

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

Esté Lauder redefines beauty with Amanda Gorman

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Amanda Gorman is an American poet and activist, whose work focuses on issues of racial and gender equality. Image credit: Esté Lauder

By NORA HOWE

U.S. beauty brand Esté Lauder is exploring language and individuality in a new campaign starring global brand ambassador and poet Amanda Gorman.

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In a campaign series titled "A Word with Amanda Gorman," the young activist shares her personal definitions of four terms: change, possibility, confidence and beauty. Ms. Gorman is the brand's first global changemaker ([see story](#)), and will use her platform as a brand ambassador to launch Writing Change, an initiative to advance literacy as a pathway to equality, access and change.

New beauty standards

For the campaign, Esté Lauder produced four 15-second videos with the poet-activist, each focused on a different term.

The first, "Change," depicts Ms. Gorman in a beige ensemble sitting in a well-lit window. She defines change as not solely making a difference, but making a difference that matters.

"When you're making real change, you are making a mark that is healing and paying itself forward," she says in the film.

Ms. Gorman defines beauty as "being your fullest self without apology"

In another video, Ms. Gorman defines "possibility" as an opportunity.

"I like to be the girl in the room who is going to make the most of every chance that she's given," she says in the clip. "It doesn't mean it's not terrifying, or that I don't have a lot to learn it just means that I'm here for the opening."

As part of the film campaign, Esté Lauder sat down with Ms. Gorman for an interview, "3 Minutes with Amanda Gorman," which is available on the brand's [blog](#).

Since reciting her own poetry at President Joe Biden's inauguration early last year, Ms. Gorman has skyrocketed to fame, but shares that her family and friends keep her grounded despite her numerous accolades.

Ms. Gorman was first drawn to poetry as a way to empathize with and help people. Through the new Writing Change initiative with Este Lauder, she hopes to promote projects around the world that emphasize writing as a form of social change.

Ms. Gorman believes confidence is created from within not provided by others

When it comes to beauty, the young poet and activist sees products as tools for highlighting how she wants to move through and be seen by the world.

Inclusive beauty

In the wake of the 2020 Black Lives protests in the United States and globally, many luxury brands publicized their diversity efforts as more consumers expect transparency and accountability.

In June 2021, Este Lauder Companies shared a progress update with its employees on how the company is addressing systemic issues around race, identity and representation.

The group's recruitment and mentorship efforts include a multiyear program in collaboration with Howard University, a Historically Black College and University (HBCU). Este Lauder Cos. also joined the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC) and renewed its membership with the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC).

As of the third quarter of fiscal year 2021, the company has spent more than \$175 million on goods and services from diverse and small-owned suppliers ([see story](#)). While the update showed progress had been made, there is still a ways to go.

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