

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Prada explores fluidity of modern femininity with movie project

January 11, 2023



Actress Liv Corfixen enters an empty house in Nicolas Winding Refn's short film. Image credit: Prada

By MARYBETH CONNAUGHTON

Italian fashion brand Prada has released on its website the short film "Touch of Crude," directed by Nicolas Winding Refn.

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The film, which debuted last September as part of the brand's spring/summer 2023 runway presentation, explores the fluid nature of contemporary femininity. It is an extension of the "Domestic Voyeurism" theme of the womenswear show, to which Mr. Refn also contributed.

"Prada characters, Prada stories, Prada lives. The spring/summer 2023 Prada campaign situates the men's and women's collections by Miuccia Prada and Raf Simons within a continuum, ever-unfolding, enigmatic fragments of stories reflecting facets of humanity," said the brand in a statement on its website.

"Spring/summer 2023 season initiated a collaboration between Prada and film director Nicolas Winding Refn with "Touch of Crude," the film exploring the lives of women and the scope of modern femininity."

"Actors and models by their very nature encapsulate an otherness. The campaign plays off that multifaceted nature, where a plurality adds complexity. Alongside, crude contradicts as it implies simplicity, directness, and purity. Its touch is here in stark sets, like cinematic projections of realities, evocations of interiors, impressions of actuality, and traces of lives."

A new point of view

Mr. Refn is known for directing the "Pusher" trilogy as well as the 2011 feature "Drive," starring Ryan Gosling. In "Touch of Crude," he directs his wife Liv Corfixen, an actress and fellow filmmaker.

In one of the many roles she plays throughout the short, Ms. Corfixen first appears, clad in a **Prada** coat and sunglasses, at the threshold of her new house. She is soon met by a strange entity.

Eventually, she discovers a black box which, when opened, allows her to enter the homes of a number of female contemporaries. She moves in and out of their lives, sometimes adopting their perspective, other times watching them voyeuristically.

"In life, you are everything: sometimes you are good, sometimes you are bad," explained Miuccia Prada, founder and co-creative director of Prada, in a sit-down discussion with Mr. Refn and her co-creative director Raf Simons. Throughout that discussion, director and designers express admiration for each others' professions. The immersive experience the three created as part of Prada's spring/summer 2023 women's runway show was designed to form an intersection between the two genres, a chance for each to be mutually observant.

The three creatives discuss their inspirations.

Ms. Prada has long used sister label **Miu Miu**, which she founded in 1993, as a platform from which to champion female-centric cinema.

In 2012, the brand debuted the first of its "Women's Tales," an ongoing anthology of short films stewarded by female directors. The only stipulation the brand gives its creators is that characters' wardrobes be supplied by the brand.

Actress Elle Fanning, who starred in Mr. Refn's 2016 psychological horror film "Neon Demon," made her directorial debut in a Women's Tale called "Hello Apartment."

Natasha Lyonne appeared in "House Comes With a Bird," which dealt with issues of race, gender and class ([see story](#)).

"Touch of Crude" has made the rounds at a number of prestigious festivals including the Lyon Lumiere in France, as well as the Geneva International and Stockholm Film Festivals.

The film will return to Milan on Jan. 11 and 12 to be presented at Fondazione Prada, the brand's center for art and culture. It is also free to view on the brand's website.



Actor Vincent Cassel poses for Prada's latest campaign. Image credit: Prada

In Frame

Coinciding with the film's online release is a print campaign shot by British photographer and director David Sims, a longtime collaborator of Mr. Simons.'

Included in the campaign are French actor Vincent Cassel who appeared in the Academy Award-winning film "Black Swan" and British actress Letitia Wright, a member of Marvel's Cinematic Universe.

Joining them are American model and actress Hunter Schafer from the hit HBO television series "Euphoria," and South Korean singer and actor Jaehyun Jeong.

The look of this campaign is appropriately cinematic, taking cues from classic Hollywood movies and French new wave films. Mr. Cassel sits on the edge of a freestanding bathtub, dressed head to toe in black with a **Prada** tote at his feet.

In another shot, Ms. Wright rests her head in her hand next to one of the house's signature moon bags.

Like the rest of Prada's spring/summer 2023 campaign, these stills move back and forth between different perspectives.

"The campaign delivers the Prada sensibility in a futuristic form while remaining grounded in the present," said Rony Zeidan, founder and chief creative officer of **Ro New York**, New York. "It is luxury with an edge."

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