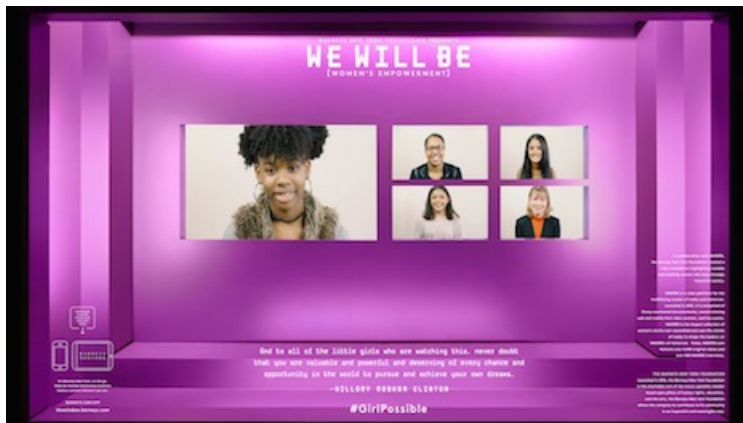


RETAIL

Barneys takes powerful stance on female equality, empowerment

February 8, 2017



Students from the High School of Fashion Industries for The Barneys New York Foundation's We Will Be

By JEN KING

Department store chain Barneys New York is calling on the likes of Hillary Rodham Clinton, Dame Helen Mirren and Gloria Steinem to celebrate female empowerment at a time when women's issues are a point of social and political contention.

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Barneys' "We Will Be" project saw the creation of custom video content that will be screened in the windows of the department store's Madison Avenue flagship. The content, up since Feb. 3, highlights strong women in society and was developed in partnership with The Barneys New York Foundation, women's media and leadership platform MAKERS and the High School of Fashion Industries in New York.

"Back in November, with such a negative and divisive tone in the world, we felt we needed to kick off the year with a message of inclusion, diversity and women's empowerment," said Daniella Vitale, CEO of Barneys New York. "With a group of us sitting around talking about how women, in general, had been treated so poorly during the [U.S. presidential] campaign, what could we do to change that narrative into something wonderful.

"With so many women's and equal rights being debated and questioned right now we wanted to celebrate women who have inspired, conjured and united people for decades," she said. "As the first female CEO in Barneys history I feel particularly energized, honored and inspired to try and lead by example.

"With a company dominated by women you just have to listen to them to know what is important."

#GirlPossible

We Will Be is displayed in Barneys' four window panes along Madison Avenue. Video content developed with the High School of Fashion Industries will be screened at the the window just north of Barneys' main entrance.

The short film entitled "I Will Be," features 34 young women from the High School of Fashion Industries, which provides career and academic training for students. In an inspiring message, the young women discuss their hopes, dreams and goals for the future to demonstrate that all girls can grow into future leaders and role models.

Barneys celebrates women's empowerment with We Will Be

I Will Be's message is strengthened further by The Barneys New York Foundation's work with MAKERS, established by AOL in 2012, through a second video exclusive to the retailer. The short film uses content from MAKERS' video library of women's narratives to share messages of female empowerment.

Messages from iconic women such as Madeleine Albright, Christiane Amanpour, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Lena Dunham, Jane Fonda, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Alicia Keys, Helen Mirren, Michelle Obama, Gloria Steinem and others are included. This aspect of the We Will Be initiative will be shown in Barneys' northernmost and southernmost windows on Madison Avenue.

Barneys' remaining Madison Avenue window will feature a custom video playing recognizable moments in history that show the actions of strong women.

Notable clips include Aretha Franklin performing at President Barack Obama's first inauguration, Billie Jean King in the "Battle of the Sexes" tennis match and this year's Women's March on Washington, among others.



Dame Helen Mirren is featured in MAKERS x The Barneys New York Foundation's We Will Be

The video content will also be shown in regional Barneys New York flagships across the country. Barneys' films can be viewed on its [YouTube channel](#) also.

For Barneys' Downtown flagship, the retailer continues its message with inspirational quotes from female fashion designers alongside recent collections. Featured designers include Lisa Perry, Nili Lotan, Isabel Marant and others.

We Will Be will extend through the end of the month to coincide with the start of New York Fashion Week.

Messages of unity

Many of Barneys' campaigns focus on inclusion, unification and equality, regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation.

For example, the department store chain showed its support for International Day of the Girl in 2016 by promoting the idea that anything is [#GirlPossible](#).

For the second year in a row, the retailer teamed up with The Girls' Lounge to create a conversation around the holiday declared by the United Nations to focus on the education, empowerment and equality of girls around the world. By joining this conversation, Barneys was able to share a common cause with consumers, which may increase the bond between store and shopper ([see story](#)).

In 2014, Barneys aligned itself with the fight for transgender equality with an ad campaign and outreach.

Barneys' "Brothers, Sisters, Sons and Daughters" campaign featured 17 transgender individuals with diverse backgrounds and stories that were told through a series of short films. With this campaign, Barneys showed a more personal, human side to its brand that allowed it to connect on a deeper level with consumers ([see story](#)).

"The movement within Barneys, to work tirelessly, for equal rights across all demographics is something that should be recognized and celebrated," Ms. Vitale said.

"[Barneys] has been particularly active in women's equality and and empowerment through many different initiatives and I have to thank the team, of many women, who have spearheaded all this.

"There is really no better and more important time than now take a stance on women's empowerment and equality."

1 thought on "Barneys takes powerful stance on female equality, empowerment"

1. **Sandra Garratt** says:

February 8, 2017 at 8:26 am

I am a Progressive Feminist and also a fashion professional and I must say that I find Barney's political window to be distasteful. Fashion & beauty & the arts as well as religious people should remain above the ugly crass vulgarity of common politics. This is not appropriate for store windows and it clearly is no way to promote & sell over priced clothes. Fashion stores & magazines do not have political credibility nor do their customers/subscribers want that sort of content.....why not just focus on selling great fashion and give people a break from all the raw politics we have suffered for the past 2 years. Do your job...which is not political commentating. I find this all rather exploitative on the part of Barney's, and I think it's wrong to involve minor aged female students in this effort.....let the students get display experience but why politicize it? The election is long over and we need to do more then complain and say no...what are your alternatives? Where are the ideas and passion? No does not stand for anything, it is just against....No is meaningless at this point. Also to use women who are not American citizens (the wonderful actress Helen Mirrin) as well as minors seems meaningless. I don't go to the UK to speak up about Brexit and I don't appreciate foreign nationals homing in on American politics. They have no say. As far as using Gloria Steinham who during the election primaries insulted younger women for their choice i.e. Bernie Sanders...well she lost me (a long time supporter) when she said they were chasing boys...how very insulting and how wrong to make a comment like that. As for Hillary Clinton, she lost, she is no longer relevant and she should show some grace & dignity by stepping off the stage and enjoying her happy marriage in the suburbs..

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