

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Miu Miu shares emotional showdown in thought-provoking short

September 9, 2021



French actor Oulaya Amamra stars in the 22nd "Women's Tales" film. Image credit: Miu Miu

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Prada's **Miu Miu** is examining power dynamics in its latest commission for "Women's Tales," the label's ongoing film series ruminating on modern femininity.

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Directed by Tunisian director Kaouther Ben Hania, "I and The Stupid Boy" is a cautionary but empowering film that follows a vibrant and assertive young woman. While the series primarily serves to elevate female directors and explore different themes around women's experiences, the wardrobe from Miu Miu is an integral part of the lead character's story arc and how she presents herself to others.

"Miu Miu has exposed the world, through a unique campaign series, by commissioning the most intelligent and innovative female director's lenses to examine vanity and femininity in the 21st century," said Rebecca Miller, founder/CEO of **ARTful Communication**, New York.

"The latest video in the Women's Tales series incorporates technology and intimacy, acerbic relationships, and self-worth: scrutinizing present-day vanity layered over masculinity and femininity," she said. "The Miu Miu brand embodies the power of paradoxes, revelations, abstract circumvents which net a seemingly equal balance between sensuality and scholastics and between couture savoir-faire and lively experimentalism.

"Unconventional, somewhat provocative, but never completely apparent, Miu Miu is portrayed by a strong identity and self-determining creativity."

Unexpected encounter

The 22nd "Women's Tales" film opens with the morning chirping of birds and the pop song "Lemon" by French-Lebanese recording artist Bachar Mar-Khalif. Running more than 13 minutes, the cinematic short takes place in an unnamed setting but blends French and North African influences.

The protagonist, portrayed by French actress Oulaya Amamra, pushes open the window curtains and begins texting. A quick glimpse at her phone screen reveals a flirtatious exchange with a young man and a montage follows of her dancing and getting dressed up for a date.

Next, the woman is seen taking a short cut through an abandoned building when she is approached by a young man riding a scooter, played by Sandor Funtek. He teases her about possibly having a date and compliments her outfit before swiping her smartphone.

As he scrolls through her phone, she demands it back. The two begin arguing, and it is revealed that the man is her former boyfriend.



The film by Kaouther Ben Hania was presented at the Venice Film Festival and explores the intersection of technology and intimacy. Image credit: Miu Miu

He then jealously accuses her of ignoring him and ditching him for a fluent English speaker. As the argument escalates, the man pauses and confronts the young woman about sending her new romantic interest nude photos of herself.

The man berates her for sending the photos to the other man, warning her that this could have consequences. His jealousy returns, however, and he asks the protagonist why she never sent him similar photos before threatening to send the photos to his own phone.

She yells back at him that the photos are none of his business before angrily slapping his face. As she begins walking away, he bitterly asks her if she is ashamed of herself.

With her back turned away from him, the woman pauses to pull a pocketknife from her handbag. He continues to approach her with her phone in his hand, threatening to send himself the private photos.

Emotional, she crouches next to his scooter and says she will slash his tires if he does not return the phone. The man calls her bluff, and she hurts her fingers when she tries to cut into the rubber.

In Miu Miu's "I and The Stupid Boy," a young woman confronts a combative ex

He kneels towards her and seemingly offers to help her only to deceive her and press her finger into the phone to unlock it.

The man, now identified as Kevin, haughtily walks away. Still wearing her feminine heels, she pursues him through the industrial building.

Finally, she follows him to a dimly lit warehouse. There is little sign of him and as she is hyperaware of the clacking of her heels, she removes them and continues searching for him.

The suspense and emotion build as the woman keeps wandering in the dark and calling out for Kevin. She admits defeat and begins crying that she will cancel her date all that matters is getting her phone back.

"Ok, I've cancelled your date. I've sent a message," Kevin answers. "Nobody ghosts me, Nora."

Enjoying his victory, Kevin calls for an elevator still holding onto his phone and Nora's. The camera zooms in on his head when suddenly Nora screams out and hits him with a metal pipe.

Nora quickly checks that Kevin is unconscious, but breathing, before deleting her photos from his phone. She begins to walk away but turns back with an idea.

She unlocks Kevin's phone the same way he unlocked hers before removing his belt and pants. Nora snaps a few photos, and he begins to stir from the brightness of the flash.



Nora and Kevin at the beginning of their encounter. Image credit: Miu Miu

Knowing that she has equally humiliated him, Nora demands an apology. When Kevin declines, she warns him that she has the power to send all his contacts the compromising photos of him.

He knocks the phone out of Nora's hands and the former couple begin tussling on the floor. In the chaos, Kevin accidentally sends his photo.

Kevin's mother calls him immediately and he begins panicking. The elevator finally arrives, and Nora quietly steps inside.

As the film fades to black, he screams out her name.

"The film's contradictions are prevalent by the choice of actors, locations, clothing and uncomfortable tension crafting a poignant topic," Ms. Miller said. "It cautions in one quick touch on a screen your private life is but for the world to see."

Storytelling for today's women

Since 2011, Miu Miu's "Women's Tales" has shared diverse and global perspectives on war, race and other social issues through creative and moving filmmaking.

The 21st commissioned film in the series, "Shangri-La," visits the past, when Americans were living through the Great Depression and interracial marriage was illegal in California. The film followed a couple sharing a pure but forbidden love in a time of racist policies ([see story](#)).

Another long-running series is "Inside Chanel," which debuted in 2012.

In the latest iteration of the series, the French fashion label shined a light on its most iconic fragrance. As a part of its extensive effort of educating its consumers, Chanel took audiences through the history and influence of the N 5 fragrance ([see story](#)).

However, while Chanel illustrates its brand history, Miu Miu differs by applying storytelling to sensitive subjects.

"Luxury brands could benefit by embracing the importance of breaking boundaries', taking collaborative risks that provide a discerning voice to disruptions in society," ARTful Communication's Ms. Miller said.

"Just as Miu Miu has done, taking a stance of domination giving elegance and sophistication a twisted meaning,' brands may unleash their ethos as it pertains to their choice of cultural influence," she said. "Success lies in long running narratives that speak to what their customers want from the brand, not what the brand wants from them.

"This series has the opportunity to build emotional attachment to Miu Miu as they continue to commission women to use their unbridled talents to story tell."