

Madame Nova Caine

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To whom it may concern,

My name is Nova Caine and I am a BIPOC Stripper Sex Worker with fourteen years of experience in the industry. I am also a disabled veteran, mother, and an International Pole Industry Association Board Member and have been advocating for the rights and fair treatment of Sex Workers my entire career. As an active and informed influencer, performer, and instructor in this community, I'd like to address growing concerns about the recent creative direction that the Pleasers brand has taken.

It came to my attention Saturday 11/14/2020, that your website listed a category for shoes labeled "Pole Fitness" as a section of a landing page where the only models featured were light-skinned, thin, and able-bodied. Considering that the growth of the Pleasers brand and the bulk of its continued aesthetic success in other markets is due to the popularization of the style by Strippers and other Sex Workers, it was especially disturbing to see the whorephobic underpinnings of #notastripper mentality mirrored in your recent white-washed marketing choices. Although I was the first to post about this on Instagram Saturday night, the swift and widespread community response to this information indicates that Sex Worker, BIPOC, and different body type/disability representation is important to both your club and studio clients alike.

I'd like to thank you for your immediate and thoughtful attention to this matter as it was brought to your attention via email and social media over the past couple of days. The fact that the name of the shoe line was changed and inquiring parties were responded to quickly, shows your commitment to a high standard for ethical business practices in a time where we are all learning more mindful ways to make our coin. After spending some time on the pleasershoes.com website, I discovered a wealth of pictures featuring much more diverse models with classic club-style attire on your #InstaShop tab. I am looking forward to seeing that kind of representation incorporated into your front-facing marketing over the coming months.

To clarify, the issue here is not the commonplace wearing of platform heels by thin, white, studio-based pole dancers but rather the continued attempts by businesses and individuals to distance themselves from the stigma and struggles of sex workers while imitating, exploiting, and profiting from their creativity and culture.

Your brand has a unique opportunity to amplify the successes and talent of the Strippers and Sex Workers that made Pleasers what it is today. I'd like you to consider how you can be more inclusive by incorporating Stripper Sex Workers into your hiring decisions and creative plans.

Take for example the group of Pole Dancing Strippers from Atlanta who performed in the “Get Your Booty to the Poll” PSA that encouraged citizens across the nation to get out and vote in the historic 2020 presidential election. I’d like to see THEM on the landing page of the website! What better time than now to highlight the many achievements of Sex Workers than when their livelihoods have been hit the hardest by this pandemic, rapidly worsening legislative oppression, and still managed to help build a historic moment for our country?

Thank you for taking the time to examine your role in these imperative culture problems in the pole dance industry. I am looking forward to hearing back from one of your representatives soon to discuss the company’s plans to work with relevant professional communities to resolve these issues.

Kind Regards,

Madame Novacaine