

NORDSTROM

Styling: Black Expression, Rebellion and Joy Through Fashion

September 17, 2020



STYLING: BLACK EXPRESSION, REBELLION, AND JOY THROUGH FASHION

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020 - OCTOBER 29, 2020

CURATED BY SOULEO

PRESENTED BY LONG GALLERY HARLEM AND NORDSTROM

HAIRSTYLES BY:
RICKY THE JONES OF AFROLIPGLOSS ORIGINALS

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Stores are about so much more than selling products — they're about creating an experience for customers through our services, our people and our store design. Good design has the power to make people feel good, and we want people to feel their best when they are shopping with us.

We strive to understand who our customers are and work to create a design that responds to their needs. Of course, good store design starts with the building themselves where we focus on energy, light and an open flow. As we look to curate the inside, one area we often turn to for inspiration and connection is the world of art. Nordstrom owns a vast collection of art from emerging artists, which we've been cultivating since the 1960s. There are 40 to 140 works in each store depending on its size and available space. The Nordstrom collection includes regional, national and international artists, many of which were commissioned to create original pieces for Nordstrom.

It's about more than just hanging something beautiful on a wall, it's about creating an experience with a purpose. According to Joseph Polimeni, senior manager of visual merchandising at the Nordstrom NYC flagship, "Art and fashion are the perfect marriage and we want our store experience to support the communities they are designed to serve and inspire." That was the inspiration behind our one-of-a-kind collaboration with [Long Gallery Harlem](#) to create an art exhibition launching today at Nordstrom NYC called *Styling: Black Expression, Rebellion and Joy Through Fashion*. The exhibition, curated by Souleo, features the work of 15 contemporary Black artists and is a celebratory exploration of style within Black culture as a historical form of creative expression, rebellion against oppression and a source of joy as inspired by movements such as the Harlem Renaissance.

"Nordstrom had a vision for the exhibition, and they trusted Long Gallery Harlem to help execute it. It is a true partnership in that we have a shared interest in making art accessible to the public in a non-traditional space and in empowering artists by not only providing a space to showcase their creative talents but also creating economic opportunities for their practices to thrive as well," said Lewis Long, owner of Long Gallery Harlem.

Paintings, photography and wearable art are represented on each level of the store as customers travel up the store's main escalator. The main floor also features two specially commissioned durag paintings by Anthony Olubunmi Akinbola. In addition, a specially commissioned installation by Anthony hangs in the store's escalator atrium. The first floor also features an original digital installation by Dianne Smith on a large 13' x 20' LED video screen outside of Beauty Hall, as well as a pop-up shop where customers can purchase wearable art and prints featured in the show.

"I'm so excited for this exhibition and the opportunity to help amplify Black voices. The work of the artists is awe-inspiring and illustrates how style can be used to affirm and express oneself — giving new meaning behind making a 'fashion statement,'" said Chris Wanlass, vice president and general manager for our NYC stores. "We've long believed that we're all made better by the diversity that exists within our communities. Our values are centered on the notion of creating a place where every customer and employee is welcome, respected, appreciated and able to be themselves. This exhibition is just one of the ways we're working to bring a greater sense of diversity, inclusion and belonging to Nordstrom."

Other artists in the exhibition include Margaret Rose Vendryes, Afrolipgloss Originals by Ricky The Jones, Beau McCall, Elan Cadiz, Hollis King, EPPERSON, Gregory Gray, Stephen Tayo, Felicia Megan Gordon, Willie Cole, Yelaine Rodriguez, Busayo Olupona, and Ruben Natal San-Miguel. Select pieces from the exhibition are available for purchase through our online partner, [Artsy](#). In addition, a portion of art sale proceeds will benefit the Howard University Art Gallery and student programs. The exhibition will be available at Nordstrom NYC today through October 29.

