

VOGUE



Nicki Minaj Lands Her Vogue Cover Debut
by **ALEXANDRIA GOUVEIA**

She's a platinum-selling rapper who has featured on many international magazines throughout her career, but Nicki Minaj has never landed a coveted Vogue cover – until now.

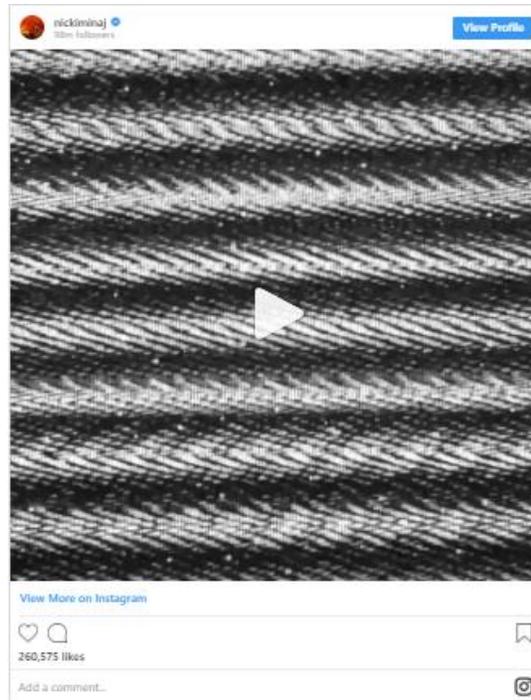
A fully-fledged member of rap's fashion royalty, Nicki Minaj, who has more than 90 million followers on Instagram, has returned following a hiatus of nearly four years to drop her fourth album, *Queen*. Within a few hours of the album's release, *Queen* had reached number one in more than 85 countries, including the UAE, Palestine, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia. The success was met with high-profile acclaim, with Naomi Campbell and Kim Kardashian sharing their support ahead of the artist's performance at the 2018 MTV Video Music Awards on August 20.

Minaj's return has been truly triumphant, with the star bagging the cover of *Vogue Arabia*'s second September issue. Model Bella Hadid was the star of the debut September 2017 cover, shot by Karl Lagerfeld.



“The fashion industry has been successfully collaborating with rap artists because they appeal to young luxury consumers and global influence. In 2018, we’re not just obsessing over their lyrics, we’re taking their style notes, too,” explains editor-in-chief Manuel Arnaut of Vogue Arabia’s 17th cover. “For us, Nicki Minaj embodies everything that makes the industry crossover a success. She’s the author and producer of most of her material, is a platinum-selling rapper, a successful businesswoman with clothing, fragrance, and beverage lines, and has appeared on Time’s 100 most influential people list. Put simply, she’s the ultimate girl boss.”

In this moment when the fashion industry discusses inclusivity, diversity, and equality, it was only fitting that the cover story was shot in New York, just a few days before the Met Gala, by an all-female team. Renowned photographer Emma Summerton was behind the lens, while the styling was done by Anna Katsanis and overseen by Vogue Arabia fashion director Katie Trotter. The hair and makeup looks were created by Kim Kimble and Sheika Daley respectively.



Accompanying Minaj's cover story is an exclusive interview by Arnaut, in which the rapper talks quitting social media, healing heartbreak, and bouncing back stronger than ever to reclaim her crown.

"I think anybody who says they don't care about horrible things being said about them or lies being spread about them are not being truthful," says Minaj. "I'm a human being and of course it bothers me when I read lies or horrendous things about myself... I took time to create something for my fans that I knew was going to be perfection."

Discussing her latest success and her struggle to the top, Minaj also reveals, "In the restaurant where I was a waitress, I would go to someone's table to take the orders and before I got their bread, I'd write raps on my order notepad about what they said or what they were wearing... I always thought, I'm going to get the hell out of this joint, stop waitressing, and become a big superstar."

Read the full interview with Nicki Minaj in the September issue of Vogue Arabia.