

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Chlo collaborates with Sarah's Bag to support women

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The new style mirrors the structure of the classic Woody tote bag but is entirely crocheted. Image credit: Chlo

By NORA HOWE

French fashion house **Chlo** has teamed with Lebanon-based fashion brand and social network Sarah's Bag, which aims to provide support and jobs to women after they are released from prison.

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Established in 2000 by Beirut native Sarah Beydoun, **Sarah's Bag** provides a livelihood for more than 200 underprivileged women through the creation of elevated handcrafted fashion pieces impacting those who make them and those who wear them. Chlo worked with the brand on the French house's Woody nano tote bag, which has been reinterpreted entirely in crochet.

Collaboration for good

Ms. Beydoun's love for cultivating crafts, bohemian spirit and outlook on fashion is what drew her to collaborating with Chlo, ultimately yielding a completely crocheted version of the Woody tote.

To promote the collaboration and special bag, a short film directed by Nadim Tabet brings audiences into the world of handbag crafting and the idea of fashion with a cause.

Sarah's Bag works with women coming out of prison

"The crochet is a Mediterranean craft that we are very familiar with in the region," Ms. Beydoun says in the short film. "For this collaboration, I wanted to move away from pure nostalgia and reinterpret the craft in a modern way."

In addition to pushing new creative boundaries for both brands, the collaboration also helped boost the morale of Sarah's Bag's artisans and expand their skillset, according to Ms. Beydoun.

The company's signature hand-beading and embroidery are done by female artisans, many of whom are prisoners, former prisoners or live in underprivileged communities in Lebanon.

Some use the income they earn to overturn wrongful convictions, while others may use their income to support their families while they are incarcerated. Once out of prison, Sarah's Bag encourages its artisans to train other women in their towns and villages, creating a network.



Reimagining the Wood nano tote bag. Image credit: Chlo

Chlo's Woody totes and handbags are among the house's most recognizable silhouettes, with prices ranging from \$590 to \$790. The crochet Wood nano tote, priced at \$690, is already sold out.

Leading with values

Since tapping Gabriela Hearst as its creative director in late 2020 ([see story](#)), it seems Chlo has issued a number of social and environmental initiatives. Ms. Hearst's approach to fashion and vision of a more responsible industry mirrors the values and sense of commitment of the brand.

Last year, Chlo unveiled the inspiration behind its runway show collaboration with Les Bisseuses, a network of individuals committed to the promotion of eco-local materials and women builders.

Les Bisseuses trains women refugees in ecological construction to help them integrate into society, and provides a way of introducing diversity into a male-dominated sector. To bring these efforts to light, the seating at Chlo's spring/summer 2022 show in Paris was constructed entirely by members of the collective ([see story](#)).