

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Christian Louboutin spotlights signature hue in social series

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Christian Louboutin's "The Most Beautiful Red" takes place on a train. Image credit: Christian Louboutin

By SARAH JONES

French footwear and accessories label Christian Louboutin is showing the lengths to which some will go to get their hands on its shoes and handbags in a series of vignettes.

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"The Most Beautiful Red" finds models onboard a crimson train, as they encounter scenarios ranging from interpersonal conflict to a crime scene. Showcasing the brand's sense of humor, the shorts infuse whimsy into the drama.

"Where some brands try to force a message to invoke some sort of statement, Christian Louboutin is a brand whose marketing team is doing something unique," said Cassie Schultz, digital strategy and partnerships manager at **Blue Moon Digital**, Denver, CO. "They're listening to their followers in earnest and responding in kind.

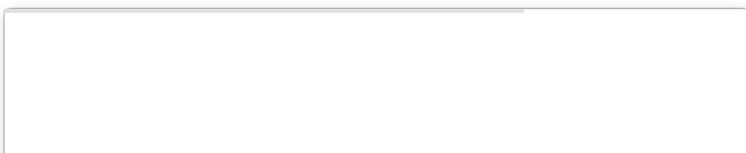
"One need only check out the comments on their Instagram page – the enthusiasm around the color red is pervasive," she said. "It's iconic – and to capitalize on an iconic association is just smart marketing."

Ms. Schultz is not affiliated with Christian Louboutin, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. **Christian Louboutin** was reached for comment.

Get onboard

The Most Beautiful Red follows the theme of Christian Louboutin's train-style set for its spring/summer 2020 presentation. The imagined old-school train is outfitted almost entirely in crimson, from the carpeting and seating to tablecloths and window treatments.

Christian Louboutin has published the series of clips as individual Instagram vignettes, as well as stringing the shorts together in a two-minute film.



[View this post on Instagram](#)

Keep your enemies close, but keep #Louboutin's Most Beautiful Red Marie Jane Bucket Bag closer.
#ChristianLouboutin

A post shared by Christian Louboutin (@louboutinworld) on S...

Instagram post from Christian Louboutin

At the start of the longer video, the brand warns viewers with text reading, "The following content may contain highly addictive accessories. Viewer discretion advised."

The first episode, titled "May I Have Your Seat," opens on a blonde woman in a trench coat, who emerges from a curtain into a train car. As she walks the aisle, she consults a ticket in her hand.

Reaching her seat, she stands in front of a brunette woman who is already seated there. The woman wearing the trench pointedly gestures to the seat assignment on her ticket, causing the other to angrily get up and leave.

Next, the series takes a dangerous turn in "Murder on the Loubhoutan Express." Stumbling upon a crime scene, the brunette from the first episode is tempted by the deceased's handbag and shoes.

Working quickly, she snatches the accessories from the victim's body and makes a run for it into another car.

Following up with the same character, the third episode finds her in a new seat. A ticket collector wearing red Louboutin sneakers asks for her ticket.

A Mary Poppins-style search ensues, as the woman pulls everything from a recorder and a giant pencil to a dog out of her bag to try to find her boarding pass, with no luck.

The protagonist changes her luck in the next scene. A game of cards with a fellow passenger goes in her favor, winning her a handbag and two tickets.

Chapter six takes place at the "Loubibar." The protagonist slides a wine glass towards the bartender.

Instead of getting a drink refill, the bartender gives the woman accessories.

Embedded Video: https://www.youtube.com/embed/vOU_nPDkuXw

Christian Louboutin's "The Most Beautiful Red"

"These vignettes marry Tarantino retro with Wes Andersen imagery – vintage monochrome and meticulously arranged shots coupled with a film noir intrigue," Ms. Schultz said. "This is a very intentional story told through a lens of contrast: murder, meet comedy.

"It's a beautifully executed concept. Even for an aspirational viewer, this Christian Louboutin campaign is self-aware without apology," she said. "Sound-tracked by adventurous 'wipeout' music while showcasing classic beauty, these

vignettes invoke the sophistication, allure and playfulness of Christian Louboutin wearers."

On Instagram, Christian Louboutin is linking to an edit of products in red, including spike-embellished sock sneakers, high heels, belt bags and beauty products.

Content campaigns

Christian Louboutin takes its affiliation with the color red seriously. It has even taken others to court over perceived stolen uses of red soles.

Last year, the label won a trademark case in the European Union surrounding his signature crimson soles.

In 2012, the brand took retailer Van Haren to court after the Dutch company sold designs that were similar to Christian Louboutin's. According to a report from Agence France-Presse, after a long legal battle, judges in Luxembourg ruled that Christian Louboutin's soles can be trademarked due to their specific color ([see story](#)).

Along with a frequent use of the color red, the brand's marketing typically features playful or outlandish scenes.

For instance, Christian Louboutin leaned into mod vibes in its fantastical spring/summer 2019 campaign as it targets more trend-centric consumers.

Emphasizing stylish experimentation, "Optical Illusion" stars burlesque performer Dita Von Teese and takes place in an eerie funhouse atmosphere. The non-narrative film puts strappy sandals, chunky heels and glamorous sneakers in the spotlight ([see story](#)).

For this latest effort, the brand is using serialized content to maintain a consistent engagement with followers.

"There's a distinct pattern to the posting strategy of this content," Ms. Schultz said. "Rather than parsing it out in an earmarked fashion – every Tuesday, for example – the Christian Louboutin amplification is staggered.

"A vignette is followed by a still in an almost-but-not-quite-teaser approach. Then another vignette, followed by several highlights and editorials showcasing the content," she said. "It's a strategy that plays out like real-life water cooler gossip. First you hear snippets, then suddenly it's everywhere.

"For content whose purpose is engagement, or the ever-elusive buzz, this campaign's execution successfully offers the lovely, shareable and red-soled 'tea' to its followers."