

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

## YSL Beauty, musician Lil Nas X boost daring makeup in new marketing

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*Called Generation Nas, the initiative will see five different looks and their corresponding beauty products released in drops throughout 2023. Image credit: YSL Beauty*

By ZACH JAMES

France's **YSL Beauty** is looking to push boundaries with its newest series of releases.

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Global music star Lil Nas X will star in the new campaign, which seeks to showcase different sides of the fearless artist. Called Generation Nas, the initiative will see five different looks and their corresponding beauty products released in drops throughout 2023.

"It is very clever to use a staggered release of the different collections reflecting different sides of the stars personality for many reasons," said Sheri Koetting, founder, brand strategist and creative director at **MSLK**, New York.

"It helps sales and keeps the conversation exciting," she said. "Millennials don't want to be defined by just one side of their personality, they recognize that everyone can be many things simultaneously, which is what makes us all unique."

"This approach is perfectly aligned with their strategy 'There are infinite ways to be'."

Ms. Koetting is not affiliated with YSL Beauty, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

**Boldly iconic**

Having joined YSL Beauty's ambassador ranks in August 2022 ([see story](#)), Lil Nas X has starred in many advertisements for the label but had yet to release a signature look, before now.

The collaboration's first drop, named "The Icon," was released on June 7 and features a more naturalistic look. Referred to as the first chapter of the Generation Nas campaign by the label, The Icon shows a glowing Lil Nas X with nude lips and smoky eyes.

Going for an edgy, free-flowing look, in accordance with the star's brand, the makeup styling is daring and singularly him.

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A post shared by YSL Beauty Official (@yslbeauty)

"Since the beginning of last year, my partnership with YSL Beaut has been about pushing the beauty boundaries and embracing individuality," said Lil Nas X, in a statement.

"With this new campaign, we're exploring my many faces and personalities through five different makeup looks that gave me the chance to experiment with my makeup in a more artistic way," he said. "I hope we can inspire the future generation to do the same."

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A post shared by YSL Beauty Official (@yslbeauty)

The Icon gives Lil Nas X a barely-there look, featuring NU Bare Look Tint in 19, Touche clat in shade 7, to help amend the star's under-eye area, and Lash Clash mascara in Brown to provide a softer look for his lashes.

To handle the visually-engaging project, YSL Beauty tapped famed London-based photographer Campbell Andy. His work will be showcased in the five vignettes released alongside each new look.

YSL Beauty refers to the promotional videos as "hero movies," for Lil Nas X's iconic appearances and music presented in each vignette, but also due to the distinctive lighting and backgrounds that Mr. Andy is known for.

"Working with the YSL Beaut team was a beautiful, collaborative experience," Mr. Andy said.

"They really understood me as an artist and left enough space for creativity," he said. "The atmosphere on set truly felt like a family creating beautiful portraits."

The French beauty label has yet to announce when any further chapters in its Generation Nas journey will release. All chapters are said to be released before winter 2023.

#### Multifaceted appeal

YSL Beauty also detailed the second chapter of the collaboration, called "The Edge."

Inspired by Lil Nas X's iconically out-there and playful music festival appearances, The Edge will showcase an entirely different side of the iconoclast. Paying tribute to his constant reinvention, the styling is far more colorful, featuring rosy quartz and gold highlighters, Lash Clash black mascara, a bright-colored under-eye tint and a naturally glossy skin tint.

Following this more flamboyant look, YSL Beauty is inviting fans to guess where Generation Nas will go next but promises the music star will deliver completely unpredictable appearances.

"Collaborations like this help legacy luxury brands maintain relevancy with younger audiences," said Ms. Koetting.

"The announcement of this particular collaboration is timely during Pride month, as he has vocalized that he is a member of the LGBTQ community."

This campaign is a clear attempt to engage Gen Z audiences with the legacy beauty brand's bevy of existing products and any new items that will be launched as a part of the Lil Nas X partnership.

In preparation for the release of Generation Nas, the brand has opened a new section of its online storefront to showcase the musical megastar's favorite YSL Beauty goods. Included in the repurposed collection are products that produced looks from Lil Nas X's first appearance as a brand ambassador.

In another appeal to younger audiences, YSL Beauty enlisted British model Lila Moss to its ambassador ranks ([see story](#)).