

# Art Department

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## L'OFFICIEL

BEAUTY

### Meet Gloria Noto—Artist, Entrepreneur, Activist

The founder of beauty line NOTO Botanics wants us to touch, feel and  
smell together.

06.20.2019  
by Matthew Carey



Gloria Noto is an individual of many talents. Makeup artist, visual artist, poet. And with the launch of her eponymous beauty line in 2016—NOTO Botanics—an entrepreneur. We recently had the opportunity and pleasure to speak with Gloria in a conversation that covered a variety of topics from conceptions of beauty and identity, to politics, spirituality, and more. Gloria offered us insight into her creative mind and the process that led her to develop a beauty line dedicated to providing all natural, sustainable products in an all-inclusive, gender fluid manner. Gloria's own personal mission is to bring joy and beauty into this world. After our discussion, it's clear she is accomplishing this through her mindful approach to creativity and product development. Below are highlights from our conversation, edited for clarity and scope.

## Gloria Noto

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**You're a makeup artist, and yet you've launched your own beauty line. Can you tell us how you transitioned from makeup to producing your own product?**

I still do makeup. I continue to have an agent and still enjoy that work. But professionally, I've cut it down to about 20% of my time. The rest of my time is devoted to NOTO Botanics. When I started out as a makeup artist, doing makeup seemed so magical—editorials, being part of a team in a real way. But the industry shifted really quickly. Everything had to be so fast, like capitalism to the extreme. I was becoming more and more successful, but I was also not feeling fulfilled in what I was doing. The irony in that, right? It reminds me of a quote from Joseph Campbell about "reaching the top of the ladder and discovering that you're on the wrong wall." That's how I felt.

**MC: So how did you find yourself on the right wall, so to speak?**

GN: Around that time, maybe five years ago, natural beauty was coming more and more to the forefront. And clients would specifically request that I use organic or clean products. Yet they weren't always the best to use in terms of quality. On top of that, the branding aspect of wellness products was very specifically targeted at what felt like one demographic. Cut to me as a queer-identified individual looking at this, and I just saw all these gaps that I felt should be addressed.

**MC: How did you gain the expertise to develop these products?**

GN: Ingredients became a big thing for me. I had really bad skin throughout my 20s, and my doctor wanted to put me on some heavy-duty drugs. I was like, "f\*ck this!" That day I bought some rose cream and the next morning my skin inflammation went down considerably. It was crazy! Over time I kept mixing my own things, learning about ingredients, buying books about herbs. Herbs are very powerful, not just topically but emotionally and spiritually as well. I started to slowly align those things—the emotional, the physical and the spiritual—and seeing what ingredients resonated with that. Everything I make in the collection to this day still has some sort of spark of what I personally have been interested in, so it's very authentic to me.

**MC: It sounds like you're still very hands on.**

GN: Oh totally. I'm a Scorpio—I love control! But I've slowly had to transition out of being the one mixing everything. My business has grown because I've given pieces of it to other people to manage. I still create all the formulas and the ideas behind them and then give them to my team to execute. But now my primary focus is on growing the brand.

**MC: How do you find the focus to build a brand without getting sidetracked by your numerous creative endeavors?**

GN: It's really hard work. I think one thing that helps is loving the time that I spend alone. Also, practicing a mindfulness/meditation that sort of bleeds into your life so that while you're doing one thing you're in it. It doesn't necessarily mean you have to do one thing the entire time. When I'm painting, I'm painting for that hour. If I'm working on a new formula, I'm working on that new formula. But it's truly about what you don't do with your time that actually matters. It's the most powerful thing because that means you're not wasting your time.

**MC: What do you see for NOTO Botanics in the next 5 years?**

GN: Truly I would love to expand on the flagship store concept and creating sustainability within that space. We want to introduce a recycling and refill program to reduce waste. It's really about building a community-based experience where we can get offline and meet our customer face-to-face. We want to touch, feel and smell together. Additionally, we want to expand on our collaboration and charity work. I have too many ideas to stick to just making a product. I'm an artist, so I hope to use this brand as a platform for art.

**MC: Speaking of charity, one of your products—the Agender Oil—is a nonprofit product with 100% of its profits going toward rotating organizations that focus on LGBTQIA, environmental and civil causes. What was the genesis of the idea behind a nonprofit product?**

GN: I was checking myself directly after the 2016 election, and I simply said we're going to have a product with a very politically charged name and it is going to be a nonprofit product. Each month we will highlight a charity to celebrate and collaborate with as part of the business plan. I'm no longer worried about being too gay or too queer because initially, I was trying to have the brand be for everyone [for fear of alienating a large swath of the market]. But honestly, I don't care about that. Although I want to be for everyone, we don't have to be for everyone.

**MC: It sounds like brand activism is at the heart of NOTO Botanics.**

GN: Absolutely. It's activism through identity. What you wear, what you put on your body, who you present to the world can be taken in a way that actually shows where you stand in the world. I think that how you live your life is a political statement. That's absolutely what we're trying to do. In these times there is no way I could not build an activist brand. The world is too f\*cked up right now to not have a message that's bigger than "put this oil on your face." My mission statement in life is simple, to bring joy and beauty into this world. And to me, the meaning of beauty is actually being open. In order to project that belief, this brand has to be political—it has to be activist—because inclusivity itself is very political.

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## V MAGAZINE

Fashion Music Culture VTV Magazine VMAN SHOP

## GLORIA NOTO, THE MAKEUP ARTIST DEFYING TRADITIONAL BEAUTY STANDARDS

With her all-inclusive line NOTO Botanics, the makeup artist is breaking down societal norms.

January 16, 2018

TEXT: DANIELLE COMBS

It's undeniable that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but for renowned makeup-artist Gloria Noto, beauty goes far beyond than just appearances. As a leading makeup artist for over 11 years, Noto has been on a mission to defy archaic beauty standards and instead usher in a new era of self-expression, starting with her eponymous line NOTO Botanics. Packed with natural and organic ingredients sourced from nature, the line — multi-use, minimal and fluid in gender— spreads a message to embrace your own individuality. In an interview with V, Noto sits down to discuss how she founded her line, why makeup is empowering, and the ways we can start to witness real change amongst the beauty industry.

### What drew you to become a makeup artist?

When I was a child, I would sit and watch my older sister and my mother decorate themselves. I am a first generation American—my mother is from Sicily. The Italian culture is very adorned. The hair, the makeup, the clothing, the attitude is always full on. I didn't realize I wanted to do this right away. I knew that I loved fashion because as a 10 year old, I would race home to watch Fashion TV and the *Twilight* Zone. I ate up magazines. I remembered learning about sex at about 12 from *Seventeen* Magazine and how to dress from Smashing Pumpkin music videos. I went to art school to become a conceptual furniture designer. As time grew [while] in art school, I knew I didn't want to [pursue] being a fine artist as my career path.

While I was working at a thrift store sitting up at the register, someone dropped off these Kevin Aucion books. I opened them up and my world changed. I had no idea that I could do makeup as a job in that way. Back in the '90's and early 2000's, being a makeup artist generally meant you worked at a makeup counter—which wasn't so bad either—but I didn't realize that I could be part of a shoot in that sense or part of a collaborative effort in terms of creating fantasy and fashion in that way. Those books made me quit art school and dive head first into whatever steps I needed to take to be on set.

### What do you find to be empowering about makeup?

I find the ability to be able to alter is powerful, be it in food, clothing, information and makeup. If you have the ability to turn something into what you believe in, or feel truth to, that is power. It's always about finding your truth, and if today your truth is painting oversized red lips, bleaching out your eyebrows, and painting a black sumi brush stroke over your eyelids, then do it. If tomorrow's truth is tinted moisturizer, lip conditioner, and eyebrow gel, then amazing. The power lies in the ability to choose because it's what feels right for you.

### Through your own personal experiences has makeup used as a medium allowed you to fully express your true identity, and how?

It definitely has. I used to be painfully goth and punk as a teenager, and when I realized that I could use makeup as a form of identity, I went nuts. I painted masks, sunken in eye contour, rainbow colored lips, pigments splattered over my entire face and so on. Then as I got older I wanted to see my face, have thicker eyebrows, and be minimal. Makeup helped me create that clean line, seamless look. When I want to dress in drag and have a mustache for the night, I can use eyeliner to give the effects I seek out. If I want my girlfriend to pay attention to my lips on our date, I can paint them crimson, forcing her to notice every word that leaves my lips. I can be whatever I am feeling on the inside on the outside. As I've said, it's a form of communication without saying a word.

### The use of makeup and how beauty is perceived is still a challenge many still face today in society. In your opinion, what are ways we can combat this issue? How can we break down archaic standards?

I think ways of combating this issue of judgment and fear is by first opening up the mind. The change has to start from within, as we all know. We as a collective need to remember that society is a tribe. We are together in this, your neighbor is your family, and that stranger down the street is your friend. There is no reason to judge so harshly or to ridicule as a projection of personal fear. First start there and open up to change and embrace what is different. Next, I think that the more displays there are of bravery in self-identity that will help to shift culture to understand and feel more comfortable. Consider gay rights. If all of the brave humans who stood up for they [believed in] never spoke out, our society would never develop and become understanding to the needs of equality and respect. In a way, it's similar that the more we are open about who we are, the more we can change how we are seen.

### Describe how you started your own line NOTO Botanics and what it means to share your take on beauty with the world.

It started—to be totally honest—when I felt incredibly lost. I wasn't sure about anything in my life at the time it seemed. My sister was diagnosed with Stage IV cancer and I didn't feel that my work was making any helpful change in the world—I felt emotionally depleted and confused. So I took off to Thailand for a month and I went to learn Muay Thai where I got my mind off of everything that was part of my normal world. There I got deeper in meditation and quietness. The one thing in my life that I knew I wanted to do was make change and make it beautiful. The one thing in my life that I knew I loved was the Earth and how magical it is in its ability to take care of all of the living creatures on it.

For a while, I had been making my own products to use on myself. I was making scents with oils and learning about herbalism. I had always thought I wanted to make my own line but felt that the last thing the world needed was another cosmetic brand. But when I really thought about it, I knew there was something much bigger that I wanted to do with a line if I should make one. I wanted to expand on the ideas of what wellness was normally considered to look like, share the imagery and the stories behind those who didn't fit into the cookie-cutter looks of wellness brands, and also push the point of the importance of knowing that what you use on your skin holds value to not only your health but the ripple effect that consumerism has on the globe. I had a lot I wanted to share and felt that this was not only the perfect platform but also something I felt incredibly passionate and educated in. After all, I had been in the beauty industry for a decade at that point.

### What are some of the most essential products from your line? And what tips would you offer to those trying it out for the first time?

The beauty of my line is that everything is multi-use. So you can use one product for a million things. So I think that they are all essential in the sense that you get to choose what you like best, and use it however it works for you. The tips I would suggest are to not be scared to play and to use the product not only as an external benefit but an internal one too. Each product has a specific scent that is meant to relax, ground, and bring up all of the good feels from inside. Use these products as that one time of the day you give yourself to love yourself.

### Your line incorporates a plethora of multi-use products that are beneficial for all skin types and are unisex. When creating your line, was your plan to create an all-inclusive line?

Indeed, my goal was to show that beauty has no gender, that minimalism is not only sexy but helpful to the environment, and to create branding that shows the diversity of gender, sexual, and personal identity.

### Can you share what the next phase for NOTO Botanics will be?

I want to do more collaborative projects and I want to be known as a brand that works with artists to create its culture. Similar to how Helmut Lang pioneered that movement, I would love to be a beauty line that does that as well. I also hope to bring in more video and more abstract ways of showing product. I also plan on working with more charities and fundraising. So far we have raised over 15k for organizations like Planned Parenthood, LGBTQ Center of LA, and AKASA, to name a few. I want NOTO to be a brand that is not only focused on looking good, but also doing good.

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*Out*

## How Gloria Noto Created Her Queer Beauty Brand



Like most cool queer people, Gloria Noto was a goth in high school. "I would paint masks on my face and make myself look sick or like I had done a bunch of drugs," she explains, laughing. "I would just look messed up."

Makeup was the perfect conduit for Noto's obsession with punk art and music, as well as a revolt against the heightened glamour of the Sicilian women in her family. The beauty she was drawn to didn't fall in line with the way she was taught women were supposed to look. She learned that being a woman was "always having to edit yourself, to make yourself look more presentable."

But even Noto's goth rebellion started to feel oppressive eventually, so she pivoted to a more natural aesthetic. "I hit a point where I wasn't happy with how I looked without anything on—if I didn't have a bunch of shit on my face, I wouldn't feel pretty in my own skin," she says. So, she channeled her artistic impulses into painting other people's faces, learning a whole lot about the industry through trial and error.

In the early 2000s, Noto moved from Detroit to Los Angeles with \$500 to her name and started doing makeup wherever she could—working for exposure and practice until she could support herself as a freelance makeup artist. "It was an undeniable fact for me that I would make this happen," she says. "There was no question; there was no other option. I wasn't gonna let [anyone] tell me I couldn't do it."

During her years on set, Noto developed a passion for using clean and natural products, but she didn't see herself or her friends reflected in what would be considered wellness goods. She had already begun developing her own products to use on friends, on set, and on celebrities with whom she'd worked. The first was what would eventually become Noto Botanics' *Rooted Oil*, a smoky fragrance so compelling a friend once texted to see if Noto was at a party so she could come take a whiff. "It was actually hard for me to put it out there for others; it felt like it was my particular smell and [I] didn't want to share it...until I gave in."

The artist launched Noto Botanics in 2016, a wellness-centered beauty brand that puts the focus on natural products. The launch of the brand coincided with the cosmetic industry's incredible post-Instagram boom, and, in only three years, she's gone from making small batches of her products to a full operation, including consultants, a production space, manufacturers, suppliers, and retailers like Free People and Need Supply Co.

Whether you're living your glam goth fantasy or experimenting with blush for the first time, Noto sees the impulse to explore beauty as universal. "We all have the same need, and it's to feel good about ourselves—but what that looks like is incredibly unique and diverse," she says. "I want to create a product that fits the mold of making you feel good, but allows you to make it your own, whatever way you choose."

To read more, grab your own copy of *Out*'s March issue featuring *"The Mothers and Daughters of the Movement"* as the cover on Kindle, Nook and Zinio today, and on newsstands February 26. Preview more of the issue [here](#). Get a year's subscription [here](#).

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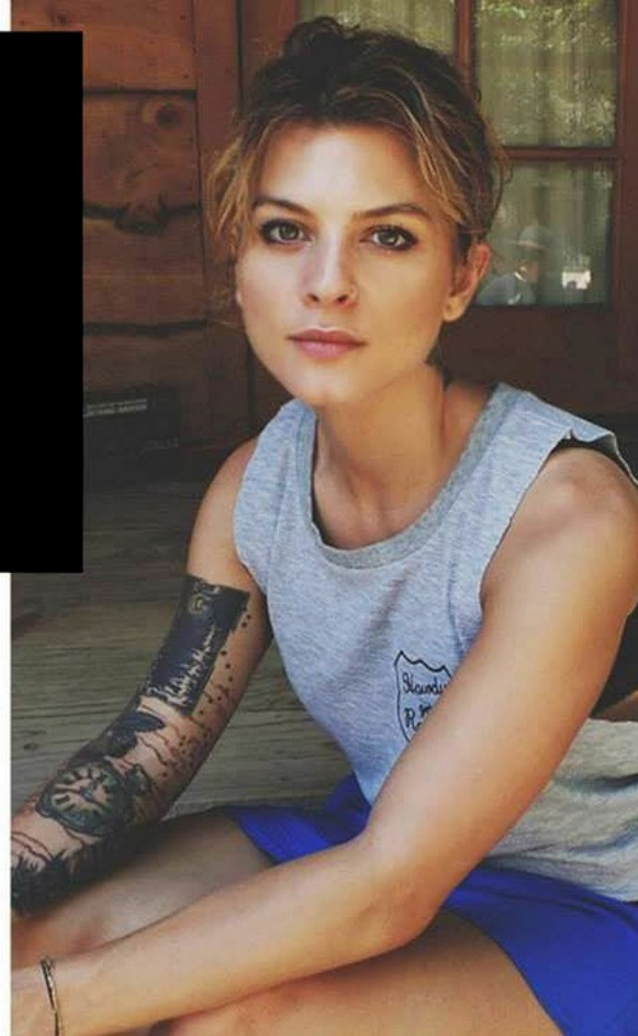
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## NOTO APOTHECARY

We caught up with Someday's babe, published Make-Up Artist, and all around badass, Gloria Noto, during our most recent photo shoot at Camp Williams. Smelling like earthy Palo Santo and Sandlewood goodness and mesmerizing us with the products she had on hand, we had to get the scoop on the amazing new project she is working on, and from the samples she gave us to test, we can't wait for you to get your hands on it and test it yourselves.



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...pushed me to ask myself what I wanted out of my life, what makes me happy and what matters most.

"It all started years ago with 'Rooted'. I had been mixing my own scent and would often be asked what I was wearing when I walked into the room. People wanted to know how they could get one for themselves, so slowly I started making this delicious unisex scent for friends as gifts. This then sparked a full desire to know where my cosmetic ingredients were coming from, and to be more connected to my work as a makeup artist and artist as a whole. I wanted beauty products that also acted as healing medicines in addition to making you beautiful on the outside. Also, I wanted products that had multi-uses to them in order to help simplify my life. All these interests, curiosities, and slow teachings collided once I got news of my sisters declining health and a solo trip to Thailand pushed me to ask myself what I wanted out of my life, what makes me happy and what matters most. Out of this perfect storm - Noto Apothecary was born."



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**Multi-Benne** color stains are multi-use products for your eyes cheeks and lips - which also include healing oils to nourish your skin as it gives it a natural wash of color.

Just Use your clean fingertips and dap a color wherever you'd like a bit of life - add more to get a deeper tone.

**Hydra Highlight** - with this you can achieve the perfect dewy glow with its coconut oil natural shine and a bit of shimmer from mica - You can add this to your temples, cupid's bow, and eyelids for a beautiful shine. It has healing hydration that comes from raw cocoa butter and shea butter as well as caffeine crystals to help tighten and awaken your skin, therefore also acting as a gentle yet effective eye cream.

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**Psyche Serum** - This is basically liquid gold - Being infused with Rose Hips - Rose hipseed oil - Rose essential oil - Mustard seed oil - caffeine crystals - Wild Carrot oil - Blue Chamomile oil - Aragon oil - and Sea Buckthorn oil - these harmonize potentially together to create a beautiful hydrating glow that also protects premature aging - and a scent that calms and brightens your senses.

**Rooted** - Essential Oil Scent - (for body and hair)  
A smokey scent made with holy tree oils like Palo Santo - Cedar Wood - Sandalwood - Frankincense - Black Pepper oils - this is perfect for keeping you smelling amazing and hydrating the ends of your hair



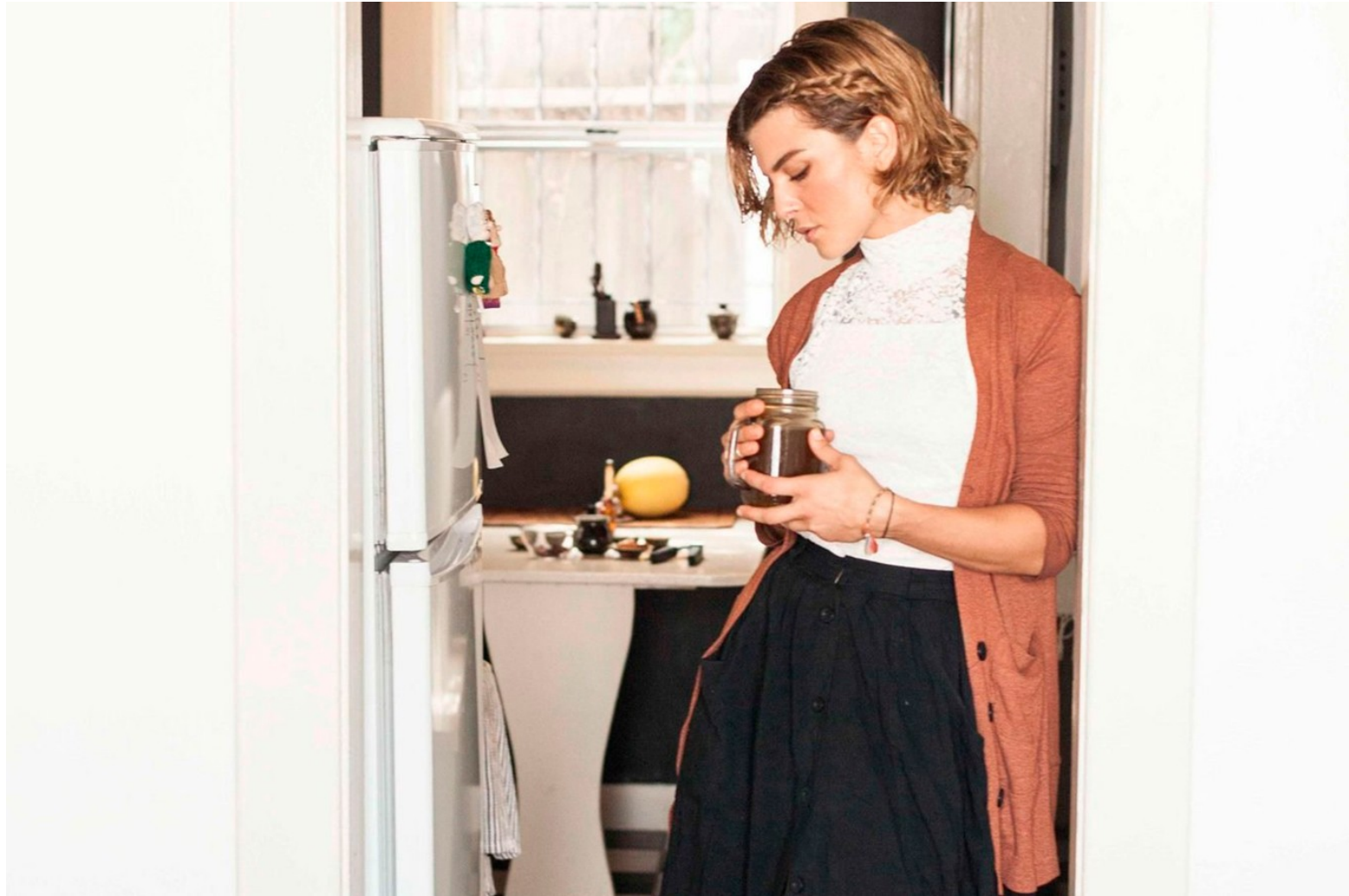
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**Elizabeth Baudouin** [Become a fan](#)  
Creative Consultant, Writer, Producer

## How Beauty Expert Gloria Noto Masters the Art of the Multi-Career Lifestyle

Posted: 04/27/2015 2:32 pm EDT | Updated: 06/26/2015 5:59 am EDT

*The Cool Kids* is a series documenting creative humans shaping present day society with their work and outlook.

**Gloria Noto | Makeup Artist | Editor-in-Chief**

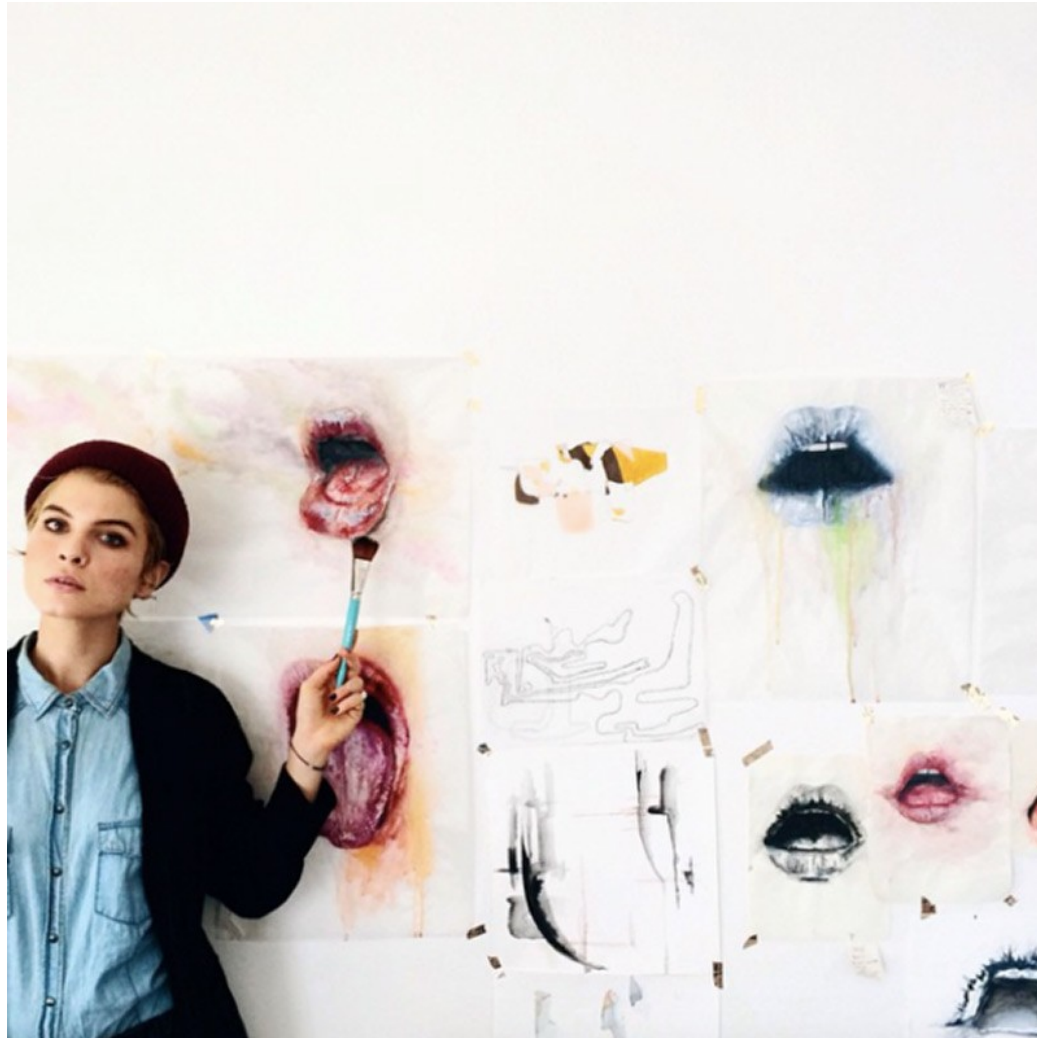


Gloria Noto is the model of a modern day renaissance woman, mastering the art of the multi-career lifestyle. By trade, she is a makeup artist, whose expertise in the field has been recognized by *The Hollywood Reporter* and has landed her as a regular contributor with both *Nasty Gal* and *Refinery29*. When she is not on set for the likes of *Nylon* or *Flaunt*, or preparing her clients for the red carpet, she can be found in one of Silver Lake's cafes working steadily on her conceptual arts publication, *The Work Magazine* for which she is the Editor-in-Chief and on the culture magazine, *2139*, for which she is the managing editor. Gloria is also an established painter whose work has been shown in DTLA group art shows and commissioned by top designers and creative agencies. When asked how she spends her spare time she'll tell you about the experimental makeup techniques on her beauty blog *SetDaze*, the record label she is thinking about launching, or (maybe) the secrets behind her proprietary blends of essential oil fragrances.

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**ASOS**  
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ASOS MAGAZINE

MARCH 2015 ▼

## BEAUTY JUNKIE



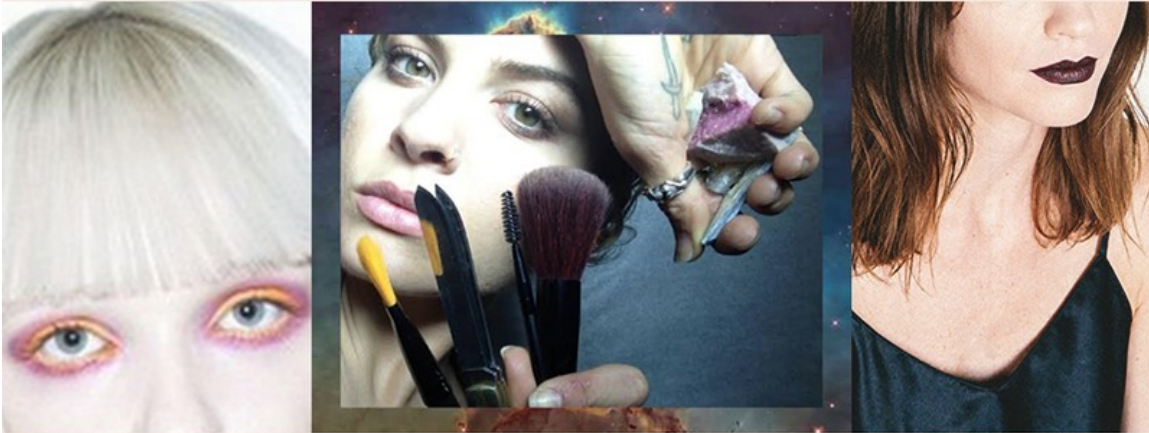
Celebrity make-up artist Gloria Noto talks best-ever products and top techniques from her pad in L.A. Gloria works with Shailene Woodley and Lykke Li, as well as editing her own editorial beauty magazine *Work*, and awesome blog, [setdaze.com](http://setdaze.com).



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## Gloria Noto + Makeup Brushes

Makeup artist and [The Work Magazine](#) Editor-in-Chief [Gloria Noto](#) is always jetting around the world (with healing crystals in tow), spreading the gospel of beauty wherever she goes (and always stopping by the Nasty Gal offices when she's in L.A.).

In between lining lips and line editing *Work's* next issue, she found some time to reminisce with us on that first life-changing rush she felt from picking up a makeup brush.

### When did you fall in love with your makeup brushes?

There isn't a time that I can really remember not having a brush in my hands in one-way or another. As for an eyebrow comb, I was about 18 and I did this full-face of makeup, eye-shadow, lipstick, blush—a beautiful “Midwestern face-beating.” My older cousin looked at me and said, “What about your eyebrows...? You did all that and forgot the most important part.” I looked at my eyebrows, thick and long and going in a million different directions...it was like I saw the light when I combed them into place.

### What's the wildest adventure you two have ever taken together?

Almost capsizing on a sailboat in Big Sur for an advertising job. Literally we almost flipped over. I was seasick for three days.

### What is your dream Valentine's Day outfit?

A kimono with nothing more.

Shop Gloria's V-Day Looks

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[Lace Robe](#)

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## Gloria Noto

*Editor and Make-Up-Artist, Apartment, Los Angeles*

13 27 March 2013 36 Photos

"I wanted to do it all." This sentence really sums up the the guiding principle of professional make-up-artist and editor-in-chief, Gloria Noto. Besides spending a lot of time at her relatives in sunny Sicily, Gloria grew up in Detroit, where she lived surrounded by a constant flow of creative ideas from her interior designer Mother, and her Father who worked as an ironsmith. This diverse and supportive background has served as the foundation for Gloria's ambitious, "why can't I?" attitude which which has led this eccentric lady to where she is today.

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## THE GENERATION NATION

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MEET AND GREET: MAKEUP ARTIST GLORIA NOTO

BEHIND THE SEAMS | JANUARY 16TH, 2013



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Gloria Noto may be small, but she has a BIG presence. We had the pleasure of meeting this petite (sometimes) blonde, with an angelic face and killer tattoos, during our recent holiday photoshoot – and it was totally worth the early wake up call to meet her. Whomever the subject, Gloria manages to make everyone (including us) feel like a longtime BFF. As a makeup artist for just under a decade, Noto has had hundreds of models in her chair and keeps them entertained with her up beat chatter and ever-changing look. (Believe it or not, she recently shaved 80% of her head!) When it comes to her work, she said, "It's really important to study the person in my chair, I don't want to force something. Make them someone they're not. So even when I have an assignment, I try to stay true to the real person. Connecting with people is the best part of my job"

Get to know the real Gloria in our Q&A below:

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## The Insider's Guide to Los Angeles

Make up artist Gloria Noto lets us in on the city's secrets as featured in our downloadable Wallpaper\* Guide



Make up artist Gloria Noto

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FEBRUARY 20, 2014 | ENTERTAINMENT

## BACK TO BEAUTY BASICS



Gloria Noto

**By Jessica Lynk  
Hersey**

Shailene Woodley first got audiences talking with her role in "The Secret Life of the American Teenager." She played Amy Juergens, a 15-year-old good girl with a big secret—she was pregnant.

After five fan-favorite seasons, the show came to an end in June. But since then, Woodley's career has taken off in a huge way.

This year, she's starring in two movies that are expected to rock the box offices: "Divergent" and "The Fault in Our Stars." Woodley stole the lead roles in both films.

When we started planning our first annual beauty issue, we wanted to feature a star who exemplified natural beauty—Woodley was our top pick. It wasn't hard to find her go-to makeup artist either. Gloria Noto grew up in Detroit and moved to Los Angeles to pursue her beauty dreams.

Noto cleared her schedule to chat with us over the phone. We asked her about her star-studded career, her own beauty routine and Woodley's top makeup secrets.

**You're a Detroit native. What was it like to move from the Midwest to L.A.?**

I think that it can be scary for anybody moving from something like the Midwest and a smaller town like Detroit. I was young too, and I didn't have that much money saved. I thought I did, but when you are young you don't really realize how much you need. ... I knew I had what it took to be successful; I had the confidence in that. ... I really believe anything is possible if you make it possible for yourself. So I really wasn't worried about it, and it was an adventure I was ready to take on.

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GODDESS Q & A

## Q+A WITH MAKEUP ARTIST GLORIA NOTO



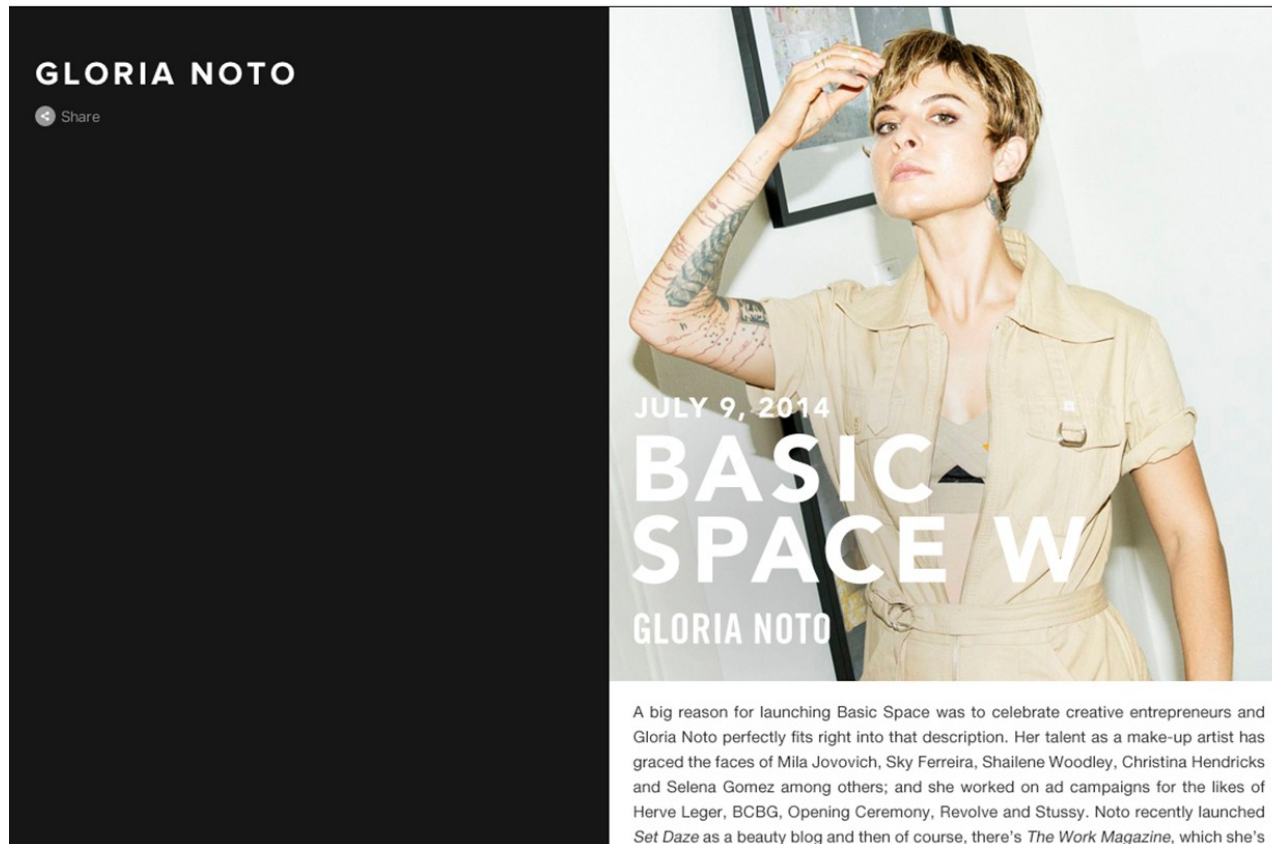
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Nasty Galaxy

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Posted on June 27, 2014 by Editorial Intern

## Working It: An Interview with Gloria Noto



We recently had Gloria Noto teach us how to [do the dew](#). Today, we're asking about her other projects, namely The Work Magazine. Since its conception six years ago, The Work has grown into a combination fashion, photography and art publication. When it comes down to it, the mag is all about "real soul, real concept and not just another hot girl looking bored." Of course, most of that soul comes from Gloria, the magazine's editor-in-chief. We caught up with her to talk crystals, something called "active rest," and the reason why one job is never enough.

(Photo by Eddie Chacon, magazine layout by Jenelle Campbell)

## Gloria Noto

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## 2014, the year of... faking extreme beauty

From temporary tattoos to faux piercings, in 2014 it's never been easier - or more fashionable - to fake an extreme beauty identity. Jane Helpen investigates...

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Make-up artist and The Work Magazine Editor-in-Chief Gloria Noto has spent much of her career fuelling the fantasy of faking it. "I think [fake tattoos and piercings] are a great way to play and make sure you're interested in said tattoo or piercing. Like a wig, it lets you be a different type of self each day." But her inner punk is still sceptical. "The days of true 'punk' concepts seem to be more sparse. The things people seem outwardly interested in aren't always inwardly true."

## Gloria Noto

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