

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Mulberry imagines dysfunctional family reunion with youthful cast

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Image from Mulberry's holiday campaign

By SARAH JONES

British fashion label Mulberry is weaving a story of generosity and family togetherness through a holiday film that explores the inner child.

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"It's What's Inside That Counts" tells the tale of one family's quintessentially English reunion at Christmas, with the cast of adult characters portrayed by an ensemble cast of children for lighthearted effect. With a production staff that rivals Hollywood films, Mulberry is putting the focus on entertainment and content this season.

"The holidays is a time when everyone reverts back to their inner child," said Romey Louangvilay, chief curator and director of digital marketing at [Curate Directive](#), New York.

"Often, people think about the happy moments in life when they didn't have to worry about work, relationships, and instead, just enjoy in the holiday season," he said. "I believe Mulberry wanted to use children actors to demonstrate that memory.

"Another aspect that I think is smart is that Mulberry had the children discuss more adult conversations, drawing a parallel to what adults go through right before the holiday season."

Mr. Louangvilay is not affiliated with [Mulberry](#), but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Mulberry](#) was reached for comment.

Homecoming

Part one of Mulberry's film debuted on its Web site on Nov. 15. Prior to its release, the brand released a trailer that presents it as if it were a feature length movie.

For this effort, Mulberry called in professional filmmakers, including writer Hugo Guinness of "The Grand Budapest Hotel," director Albert Moya of "American Autumn" and director of photography Yorick Le Saux of "I am Love."

At the start, the film catches a group walking up a driveway on Christmas Eve, as an off screen voice instructs them to shut the door. The source of this remark is Antonia, the matriarch of the family, played by a girl wearing red lipstick,

a French twist and conservative attire.

Speaking to her children, Antonia says that her rheumatism has prevented her from organizing too much of a celebration, with her statement proven to be an understatement as she flicks a switch to illuminate a series of holiday lights.



The cast of Mulberry's holiday film

Mulberry's film features four children Camilla, Rose, Jane and Charles. After Antonia inquires after Jane, who has not arrived with the rest of the siblings, Camilla says that her sister is picking up her new boyfriend.

Rose decides she is going to change, and Camilla heads upstairs with her. Rose's pink handbag falls as they ascend, and Camilla remarks how pretty it is as a self-help book about men falls out.

The film cuts to Jane and boyfriend Tommy in the car, as Jane worries about her typically disapproving mother and he consoles her and tells her about his ways of charming mothers.

Much as a trailer, the film cuts between scenes quickly, showing Rose taunting her mother's favorite Charles as he considers an ornament's placement for too long or Antonia coldly telling Tommy which room is his.

The consistently single Camilla is seen in the bathroom leaving a voicemail for an unknown romantic partner. Rose pauses to listen to her discontent through the door and decides to do something to cheer her sister up.

Rose is seen wrapping her pink bag poorly in a similarly hued paper, saying to herself, "It's what's inside that counts."

Meanwhile, the recently divorced Charles confides in Jane that he got married last month, prompting Jane to ask if he will tell "her."

Mulberry Christmas - It's What's Inside That Counts: Part I

Social media content continues the theme, with videos showing other individuals haphazardly taping paper around an item from the brand's gift collection, proving the point that the contents are more important than the wrapping

"As the video shows us, it's what's inside that counts," Mr. Louangvilay said. "I'm not referring to the handbag that's wrapped by one of the kids in the film, but the fact that the kids all discuss adult conversations.

"They talk about relationships, discipline, and helping setup for Christmas, and while some conversations are tough, we as viewers see that the kids are coming from a good place," he said. "They only want the best for their holiday and this directly translates into the quality of Mulberry's handbag.

"From the stitching to the materials used in each handbag, Mulberry takes pride in their craftsmanship as they should. The video emphasizes its the inside that counts, which is something, we as a society often ignore."

Irreverent initiatives

Mulberry is not afraid to be a bit quirky around the holidays.

Last year, the leather goods brand ushered in the holiday season with a humorous Christmas video.

The film begins romantically, with a man gifting a woman a Mulberry handbag, but grows increasingly bizarre as the video goes on. Humorous and self-deprecating videos will appeal to marketing-savvy consumers, while the range of the brand's offers and services will re-install its seriousness and dedication ([see story](#)).

In 2014, Mulberry inspired competitive gifting with its holiday campaign, #WinChristmas.

The campaign centered on a social video, which showed a young woman unwrapping presents from her various family members, who are trying to out-do each other. This film helped position Mulberry as the ideal gift destination, which may have spurred holiday sales ([see story](#)).

"I believe the video taps into many consumers' memory of what the holiday season is actual like," Mr. Louangvilay

said. "From the planning to checking in on loved ones, it touches on your memory, which is a good thing.

"I would have shown the handbag more prominently in the video, however, I do think the fact that the overall message touches on people's memory will help inspire people to either buy the bag for themselves or another loved one."

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