

Is Rihanna set for world domination with the launch of Fenty Skin?

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This image was taken from CHP - 23rd July 2020: Savage x Fenty

She's the Grammy winner turned Hollywood actress turned sportswear designer turned cosmetics entrepreneur who revolutionised the stale, pale face of the beauty industry with her hyper-inclusive brand of make-up. Now, Rihanna is out to do the same for skincare.

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News broke last week, when the singer shared a sneak-peek with her 85 million Instagram followers. "Elma try my best to be humble about this but @ fentyskin is coming July 31st," the Bajan star wrote, sharing a link for fans to sign up for early access on July 29.

The teaser hints at three products " a cream-to-foam cleanser, an essence and a gel moisturiser. Instagram also tells us that this has been a long time coming, with Rihanna posting that she has been "working on Fenty Skin for over two years". Though the news is no surprise to fans after the star confirmed the launch was imminent in a recent interview with British Vogue, adding: "Skincare, it's the truth. It either works, or it doesn't. There's nowhere to hide."

Rihanna modelling Savage x Fenty (Savage x Fenty)

It's also a strategic countermove in her head-to-head battle for the cosmetics crown. The brand's biggest rival, Kylie Cosmetics by Kylie Jenner, introduced Kylie Skin in May last year which instantly became one of the top selling skincare brands in the US.

So what's the secret to her success? Well for starters, it helps that she's Rihanna. But there's also no denying that the star is bang on the money as far as the cutting-edge agenda is concerned. Proclaiming it "the new culture of skincare", Fenty Skin looks set to be as inclusive as the make-up range which turned 40 shades of foundation (since expanded to 50) into the new industry standard. In response to a tweet about whether a skincare line for men was on the horizon, Rihanna tackled the antiquated notion of gendered skincare by replying: "Whoever told you skincare has a gender, LIED to you!" She has also cast rappers A\$AP Rocky and Lil Nas X in the line's campaign promo, which aired on Instagram over the weekend.

Fenty's latest drop (Fenty)

This empowering celebration of diversity is also at the heart of the star's other wildly successful side hustle Savage x Fenty, the lingerie label that has torn down barriers and reset the parameters for an entire industry. Just like Victoria's Secret, Savage x Fenty has unveiled its collections via televised fashion shows since its launch in 2018. But that's where the similarity ends.

In stark contrast to Victoria's Secret outdated size-zero, blonde-bombshell image, Rihanna's body-positive brand ushered in a new era of sexy which seeks to create a safe space for all shapes, sizes, races and genders. The cast for the debut show was as broad as the size range of the collection, which spans from 32A to 44DD and XS to XXXL. One of two pregnant models, Slick Woods, gave birth hours after stepping off the catwalk.

Last month, Rihanna revealed the brand's new summer campaign, which features fans cast from an Instagram contest. They include Hawaiian plus-size model Kortney Russell and Gerlind Anagho, better known by her social media persona @fitnesswithfemininity, who focuses on empowering women through exercise. This disruptive yet democratic approach is precisely what has caused profits to skyrocket just as Victoria's Secret sales took a nose-dive.

Fenty's shoe collection by Amina Muaddi (Fenty)

Oh, and if that wasn't enough, she also became the first black woman in charge of a major luxury fashion house in Paris when she launched her Fenty label 14 months ago with LVMH. Last week, her latest clothing capsule – a high-end homage to the Nineties – dropped with what's tipped to be the most-hyped shoe of 2020. The debut Fenty shoe collection by designer Amina Muaddi – whose signature flute-heel stilettos have become a viral Insta-celeb hit – spans lime-green thong mules and sky-high cage sandals.

Muaddi is also the latest in a line of grassroot creatives invited to share the spotlight with Rihanna and her deputy creative director Jahleel Weaver, including London Fashion Week's A Sai Ta of Asai, who collaborated on a 24-piece Fenty collection in December.

So, four years since her last album, has Rihanna stopped the music? As if. Her long-anticipated ninth studio album R9, first teased in 2018, is reportedly imminent. As Rihanna once observed, it's work, work, work, work, work.

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