

Pretty Curious with Jonathan Van Ness & Danessa Myricks

JVN // Welcome to Pretty Curious. I'm Jonathan Van Ness, and every other week I sit down with a stunning expert to talk all things beauty: skincare, haircare, self-care and beyond. This week we're going full glam with someone who I deeply admire, respect, and look up to: photographer and brand founder Danessa Myricks. She's the force behind Danessa Myricks Beauty, and she is literally self-taught, and one of the most incredible leaders in our industry. One of her palettes was my Makeup Pick of the Week for our Pretty Curious premiere, and we are thrilled to have her joining us on the show today. She's all about using products in unconventional ways, and every product from her brand can be used for more than one application, style or goal. Her goal is to create a beauty brand for everyone who feels unrepresented or unseen by the current beauty industry. If you cannot wait to hear that convo, head to the episode description for more info on how far to skip ahead. But first, it's time for a Get Ready with Me segment!

How ya doing? How ya doing? Since we spoke last, I hope you're thriving. I hope you are getting into your life. I'm happy that we're in fall—this extreme heat here in Texas has broken. I can hear myself think when I go outside. It's really been nice. But let's get into our body care recommendation of the week. You guys! You know I love a bath soak, you love—you know, I just, I love a bath. I quit smoking cigarettes by taking baths. I don't know if you know that about me, but it's true. This company, Pursoma, this—they are a company that makes bath soaks. This one is called Digital Detox. Just for the ASMR of it all. You can hear the, like, gorgeous, the gorgeous sea salts. It has single origin French green clay, which is purifying and remineralizing. It also has hand-harvested French gray sea salt, which is detoxifying and tension melting. I love this company. They are a small company. I've been using them for years. Your skin feels incredible after these baths. And it's just nice to have that reminder of, like, I love their titles. It's, like, Digital Detox. Like, turn your fucking phone off, take a bath, let your asshole relax. It's just, it's really nice. Get into it. I love Pursoma. They have so many different ones that you can choose from. But I do love Digital Detox, so this is my body care of the week.

Skin care! Another one from Tatcha. I interviewed the founder of Tatcha years ago on getting curious. I've been using her stuff for quite some time. This is their Indigo Overnight Repair Treatment. It's really thick. It's really occlusive. It's, like, very gorgeous and thick. Another thing about touch that I love is their packaging. It just feels very luxurious. It's a nice experience. If you like a slugging type of vibe for your nighttime skin care. This is really beautiful. If you have very sensitive skin, this is really calming. I really like to use this when I have psoriasis outbreaks. It really calms my shit down. The indigo is so healing. So this is our skincare pick of the week. I love Tatcha. I would also say, I know that they were sold a few years ago, and as someone who was a fan, like, before and after the sale, I've noticed that their formulas have not changed. And a lot of times when a company gets sold, formulas can change. There's a potential there for it to not retain the same integrity, and they really have so good for them. Love Tatcha. Get it together.

Makeup pick of the week! Gaga! Haus Labs! We do have the same birthday. I know I've mentioned that a few times on the podcast, but just want to reiterate, we both are born on March 28th, which I just think that is so interesting. Yeah, this formula is stun. It's a [TAPPING] glass bottle with a metal attachment on the top. The formula is so lightweight, the color match is pretty. I love Haus Labs. We love Gaga. She also is a big fan of putting skincare ingredients in her formulas. So if you aren't someone who preps your skin as much before you put on makeup as you should, this is a really good option. So if you're newer to makeup, I do really like her stuff because it's going to blend really seamlessly. It's going to

apply nicely. It's a really nice formula. It's luxurious, I really like it. So that is one of my fave foundations.

Okay, haircare of the week! Pre-wash scalp oil, I'm bringing out a JVN Hair one for this. This is my favorite scalp oil of all time. We are going through seasonal changes. A lot of times people get dry, flaky scalps. Their hair can be a little bit dry from just all the summer, all the swimming, all the heat styling that you put your hair through this season. So love this pre-wash scalp oil. It has turmeric in it which decongest the hair follicle. It also has rosemary extract, which helps to increase blood flow. So it's going to set your scalp up for really robust hair growth. It also has bisabolol, which comes from chamomile—that's really powerfully anti-breakage. It also has neem oil in it, which has been used in ayurvedic mixtures for over 5000 years to help heal broken skin, weak skin. Neem oil is an incredible ingredient, so it also has our hemisqualane and our squalane. This is just a really beautiful formula, you put it on your scalp. And you actually want to fill up the dropper and put it through your ends as well. Brush it through everywhere, let it sit for 10 to 15 minutes and then you're going to wash out. So balancing, so nice. It's a really beautiful hair treatment as well. It's going to make your hair a stronger, shinier, happier. Love pre-wash scalp oil, use it all the time. It's why my hair is so shiny and so strong. I use it all the time—love it—before I wash every single week. So, pre-wash scalp. Well, if you have not tried to get into it, it's so effective. And if you don't want to try mine, there are lots of other pre-poo treatments you can try. I don't like their formulas as much, but you can give it a go. Get into a pre-poo treatment. It is so good for your hair.

So that was my beauty recs of the week. Another thing I would say is that if you are having really dry hands or dry feet because of seasonal changes, do a really thick lotion and then put on socks on your hands and your feet and go to sleep. Keeps the moisturizer really close. It's like a little extra burst of moisture for really dry areas. So try that out. It's a really fun trick. I like it. But now it's time for a listener question. We usually do listener questions later in the episode, but we wanted to put this one here for you so you can have a taste of what the full episodes are like. So I love a little switcheroo. So here's our voicemail. Ah, voicemail question?!

JULIE // Hi, my name is Julie, and my question is for beauty. I will be getting a surgery soon, and I will be getting a kidney transplant in the next three months and starting dialysis. So my concern is, is how I take care of my hair during this time process. I don't know if you've gone over how to take care of your hair and skin or any huge medical procedures, but that's something I'd love to learn about. I have had two kidney transplants. This will be my third one. I just don't know how I can do better self-care during this time, whether it be hair or skin care. Because last time around I remember it being very frustrating. Do you have any tips? Let me know. Again, this is Julie. Thank you.

JVN // Julie! The power and the vulnerability of your question. Thank you for asking it. Thank you for listening to Pretty Curious. We adore you. So it says that you're, or you say that you're going to be getting your kidney transplant in the next three months. So I would use these next few months prior to the operation to kind of see what are the easiest styles and looks that you're going to be able to do. I think obviously a really important thing when you're recovering is just making sure that things are, like, clean, like, sanitary around you. And so I think, you know, if you're really not leaving your house and you're really just kind of recovering, I think when you get home from the hospital, like, whenever you can take a shower safely, like, let's do that, like, let's get the, get that hospital off of you.

And then I would say if you have any partner or a friend who could kind of help you, they do make these, like, portable shampoo bowls that you can put in, like, a sink. And then if you could put, like, a chair up against that, you could maybe, like, sit, sit and, like, lay back into your sink. So you're not having to do it in the shower. Or you could also maybe for, like, if your doctor says it's okay, maybe you just, like, get a blow dry for, like, you could, like, go to a salon, maybe, like, get your hair washed and have them style your hair for the first couple of weeks. So that's what I would do for hair. I would also take some time to get some silk scrunchies, some some really loose fitting silk scrunchies so you can get your hair up and off your body and just either put it in a little braid or a little loose top bun to just get it out of your face and out of your way. So if you're just—you're not hot or uncomfortable, I would definitely suggest that. And then for your skin, I would say I love these, like, wrist cuffs that LABeautyologist makes. And we can include the link on this episode description. But there are these kind of, like, terrycloth fabric wrist cuffs that you put on.

So that way, instead of having to take a whole shower, you could just wash your face at the sink without getting, like, water and foam everywhere from, like, washing your face. So maybe just wash your face at the sink, do your skincare at the sink. I would also imagine, like, maybe getting, like, a nice towel warmer would be nice. So you could have, like, hot towels so that you could do, like, a little hot towel on your face or do some, like, moisturizer on your hands and feet and cover them in a hot towel, that could feel really kind of nice doing, like, a little like at home spa session as your recover. And then also, I would say, as you go into recovering, like, those blow dryer brush attachments, like, either, like, the Dyson were probably the most expensive, like, luxurious one, the Shark is, like, half the price but does a very similar thing. And then there's, like, ConAir ones that are, like, probably the most affordable, but it's, like, that, like, blow dryer, round brush, like, two-in-one, that really makes your life so much easier blow drying than like, you know, having to hold a round brush in a blow dryer. Like, when it's all in one, it really is helpful. So I would invest in one of those too, for your recovery. Could make your life a lot easier. But Julie, thank you so much for your question. We adore you.

So now that is all the time we have for our Pretty Curious segments. Without any further ado, let's get to our conversation with makeup artist, photographer, beauty brand, founder and all around makeup icon Danessa Myricks. Danessa, thank you so much for coming on Pretty Curious. I'm so excited to see you.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Thanks for having me.

JVN // Okay, so I was lucky enough, y'all, if just to give you a little bit of the background on Danessa's and my origin story as a friend, as a friend couple. So we met each other at the Harvard Business School in this, I think it was in 2023. I think it was this year, which is a few months ago. And prior to that I had heard of you through my best. People know about her on the podcast cause they talk about her a lot, her name is Patty. And she's been a huge fan of yours and has just loved you for a minute. Like, since Benefit, like, for a minute.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Ohmigod!

JVN // And she worked with CoverFX at Sephora for years as, like, as a, like, one of those people who's, like, not a beauty advisor but, like, you're, like, a field rep, you know?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Yeah, yeah.

JVN // So she was a field rep for CoverFX, but she's been singing your praises for years, and so that's how she first discovered you. But then—

DANESSA MYRICKS // Tell Patty I love her.

JVN // I will, I will, I will. And then we met at Harvard, and then we got to meet again at our Sephora, like, at the Sephora Summit, which was fun. But can you share with our people if they've been under a rock and they don't know about Danessa Myricks Beauty, who—because you are an icon in the beauty space with more than 20 years of experience as an artist and an educator, you're also self-taught, which I love, because it doesn't really matter how you learned. But when you are an expert in the way that you are an expert, the way that you excel at makeup application and artistry is just so next level.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Thank you!

JVN // So it's, like, just teach me your ways. I am obsessed with the ways. Will you tell us, in your words, what was the story of your beauty journey?

DANESSA MYRICKS // For me, I like to say that I'm an accidental makeup artist, an accidental photographer, accidental product developer. I don't know if anybody can relate to this, but, you know, I was just at a point in my life where—let's just call it what it is, I was fired from a job! Actually, everybody was fired. I was displaced from a corporate job that I had for a lot of years. And it happened to be a publishing company. And they published beauty magazines. And at that point I was a nerdy girl in the corner and, like, doing the sales and marketing, I had nothing to do in the beauty space at all. I just loved watching the photoshoots, seeing, like, the makeup artist come in and create these amazing transformations, seeing how it affected the people who they worked on. And then, you know, we paid them at the end of the day. So for me, that was, like, the trifecta of amazingness, right? And so I just always, you know, celebrated it from the sidelines. But when the owner came to me and said that we were closing, he told me first, because I have two kids, I was a single mom, I still am. And he was, like, "I just want you to get a head start." And for me it was, like, "Okay, there's no real good head start when you're in that scenario."

But I just, I was 30 years old at the time, and I just kind of wanted to reimagine what my world looked like. I didn't love what I was doing. I was kind of, like, going through the motions. And so I just, you know—what was in front of me was beauty, who I was aspiring to be like and how I wanted to aspire to make people feel was in this beauty space. So I just decided, "I'm a makeup artist." Honestly, I didn't even wear makeup at the time. I wore, like, blue eyeliner. So the journey was a long one. But I'm a quick study. I'm also a Virgo. We know we're aggressively, like, particular and detailed. So I was, like, "I'm going to figure this thing out." And so I didn't even have makeup, but I just kind of was, like, "Word on the street says that there are a couple of makeup artists that are, like, you know, the ones to watch, the ones to know." And it was Kevyn Aucoin and it was Sam Fine. And I was just, like, "Okay, I don't know what I'm doing, so I'm just going to try my best to be like them." And that literally I just, you know, went on this campaign to, like, kind of immerse myself in their style and just, you know, their work in general. And that's how I taught myself!

Back then, in the stone ages, there was no, like, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, there was none of those things. So you either gotta apprentice or you figured it out on your own. So I was pretty much in the "figure it out on your own" path, and I literally just played with the makeup I could get my hands on. I read the books, I closed my eyes. I imagined, I

literally—I was just putting makeup on myself, until eventually I got an opportunity to do something. I worked for free for, like, a year, to be quite honest, and just temped while I was figuring it out. But when I figured it out, I figured it out. And then it was, you know, off to the races. I think most people know me from my presence in the hair world. Believe it or not, I started my makeup career in the hair world. I would teach makeup at Bronner Brothers Hair show, I'm sure you're familiar with Bronner Brothers. But that was my only connection to beauty at all. That's the only place where I saw beauty come to life, because that magazine used to sell at that show. And so I, my whole perspective on makeup was really crafted in that space. And if you're familiar at all with the hair world, especially the Bronner Brothers Hair Show world, it's very extravagant, it's very dynamic. So that's really where I got my perspective from.

I didn't have a lot of money, obviously, when I started, so I had to get really creative with how I used product. So I would go to, like, Walgreens and buy 99 cent pencils, break them open, melt out the inside, and use that all over face. It would be the eyeshadow, it would be the blush, it would be the lip. And I would pair, like, that, that melted pencil with some inexpensive eyeshadows. And that's really how I learned, you know, my, my personal esthetic on how to put color and texture together just came from, like, just discovering and playing because I had no frame of reference. I was just trying to figure out what can work and what can work consistently. And it's really how I built my makeup style, and it's really how I develop how I see makeup. But just along the journey of teaching in these environments, I made a few DVDs, so people know me from the DVD world. Back when DVDs existed, I have a whole series of DVDs that I produced that sold all around the world, and those DVDs led me to brands, who figured I was an expert because I had a DVD. And so they invited me to come and to help them, you know, make makeup. And I just kept saying yes, even if I didn't know how to do it. And through that, I journeyed through developing makeup for beauty supply stores, the prestige brands. And I've had a whole long journey of doing that as well. And all of that, that culmination of all of that brought me to the beginnings of Danessa Myricks Beauty.

JVN // Ah, my God. The way—because, I mean, I think it's so interesting the way that, like Kevyn Aucoin opened so many people's eyes, like, Making Faces and Face Forward, like—

DANESSA MYRICKS // Yes!

JVN // And that scene, like, it was—because it was Sex and the City for me, like, that's, like, what I, like—when he was, like, with his, like, I was, like, “Who's that, honey?” And, like, my little 13-year-old self, I was, like, “Ah!” So if you don't know Kevyn Aucoin, you must, like, Google him, learn his story, because he's incredible. But I'm so great. That's another thing I will say thank you for Kevyn Aucoin for—RIP we love him so much—but just for being an inspiration to someone who I think is just, like, such an inspiration. Like, I just am obsessed with you all. Yeah. So really, trial and error, a lot of self believing in yourself, a lot of, like, really, I think you said earlier—like, closing your eyes and imagining, like, that is some hardcore manifestation power that you have. If you had to say, like, your beauty philosophy is _____. You're in an elevator, you're never gonna to see this person again. Or maybe you will, but it all depends on this elevator pitch, honey. And then they're, like, they're like, “What do you do?” You're, like, “Okay, like, like, I'm a founder of a stunning makeup company. I'm a makeup artist.” What's, like, your elevator pitch approach to beauty?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Our brand is all about beauty without boundaries. And when I say beauty without boundaries, it means a lot of things. There's no boundaries to who can participate. There were lots of rules. “You must use this in this place. Use this for this

second. This third. Never do this. Don't do that." It's very frustrating for me, and I didn't really believe beauty to be that kind of space, especially because I'm somebody who grew up *in* the world of beauty not feeling included. And I know how that made me feel. So the biggest expression of our brand and the thing that we like to put forward is that everybody is welcome in our playground. And there's a story for everybody here. There's a ride for everybody to play on, and there's no rules here. This is boundless opportunity to just really play and be creative with makeup.

JVN // So how does Danessa Myricks Beauty embody that philosophy as far as, like, your products and how you thought about approaching the formulation of your line?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Yeah. So if you've ever played with our products, you'll realize that they're, they do a million things. They're all-over face products. Like, everything has multiple uses. We try and really develop everything consciously so that you can play, right? So you're never going to see us say, "Here's a lipstick!" Never, right. We're going to create, like, a beautiful cream texture that works beautifully all over face, like Colorfix, right? So you could put it where you want it. If you want to paint the back of your ear with it, you'd go for it. I'm not telling you where to put it. I'm just letting you know every place where it can exist. Right? And then I'm going to teach you all the different ways that you can play with it. So the majority of our products are multi-use, whether it's our color products or our complexion. You're going to hear there's going to be a laundry list of the things that you can do with it. And so we lean very heavily into that. And then also, we want to tell everybody's stories. So if you scroll on our page or if you look at any of our product pages on Sephora, you're going to see everybody there because we really want to lean into their messaging that this is for everybody.

JVN // Yes! Now let's talk heroes of your line.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Okay!

JVN // So if people only try one of your products for—

DANESSA MYRICKS // Oooh!

JVN // I know. What should it be?

DANESSA MYRICKS // I think our flagship product, the product that really put us on the map, one of our earliest products that's still our number one selling product to date is ColorFix. And I think ColorFix really is, like, the grandest expression of what our brand represents, because it's this multi-use, 24-hour, long-wear product that you can use anywhere on the face. And it comes in a multitude of finishes, from mattes to creams to foils to glazes. You can take, you can literally experiment over your entire face and even your hair if you want, and your nails with this one product. And it really leans into that whole beauty without boundaries conversation. So that's also the first product we won a Best in Beauty Award for—like, she's been a hero product since day one. So Colorfix would be in the color category. And for complexion, I think the one that I'm the proudest of is Yummy Skin Blurring Balm Powder. Because that product really tells the story of multi-use in a really, a big way. And it's not just specifically for pros, but for everyone. Anybody could pick it up and throw it on with your finger is the easiest to use, but there's so much science behind it. We were the first brand to use this magic Swedish ingredient called Upsalite—

JVN // Yes! Danessa! No, no—this is, like, I'm not trying to interrupt you but, you guys. This is, like, when you started talking about this. The first time I heard you talk about this, I was already goo goo. But then, but then during this—because, like, we're really into rocks around here. We're really into, like natural cool, like ingredient things. And you guys just, like, gird your fucking loins and, like, say goodbye to your checking account because it's, like, you're—well, not that it's, like, you're going want to buy every single thing because, no, because this story, like, this—just, take it away again. I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to jump down your throat but—

DANESSA MYRICKS // No, but I love that you love it because it's so—I love it so much. And, you know, I was working on this product for a long time because it really came, it was based on how I used to do makeup back in the day. I'm very hyper-focused on skin, and once I heard about it, I was, like, "I have to make it work." And at that point, nobody had ever used it in a formulation like we had designed. Upsalite is such a magical ingredient because it has, like, the highest blurring index of anything in cosmetics, it's superior when it comes to poor refining. But what's amazing about it is that it's super porous. And, like, just to give you an example of how porous it is, if you like sciencey stuff, if you can envision, like, a tennis court in your mind, the surface of a tennis court, like a gram of Upsalite can absorb the surface area of a tennis court, oil and sweat. So if somebody's face is smaller than a tennis court, this product works—for blurring, for absorption of oil, for absorption of sweat, and also it's non-comedogenic. It doesn't go into the pores. It's too big to go into your pores. So anybody who's acne prone, they're going to freaking love this because it blurs away all the distractions that you can focus on what's real. That's what I like to say about this particular form.

JVN // And then, so ColorFix, is that, like, is that, like, a three-in-one stick vibe? Like, is it like, is it like—

DANESSA MYRICKS // No, it comes in a tube, it comes in a squeeze tube like this. So it's super hygienic, you just squeeze out of a dot. Like, one dot, you can do everything—you could do both your eyes, your cheeks, and your lips in one dot. So if you ever purchase a color fix, just put it in your will because, you know, you'll probably never get to the bottom of it. It's super efficient. And she's a hard worker.

JVN // Cream or powder for eyeshadows? And it's different for different people...

DANESSA MYRICKS // Yeah, for sure. But if somebody gave me an option of which one I can use for the rest of my life, 100%, it would be creams. Because creams are, like, they're so easy to blend and to move. Cream shadows are similar to Colorfix that are long wearing. If you're, if you have hooded eyes, if you have oily eyelids, if you have issues with color staying on your lids or color fading, you know, all of that gets erased when you use a cream. Creams are also amazing amplifiers, so creams are more powerful than a shadow in that you can put down a cream first and then put your shadows on top to amplify color and also extend the wear of any of your shadows. And also if you're somebody who's new to makeup or who's just not, like, as savvy, you know, with powder shadows, you get fallout.

JVN // If you guys don't know, fallout's the powder, like, when it falls, like, underneath your eye, when you're, like, applying the shadow, you know, it's, like, like, the powder, like, down here. I really—can I tell you, Patty told me for years to put my eyeshadow on and then my complexion. But I was, like—like, for the fallout, so that you're not getting, like, fallout all over your, because if you're, like, your skin first and you getting, like, all that, like, right, like, which I was, like, "No, I can't." And then finally, once I got it through my head to do my

eyeballs first, it really made things so much easier. But you agree, right? Like, eyeballs first, and then skin?

DANESSA MYRICKS // No, but you know what? I was like you, especially when I first started doing makeup. I needed to see the skin together first before I could even think about the eye. And a lot of people are like that. They really would prefer to start with their skin first because it's just, their mind can work around the process of what to add next afterwards. So I think you can do it either way. The products that you're using do matter, but I tend to like to do the skin first.

JVN // Because then you're saying it doesn't matter with the skin because, like, you're not going to get fallout when it's a cream.

DANESSA MYRICKS // It doesn't matter, yeah!

JVN // But let's say you wanted to do a powder and you wanted to do skin first. Then would you just do, like, a bunch of translucent coating powder, like, underneath the eye to catch the fallout, and then brush it off?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Yeah, you for sure can do a little baking. Just put a little powder underneath just to catch any oil and shadow and dust it away, yeah.

JVN // Okay, I've another cream question. I'm going totally off now. I'm freaking out. I'm sorry.

DANESSA MYRICKS // No! I'm obsessive with cream, so go for it.

JVN // What if you wanted to do your, okay, so you guys, Danessa did this cool thing on Instagram where she was, like, showing this, like, contouring thing, like, with, like, darker to lighter colors to make things look, like, lighter and bigger, which we'll get into.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Yeah.

JVN // What if you're trying to do that with creams? Like, do you need to, like, wait for one color of the cream to dry if you're then going to go put, like, another cream over the top of it? Or do you need to be intentional about, like, doing, like, the darkest cream here? And then, like, you know, like, the middle one, like, in the middle and the lighter, like, on the inside? You know what I mean?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Yeah, that's a great question. So I would say, like, all creams aren't create equal, right? So you have some cream shadows that stay creamy, right? And then you have others like Colorfix that set, right. So if you're somebody who's concerned about movement and placement, I would just go for things that set, you don't have to think about it. Once it sets, you can build on top. But if you're using creams that stay creamy, once you put another cream on top of it, they kind of will mix together. It is not necessarily a building block. So if you have a cream that's like that, that doesn't actually set, you may want to just maybe use it as, like, one wash of color over the lid or, you know, be very strategic with your placement, to your point.

JVN // That's more, like, a highlight if, like, if it doesn't set.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Yeah. Or, like, if you're going to smudge a smoky eye with it and use one color, right.

JVN // Yes.

DANESSA MYRICKS // But anybody who has folds of skin or, or really strong brow bones or any, like, hooding, I recommend products that sit because as soon as you open your eyes and you look around, things are going to start moving. And if you close your eyes do to wink at somebody, whatever, they're going to see all the stuff that's going on. But if you use it, if you use something that sets, it's going to stay looking beautiful all day.

JVN // So with Colorfix, if I was going to layer Colorfix, I could do one, let it sit, and then do a different color of Colorfix, mix over it, let it set, or even go with, like, a powder over Colorfix. And that would be fine.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Absolutely, you're a pro! You're a pro!

JVN // Cool! Okay, so Colorfix is cool as fuck. Okay, that's fun. Okay, so and then if people want, like, full Danessa Myricks glam. Like, just really want, like, full glam, like, what would they, what would they get—like, not having to choose one or the other? Like, what would you have them get?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Alright, well, I would definitely start with Groundwork Defining Neutrals. The one that you fell in love with, because it's an all-over face, and literally you can smudge and layer and add your shadows, everything with this one palette. To amplify it, if you want to just go balls to the wall and just have a little glitter and a little shimmer, you can add a Colorfix with that. And for complexion, I would go with the Yummy Skin Serum Tint if you like a very natural, fresh but radiant finish to your skin. And if you want, like, more of a matte, natural matte finish, I would go with Yummy Skin Blurring Bomb Power. But you really don't need a lot of products if you're shopping Danessa Myricks Beauty because they're multi-use.

JVN // Okay, the way that you just broke me again, like, I've only been using this on my eyeballs! But I can use this—so I could do, like, Sandstone on my, like, face.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Oh, yeah! This is, like, lip liner, cheek contour. The, the Groundwork Palette is really about lifting, shaping, and defining every area on the face. Your brows, it's a brow pomade. It's your shadow, it's your liner. You can even rim your waterline, it's your cheek contour, it's your bronzer. It gives lip liners, everything.

JVN // Let's talk about coverage and, like, what that spectrum is. Because, you know, for me personally, I like more of my skin to show through. I don't try to cover up my freckles. I like to see some of that naturalness. But if your skin coverage, like—full coverage in your mind's eye, and tell me if I'm wrong, Danessa, the full coverage would be, like, your Meredith Duxbury, like TikTok queen with, like, the 17 pumps of full-coverage foundation, like, and just going full in, willy nilly, like, just drag queen, full coverage, into it. And then the other end would be, like, just skin care, like, no coverage, like only skin care.

DANESSA MYRICKS // There's a misconception that full coverage means you can't see your skin because there are full coverage formulas that give you the full coverage that you need. But they still look like skin, right? And so you can take a full coverage foundation, use a

drop of it, and mix it with your skincare. And now you've made a tint, you've made something more medium coverage, right? So there are so many ways to play now.

JVN // What's your favorite full coverage Danessa Myricks option, that still looks like skin?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Hmm. Okay. If you are, if you were going to be on TV, or if you—you're, like, in a super hot and humid area, or if you want something that's going to wear, like, waterproof, I say Vision Cream Cover. All the queens love Vision Cream Cover. And then if you like a dewy full coverage, like, more juicy, more skincare-infused, I would say the Yummy Skin Serum Foundation.

JVN // I am so—Yummy Skim Serum Foundation, someone text my assistant right now. Do you have any tips or thoughts on, like, pitfalls of contouring or, like, like, when I see, like, someone who has, like, really light roots, but then they go really dark. I'm, like, "Oh, if you could just, like, it's, like, just a floating root," like, "Oh, my God." Right? Like, is there, like, a version of that for contouring for you? Or, like, if someone just is, like—their face, you're just, like, "Baby, I just really wish I could tell you this one thing."

DANESSA MYRICKS // There are so many interpretations on how to contour. And, you know, because of social, a lot of them are expressed in a very extreme way. I think the important thing to know is that any tone that's deeper than your skin tone can be used to shape. And so that's why I like to go back to that pulling concept. If you choose a foundation shade that's a shade deeper than your natural foundation shade and put that in the areas that you want to, to slenderize or trim out, it's going to work, right? The face and all of its features will pull in the direction of the deeper shading. So as an example, whenever we want to, like, create, like, a cat eye, we basically want our eyes to pull outwards, right? So what do we do? We smolder something deeper than our skin tone at the outer corners of our eye, and it creates the illusion of pulling. Same thing with our brows. We deepen the shade of our brows, or we draw a line going in the direction that we want our face to be, right. The face is always going to follow deeper shading. Even with a lip line, over lining the lips is simply the pulling concept. When you have a line that's deeper than your skin tone and you put it beyond your lip line, it pulls your lip up or the same thing at the bottom, it pulls it down. So if you just remember that the face is going to follow deeper shading, like a string. And so wherever you put that deeper shading, just imagine it as a string and your face is going to pull that way.

JVN // Mm. And then lighter than your skin makes it...

DANESSA MYRICKS // Yeah, right, so whenever you shade an area lighter, it's going to make it look larger and it's going to make it look more prominent. A fun fact is that our eyes will always see what shaded light is first, just how the human eye works, right? So the idea of putting lighter shading in the places where you want people to focus on, it's almost like a reverse optical illusion. Your eye sees what's lightest first, so you can actually create the shape of your face with lighter shading because we can't help it. That's just how the human eye works. Because, like, a lot of people, you know, have narrow faces and they're looking at the general contouring guidelines in every TikTok video and then they turn themselves into the Planter's Peanut. Right? So, you know, every face is different. So I think just being strategic and focusing on *your* face shape, and if you're going to watch someone's techniques, just make sure that their face shape is similar to yours. The, the further away the tone is from your skin tone, the more dramatic the effect is going to be. Right? So you don't always have to go 0 to 100. You know, everybody else has their safe space in between. So that's one thing.

JVN // Yes. Okay. Sorry we're, like, slaying this so hard. So something you said about Danessa Myricks Beauty that I love is that it's for everyone. Everyone's welcome here. You didn't see yourself in the beauty space and you didn't see that representation, and so you made it. And the way that that is so fearless, and the way that you've been so successful in doing that, I just it gives me so much. I hate when people call me inspirational, but it does give me inspiration. But then the thing about yours, it gives me the double, extra inspiration is that, like, your formulas work so well, like, the efficacy is off the charts—

DANESSA MYRICKS // Thank you, my love!

JVN // Like, is there any other, like, Upsalite-like things that are, like, on the horizon, not, like, trying to, like, steal—I want you to, if you gotta keep the trade secrets trade secrets, we get it!

DANESSA MYRICKS // No! It's funny that you say that because Upsalite is in that Groundwork Palette, those powders—there's two textures in that palette. One is the Velvet Pomade and the second one is the Shape and Fix Powders. And they're infused with Upsalite because one of the number one issues with lids is that they need smoothing and oil control. And so there's Upsalite in those powders, like, I'm obsessed with the ingredient and yes, I have a lot of magical ways that we're going to be using it in the future, but it's in there!

JVN // What—how do you feel about, like, trends? Like, do you love a trend? Do you hate a trend? Do you think we're going to be seeing any big, like, winter trends or, like, big upcoming makeup things?

DANESSA MYRICKS // You know what's interesting for me about trends is that they're just things of old coming back around. But what I love about trends is that it gives people permission to play. So maybe there was something that was around all the time that they always wanted to try, but they didn't know how or they didn't see anybody doing it. And suddenly it's a trend. So it kind of gives people permission to go for it, right? So I love a trend for that reason, because it, it allows people to explore in ways they haven't before. But I do see people really getting into color way more than before. I see people getting into metallics and reflective, like, fun way more than before, which is really exciting for me. And for complexion I see, like, this, this, this soft matte.

JVN // Yeah, softer mattes are kind of coming back, like, it has been so dewy, dewy, dewy. But now we're kind of, like, wanting a little bit of a matte-ish moment!

DANESSA MYRICKS // Right, we want to pull it back a little bit more, like, somewhere in the middle. So that in-between is what's resonating right now.

JVN // Yes!

DANESSA MYRICKS // Not too dewy, not too matte, just somewhere right in between.

JVN // One more question that I just—a selfish question for someone I know! Ha! What about, like, what about this whole baking thing? Like, if I have, like, like, let's say that I've done, like, a Yummy, like, the Yummy Skin, like, coverage. Like, what's the title? Yummy skin serum.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Right. So you have the Yummy Skin Serum Foundation or—yeah, the Yummy Skin Blurring Balm, either one.

JVN // Do you need to put, like, a, like, setting powder on afterwards or, like, what do you think are, like, setting powders for under eyes? What do you think about, like, setting sprays or mists? Does it depend on, like, if it's hot out or what do you think about, like, setting things?

DANESSA MYRICKS // I think it's a lot of variables. It depends on your taste. It depends on your face. Like, some people are just prone to creasing just because of the construction of their face. There's some people that underneath their eyes, it just has lots of lines. And so inherently, unless you said it, your product is going to settle in those lines and it's going—you're going to see the lines there. So for me, like, most times, I'm not using powder. I'm only going to use it, like, if I need for my product to wear longer, like, underneath my eyes, I want to stay, you know, like, a nice, semi-matte longer. Everyone's different, right? Not everybody is here for a dewy finish, and so setting that coverage, your powder is important for that. Depending on the climate, like, setting your entire makeup is super important. Not everybody needs to bake. I don't think baking is necessary. Baking is taste. You know, baking is also a look. Sometimes people are baking for extra brightening underneath their eye, but it's not necessarily a necessity. So setting, yes. Baking, it's, like, taking your setting to another level where it's like amplifying the brightness underneath the eye as well. So that kind of leans into the taste category.

JVN // I just felt some of our listeners asking, like, "What's baking?"

DANESSA MYRICKS // Yeah, baking is, like, maybe taking powder on a puff and, like, pressing it underneath the eye, like, a lot, like an excess amount of powder, like pressing it in underneath the eye, letting it sit for a while so it bakes in and it seeps into your foundation. It's like letting it cook. Yeah. And then dusting it away.

JVN // Yeah, okay, okay. Oh, okay. Rapid fire round. Are you ready?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Yes!

JVN // It's the last segment?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Okay.

JVN // Okay! What do you think the holiday beauty gift of the year is going to be?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Love.

JVN // Oh!

DANESSA MYRICKS // Okay. Outside of love, I would say Groundwork Defining Neutrals palette.

JVN // Come on! You're doing so good, okay, okay—what's it like to get ready and unready with Danessa Myricks? What are your skincare, makeup, and hair care go-tos?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Ooh! For hair, I love, like, a lightweight oil. I'm definitely oiling every single night before bed and wrapping it with a scarf.

JVN // Yes!

DANESSA MYRICKS // Love a hair serum. To remove makeup. I love removing it with, like, an oil cleanser. I'm loving, like, that Elemis balm because it's just, like, super hydrating as I remove my makeup. And my day-to-day getting ready, I'm a balm, powder girl. I'm, like, one minute, in and out the door.

JVN // Oh, yeah, it's so good. What's your go to budget beauty recommendation?

DANESSA MYRICKS // I would say pencils. You can win with a pencil. Grab a 99 cent pencil that is creamy and you can go to town.

JVN // What's your, like, splurge recommendation? You wanna treat yourself.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Always treat yourself to skincare! I think that has the longest legs. Yeah.

JVN // Must keep in stock recommendation, has never run out will never run out.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Colorfix.

JVN // Com on! Slaying, seconds, or storage. Slaying: a new product that you're obsessed with right now.

DANESSA MYRICKS // The Lightwork V palette.

JVN // Come on, Lightwork V palette! Seconds: a product that deserves that comeback but we haven't been thinking about it for a long time.

DANESSA MYRICKS // I mean, I love a black lip liner. [CROSSTALK]

JVN // Come on! Okay, I love it. And some storage, something that's had its day in the sun. Like, if you see one more graphic eyeliner, it'll be too soon.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Ooooh, it's not about style. I would say sticky makeup. No need for it in this day and age.

JVN // No need. Okay. That's really, that's really resonating. What's an iconic look that inspires you to this day?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Nineties all day! Like, we talked about Kevyn Aucoin, nineties look, like, that's, like—all of those, using all those rich brown tones, or sculpting shady tones, smoldering the eye, like, overlining lips, deeper shade and, like, all day for the rest of my life, just stick me in the nineties and I'll be happy.

JVN // He was so ahead of his time.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Yes!

JVN // What's a recent beauty moment that stopped you in your tracks?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Ooh. Glue gun makeup.

JVN // Okay. Okay. Okay. What's a beauty look that we've yet to see but absolutely need.

DANESSA MYRICKS // This maybe unconventional, but makeup without foundation! Like, it's okay just to do your eyes. If you're not a foundation person, go for it. Like, let your skin be. And you can still do a brow, do an eye, do a lip without makeup—like, be *undone*, like, undone skin. Why not? It's ours. And we can love and embrace it as it is.

JVN // Mic drop! That was so good. Circling back to your professional makeup training, this is our last thing. Yeah. What tips do you have for people that are looking to go pro?

DANESSA MYRICKS // I love that. What I would say is if you have that desire in your heart, please know that it is possible. I think it's the easiest time now ever to lean into a makeup career because you literally can post something beautiful on social and be doing Doja Cat's makeup next week. That's the way the world is working right now. I will say educate yourself. I mean your style, your aesthetic, be *you*—copycat, don't worry. No need for it. But at least know, like, the fundamentals of, like, hygiene and safety so you can take really good care of your clients. But outside of that, be you. Whether you see it or not, don't be afraid to show who you are and just how you want to express beauty. We need you.

JVN // Okay. And then where are you the most active on social for people to follow along, if they're just obsessed with you like I am and they just want to, like, where do you want people following you? Where are you the most active?

DANESSA MYRICKS // I'm the most active on Instagram, @Danessa_Myricks. And I am learning my TikTok vibes, but slowly but surely, I'm getting better at TikTok. But TikTok is hard!

JVN // It really is hard. Okay, we're really quick because it's, like, I said, it's, like, our last thing three times. But this really is our last thing. Just using Groundwork, three seconds or less. I have no makeup on my face. Can you, can you—snatch my face, tell me how to do it! Just, like, 3 seconds unless you don't want to.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Okay, now, pick a shade that's deeper than your skin tone. Decide whether you want to go warm or cool, because you can go either way.

JVN // I think I want to go warm. And I'm thinking, like—is, like, Mirage, would that be cool?

DANESSA MYRICKS // Ohmigod. So Mirage is—it's kind of, like, in the middle, but it's going to give you some warmth and a little bit of bronze. You could take that shade Mirage, put your finger in it, tap into the Velvet Pomade and just smudge that over your entire lid. Just, like, literally all over your lid on both sides. Close your lash line.

JVN // It feels incredible, you guys.

DANESSA MYRICKS // That texture is so easy to play with, and that's going to give you almost like a little baby smoky effect, like a natural smoky because it's close to your skin tone, right?

JVN // Pretty!

DANESSA MYRICKS // You can use that same tone as, like, a bronzer.

JVN // Look at this side to this side!

DANESSA MYRICKS // Ah! And you can also use that Mirage either to line your lips. You're not going to line your lips. But she's great as a, like, a lip liner as well. Or if you want a nude lip.

JVN // Ooh, a nude lip.

DANESSA MYRICKS // And now you did that Mirage, right? Now I'm going to show you how easy to go smokier. You can just pick something like Bark or Harvest. Use your finger, but blend it closer to your lash line.

JVN // Bark.

DANESSA MYRICKS // So you still have a little bit of the Mirage peeking through. So it's like, go right up to your lash line and then just smudge, with your finger brush. As close to your lash line. So it's, like, the darkest tone is closest to your lashes.

JVN // Ooooh!

DANESSA MYRICKS // And just like that, you should have, like, a really easy smudgy, smoky.

JVN // You guys, this cream is everything.

DANESSA MYRICKS // So it's, like, a velvet, it's a pomade that, that has a powdery finish.

JVN // Yeah!

DANESSA MYRICKS // So it makes—yeah, so it makes it super easy, it's not wet, you still look matte and smoky.

JVN // Look at my face! Can you tell the difference on that camera? It looks really different on my phone!

DANESSA MYRICKS // I can see this, yeah, I can see the smoldering eyes for sure. I love you so much.

JVN // I love you, Danessa! Thank you so much for coming on Pretty Curious. We love you so much. Thank you for coming on.

DANESSA MYRICKS // Let's do this 100 times. I love you.

JVN // Anytime. I love you too, Danessa. Yay! You've been listening to Pretty Curious with me, Jonathan Van Ness. You can learn more about this week's guest and the episode description of whatever you're listening to the show on. And you can follow us on Instagram @CuriousWithJVN. And Pretty Curious drops every other Monday wherever you get your podcasts. Make sure to tune in next Monday for an episode of Curious Now and every Wednesday for Getting Curious. But you still can't get enough, queen? I feel you. You can

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