

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Prada character pulled after accusations of racism

December 14, 2018



Prada came under fire for its character. Image credit: Prada

By STAFF REPORTS

Italian fashion label Prada is responding to consumer complaints that a monkey character depicted in its holiday merchandise and marketing resembled blackface.

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For the holiday season, Prada worked with agency 2x4inc to develop a series of seven creature characters that are inspired by the brand's codes. After one of the figures received backlash on social media, Prada issued an apology and is removing it from circulation.

Character controversy

Per Prada's marketing, the Pradamalia characters were said to have been born in Prada Labs. The figures combine biological traits of animals with technical elements, weaving in house identifiers such as triangular hearts that resemble Prada's logo.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

Attention: #Pradamalia, the experimental species derived from #Prada codes, have escaped from Prada Labs. If you encounter one in the wild, please be kind. - Find Pradamalia Tricks, prints, accessories, and more at Prada stores and on Prada.com. Pradamalia, a collaboration with @2x4inc, are individual characters derived from classic #Prada codes. - Discover more via link in bio.

A post shared by Prada (@prada) on Nov 19, 2018 at 4:01am PST

Instagram post from Prada

Among the Pradamalia is Otto, a dark brown monkey figurine with large red lips. When Prada put out its marketing for the collection, consumers responded with accusations of racism, calling for Prada boycotts.

After backlash, Prada issued an apology on Twitter.

"Prada Group abhors racist imagery," the statement reads. "The Pradamalia are fantasy charms composed of elements of the Prada oeuvre. They are imaginary creatures not intended to have any reference to the real world and certainly not blackface.

"Prada Group never had the intention of offending anyone and we abhor all forms of racism and racist imagery. In this interest we will withdraw the characters in question from display and circulation."

[2/] #Prada Group never had the intention of offending anyone and we abhor all forms of racism and racist imagery. In this interest we will withdraw the characters in question from display and circulation.

PRADA (@Prada) December 14, 2018

Prada is not the first luxury brand to come under fire for the perceived use of blackface.

Outerwear label Moncler apologized after a cartoon penguin character used in its products and marketing offended consumers.

Malfi, which is featured as part of Moncler's collaboration with artistic duo FriendsWithYou, received criticism from consumers who felt its face too closely resembled that of blackface minstrel caricatures. Moncler has apologized to consumers for any "distress," but has not made any mention of changing its marketing or pulling products from stores ([see story](#)).

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