scenes, with each containing one or more words from the statement.

Each film has a distinct feel and mood, established with lighting, setting and soundtrack.

Scene one sees Ms. Moody sans-sunglasses, staring up at a pale blue sky. After slipping on a pair of white frames, she and her group begin to walk down a sidewalk, eventually passing a graffitied "whatever."

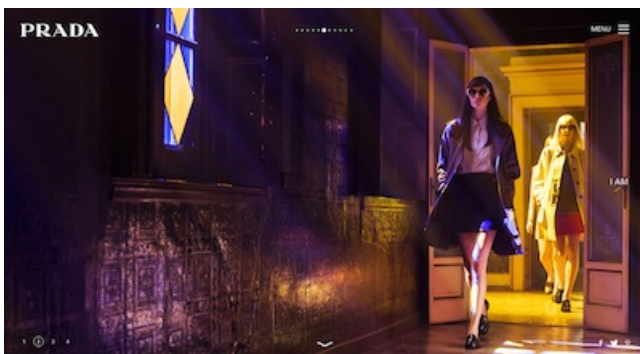
In scene two, Ms. Moody is indoors. Seated on a bed, she spells out "they" in red lipstick before lying down.



Screenshot of Prada's Mod eyewear project

Habanera from George Bizet's "Carmen" juxtaposed with the sound of an electric guitar sets the stage for scene three, in which Ms. Moody traipses across a wet floor in almost darkness. She nearly walks across a poster bearing the word "think."

Other messages are shared via a typed text message at a club, the lit sign on an elevator call button or in the variations in paint on the side of a building.



Screenshot of Prada's Mod eyewear project

In the final scene, Ms. Moody pauses before heading through a door, the panes of which bear the message "I am not."

Prada's Mod eyewear debuted on the catwalk during its spring/summer 2016 fashion show. Produced under a licensing deal with Luxottica, the Mod collection includes two sunglass styles and two eyeglass designs.

"Through the hidden message, Prada communicates that the new eyewear line is more than just a fashion statement," Ms. Szubrycht said. "It's a contemporary interpretation of this bold ideology from the late 50s focused on fashion, music and free spirit lifestyle.

"The message was inspired by Adam Sillitoe's literary mantra 'Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not' but it was also used as the debut studio album of the English rock band Arctic Monkeys," she said.

Fashion on film

Prada frequently flexes its filmmaking muscle to create high-concept efforts for its apparel and accessories.

Italian apparel and accessories house Prada explored the many sides of a woman's nature in its spring/summer 2015 advertising campaign videos.

Set against varied backgrounds and featuring a cast of three models, the campaign is split into three separate narratives, depicting confidence and control while at the same time a spirit of nonchalance. This varied approach will help Prada appeal to a wider range of women, as they identify with traits in one or more of the characters portrayed ([see story](#)).

Prada is not the only label to harness the power of film to convey something larger than fashion.

Fashion should not be treated as a series of products, but as the presentation of a lifestyle, according to an Armani executive.

At the Cond Nast International Luxury Conference 2016 Armani global communications director Claudio Cal spoke of how the brand has leveraged the power of cinema to elevate its brand beyond products. Fashion and cinema have had a dialogic relationship for decades, and by leveraging cinematic tools, fashion brands can give themselves and

their products a fuller lifestyle ([see story](#)).

"Thanks to connotations with modern values Prada builds awareness and shares an interesting message among a younger target audience: social media savvy music fans," Ms. Szubrycht said. "In the same time, it stays confidently feminine with a usual Prada twist in elegance and provocative style."

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