

RETAIL

Nordstrom pushes inclusivity, creativity with artist collaboration

October 1, 2021



In partnership with Nordstrom, Cristina Martinez designed a collection of apparel and home decor pieces based on three original artworks. Image credit: Nordstrom

By NORA HOWE

U.S. department store chain Nordstrom is celebrating self-expression and the convergence of art and style through a new partnership with contemporary Seattle-based artist Cristina Martinez.

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Ms. Martinez's work is founded in amplifying the stories of Black and Brown people, and the initial release from her new collection with Nordstrom has been launched in celebration of Latinx Heritage Month. The collection is inspired by three original artworks created by the artist, each of which encourages individuals to take care of themselves and bloom where they are rooted.

"Nordstrom has a role and responsibility to amplify the voices and works of artists like Cristina Martinez, and we are excited to collaborate with her to introduce the Nordstrom by Cristina Martinez collection," said Meliz Andiroglu, senior PR manager at Nordstrom, Seattle.

Nordstrom by Cristina

Ms. Martinez worked with the Nordstrom Made design team to imagine elements of her original artwork on a selection of limited-edition products across women's, men's, gender-inclusive, kids, baby and home.

Through a series of short films produced by Nordstrom, Ms. Martinez shares how her Mexican and Black heritage and the people, art and culture that surrounded her continue to inspire her work today.

"Seeing my mom, my aunts and my grandma as hard-working Mexican women that's the biggest take away I have from my culture," she says in one video. "The women that get things done, no matter what.

"Life is going to happen, and you're going to go through hard times," she continues. "But be resourceful and use that resourcefulness to your advantage."

Nordstrom also entered the artist's home to ask questions regarding her personal style and inspiration for the collaboration. The rapid-fire style of the Q&A video mirrored that of Vogue's famous "73 Questions" video series.

In this colorful and energetic clip, the artist shares her favorite piece of art, her favorite footwear and personal style. She also admitted she would like to see Beyonc wearing her designs.

Ms. Martinez found her passion for art while studying in fashion school

The Nordstrom by Cristina collection represents the importance of capturing one's beauty and resiliency and focusing on everyday successes.

The first artwork "No Rain, No Flower," is a reminder that when one must go through certain negative experiences in life, one can recognize when there is positivity.

With this piece, Ms. Martinez wants people to consider that without inevitable hardships, they would never know the good in life.

The second piece, "A Planted Seed, Grows," reminds people of the importance of taking care of oneself in order to grow in life, one must be rooted and watered.

The third piece, "Live to Blossom," focuses on life's process. The technique for creating this artwork required painting a series of flowers and purposely smashing them together to create a new image.

By using this technique, Ms. Martinez shows that one can experience something, good or bad, and come out of it differently a bloom cycle, so to speak.

The collection embodies the artist's background through color, texture, shape and design, and is available in the United States and Canada.



Nordstrom by Cristina includes children's clothing, available at 50 stores across North America and online. Image credit: Nordstrom

Pieces in the U.S. range from \$19-\$129, and in Canada from \$20-\$149. The partnership will continue with additional releases through next year.

Diversity goals

Nordstrom has stated it believes in the value diversity brings to the company and its communities, and acknowledges its role in contributing to the change necessary to address systemic racial inequity.

To further celebrate Latinx Heritage Month, Nordstrom is celebrating Latinx-owned, operated and designed brands including Viva La Bonita, Camila Mesar, Squeeze de Citron, Costa Brazil, Kids of Immigrants, Kid Dangerous, Holo, Alix NYC, Tata Harper, The Honest Company, Clare V. and more.

The recently launched haircare and skincare lines are aiming to address the unique beauty concerns of Latinx customers ([see story](#)).

The retailer also plans to deliver \$500 million in retail sales from brands owned by, operated by or designed by Black and/or Latinx individuals, and has set a goal to increase the representation of Black and Latinx populations in people manager roles by at least 50 percent by 2025.

As part of Nordstrom's corporate efforts, the company provided grants and funding to organizations that support the Latinx community including United We Dream, The Posse Foundation, Geeking Out Kids of Color and The Latino Student Fund.

In July, the retailer took a step toward product inclusivity by launching an exclusive hijab collection as more high-end retailers appeal to affluent Muslim consumers with modest items and culturally-tailored campaigns.

Nordstrom began working with Henna & Hijabs earlier this year to create a collection of hijabs in versatile prints, rich colors and fabrics ([see story](#)).

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