

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Hennessy turns spotlight on African creative leaders

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Ama Asantewa Diaka, second from the left, is a widely popular spoken word artist and designer in Ghana. Image credit: Hennessy

By NORA HOWE

French Cognac brand Hennessy is celebrating African creative entrepreneurs as part of its ongoing [#NeverStopNeverSettle](#) initiative and platform.

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In pursuit of supporting and championing Black excellence around the world, Hennessy hopes to encourage creativity and dreaming in the face of adversity. For its latest campaign, "All I Need," the brand shares seven stories of individuals from Africa who are paving their way through the worlds of music, art, fashion and entertainment.

All I Need

Based on the idea that success means pushing oneself beyond one's own limits, the "All I Need" campaign hones in on seven success stories individuals who, despite unwavering obstacles, have found ways to spark movements and ignite change in their communities and around the world.

At the age of 26, Ghanaian storyteller and visual artist Ama Asantewa Diaka entered the public eye after reading her poetry at Ehalakasa, the festival of the spoken word, music, and dance hosted by the Nubuke Foundation in Accra. Since then, she has become one of Ghana's most inspirational creative leaders.

"I am committed to community because I recognize that I am not self-made I did not become me by myself," she says in the video. "I didn't become me by not involving myself with the people around me."

The Cognac brand featured seven empowering stories for the new effort

Cameroonian radio announcer and TV correspondent Brice Albin Yamedzeu runs his own production company, organizing concerts and events, and serves as the director of programming for SweetFM in Douala.

From Nigeria, award-winning songwriter, composer and record producer Ayodele Basil, known professionally as Del B, has built a reputation based on a style that allows his collaborators to showcase their own talents.

Popular South African TV presenter Scoop Makhatini, born Siyabonga Ngwekazi, aims to bring the dynamic, and often hidden, world of street art in front of a broader audience.

Multi-award-winning South African rapper, songwriter, actress and poet Sho Madjozi, born Maya Christinah Xichavo Wegerif, is on the rise as one of Africa's biggest stars, known for her clever wordplay and focus on Tsonga culture. In 2019, she was named one of Forbes Africa's "30 Under 30."

Nigerian photographer and visual artist Thompson S. Ekong explores the various components of humanity through his work contrasting his local environment and the digital world.



2manysiblings hopes to inspire younger generations to think consciously about fashion and circularity. Image credit: Hennessy

Finally, having started their career as photographers, Kenyan sustainable fashion creators Papa Petit and Velma Rossa, known as 2manysiblings, have emerged as a voice of the younger generation. As the founders of Thrift Social, they are redefining how people look at, wear and consume fashion and circularity.

Hennessy launched the campaign via its social accounts, but audiences may further explore these stories at the dedicated "All I Need" [webpage](#).

Honoring the community

For years, Hennessy has been committed to lifting up its communities, providing economic and emotional support to encourage individuals to pursue their dreams.

In November 2020, the LVMH-owned brand revealed some of the beneficiaries of Unfinished Business, a program dedicated to providing immediate relief and long-term support to Black, Asian and Latinx small-business owners across the United States.

Black, Asian and Latinx business owners have had to overcome great obstacles in their paths to success and in the era of COVID-19, these individuals were fighting harder than ever against a range of inequalities that stood in their way. Through the Unfinished Business initiative, these businesses were given the opportunity to receive urgent funding and access to vital resources ([see story](#)).

Nearly one year later, in October 2021, Hennessy, in partnership with the American National Basketball Association (NBA), continued with this commitment to supporting small businesses.

Hennessy and the NBA unveiled a series of short films as part of its ongoing "Make Moves that Start Movements" effort, featuring influential individuals in the basketball community such as NBA All-Star Russell Westbrook, "Literally Balling" artist Victor Solomon and community activist Alex Taylor ([see story](#)).