

Client: Stuart Weitzman

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Expect Most Actresses to Be in Nearly Seven-Inch Heels at the Oscars



Rihanna, Beyoncé, Anne Hathaway, Angelina Jolie, and Halle Berry are just a few famous ladies who have worn Stuart Weitzman's shoes on the red carpet. For the Oscars this Sunday, the shoe designer has given heels to Hollywood's top stylists, including Rachel Zoe and Kate Young. In 2002, Weitzman famously put Laura Elena Harring in a million-dollar pair of shoes for the Oscars that year. "Since that, you see shoe cams on most of the shows. The interviewer will usually mix in, 'Can we see your shoes?'" Weitzman told us over the phone from L.A. "I like to take a little credit for that. The million-dollar sandal called great attention to footwear and that has not let up since." Weitzman, who will create a special collection of the most popular styles worn by celebs on the Oscars red carpet to sell to normal people, revealed much more about what will be up with the shoes at the year's biggest red carpet on Sunday.

What can we expect to see in footwear at the Oscars on Sunday?

With these girls, the higher the heels — as long as they can walk — the better the shoe. We're using platforms more than ever this year to give them that height.

How high?

About six and a half inches is the highest heel they'll be offering this year. That's basically a four-and-a-half-inch pitch with a two-inch platform.

Does anyone ask for low heels?

Older actresses, very often. Helen Mirren has asked us — "That's a gorgeous shoe, I'm

not wearing it in that height, I'm not competing with these girls on the red carpet." They want to be a little more practical. But the young girls, no — if they can step in it they'll take it a half inch higher.

So is Hollywood done with strappy sandals?

We're doing more peep-toes, maybe even closed pumps, as opposed to everything being sandalized. Of course, the red satin sandal is always great with a dress. Swarovski-trimmed shoes are back in the limelight. We had a couple of years when we toned things down, but that's history.

With the recession, everyone took things down a notch on the red carpet. You think we're past that, then?

The clothing designers toned down their dresses. I think in general we all toned down what we were putting on feet — and this year the shackles have come off. We design what is beautiful, appropriate, without restrictions.

Have you heard anything about who's wearing what?

We often don't know what shoe to give these girls until Friday before the event because they may not have made up their mind about what gown they will wear. Our experience has taught us that we never know if they're going to wear what they've selected or not. And the dress decision doesn't happen weeks ago — it really doesn't. It's mood, I suppose — if it's pink that day, she'll wear pink; if it's black she'll, wear black.

Do you worry about the girls falling in their heels?

I can't remember who it was — Sandra Bullock or whoever — but she was saying. "Am I going to be able to walk in that heel?" And I said, "Whoever's escorting you, hang on tight." They're pretty used to it, unlike the average housewife who wants to try it once for a special event. These girls are athletes, they can do it.

What do you think of wearing two different colored shoes, like Helena Bonham Carter at the Globes this year?

I can't imagine why anyone would want to do that. I suppose if you absolutely want to make a spectacle of yourself, certainly that would be noticed, and you would probably be interviewed and photographed for it. So that wouldn't be a shoe person's dream, but that is one way to get attention — as a bare-breasted dress might as well. But it's not part of what we would design as appropriate.

What about flats?

Certainly flats and ballerina shoes look great on runways, but they don't have a place on red carpet. Red carpet is party time. But there will always be someone who will do that just to be different.

One would think all those feet would hurt in nearly seven-inch heels.

The red carpet is a 200-meter walk. Sure, they're on it for longer than the three minutes that it would take to walk 300 meters. But they're in their seats the rest of the evening.

So they don't bring shoes to secretly change into?

Often when they change out of their gowns for the after-parties, they change their shoes.