

WATCH THIS FACE

MODEL OF THE MOMENT NEELAM GILL SHOWCASES THIS SEASON'S SCULPTING TECHNIQUES (HELLO, KILLER CHEEKBONES)

Twenty-year-old Neelam Gill is *everything* in the fashion industry right now. Beyond the obvious – the enviably thick, dark hair; the full lips and those major brows – she is the first Indian woman to be cast in a Burberry campaign, an historic moment in the crusade for diversity in fashion. “It’s a big role to live up to, but I try not to think about it until it’s mentioned!” She is also befriending her idols: Kanye West cast her in his Adidas show, Jourdan Dunn is like a big sister to her – “We hang out in New York a lot and she gives me skincare advice,” – and Givenchy creative director Riccardo Tisci likes her Instagram posts, alongside more than ▶

By **Alessandra Steinherr** and **Grace Timothy**
Photographs by **Pawel Pysz**



Cape ralphlauren.co.uk;
necklace Ekria; ring
Maria Francesca Pepe



◀ 37k loyal followers. Most recently, she’s created her own brow kit with Blink Brow Bar (**Neelam’s browbar Essentials** £35 blinkbrowbar.com).

But beyond all the trappings of being a billboard superstar, Neelam is a model with a message. She wants to speak to people of every race, age and background about overcoming insecurities and embracing your own natural beauty. “I’d like to break boundaries,” she says. “I’d like to give advice and support because I wish I’d had that growing up – I want people to feel like they know me and can ask me anything. At school in Coventry, I got picked on a lot for having these thick brows and long straight hair,” she explains. “Everyone thought I was such a geek because of the way I looked, and sometimes I’d think, ‘I know it won’t suit me, but should I just change?’ Then I got a beauty campaign out of it.”

Yep, that’s the ultimate riposte to the bullies, right there. Although, as she’s since learnt, self-acceptance is an ongoing process. “When ▶



Volume Effect
Faux Cils
£23.50
yslbeauty.co.uk

Skin Foundation
SPF15 in Honey
£31.50
bobbibrown.co.uk

Sculpting
Powder £35
Kevyn Aucoin

THE SCULPTED EYE

(Previous page)

“Eye contouring is such a beauty classic – so easy and effective,” says make-up artist Polly Osmond, who created the looks on these pages. “All you need is to stick to flat taupe and brown tones – no shimmer!” As a base, just scribble the foolproof **Effortless Contouring Pen For Face & Eyes** £25 burberry.com (1) into the socket line and blend it with your fingers. If you want to add intensity, brush over with matte shadow – for dark skin, try **Matte Eyeshadow in Coconut Grove** £18 narscosmetics.co.uk (4), for medium skin, we like **Sheer Eyeshadow in Dark Sable** £22.50 burberry.com (3) and on fair skin, try **Beautiful Color Eye Shadow in Truffle** £18 Elizabeth Arden (2). Finish with a dab of sheen in the centre of the lid for a hint of shine. **NAIL NOTE** Neelam is wearing **60 Seconds Super Shine Polish in Chic In Chelsea** £2.99 Rimmel London.

THE CHISELLED FACE

“Extreme contouring is fine for certain face shapes, but it’s not for everyone,” says Polly. “There are ways to do it and not look like a Photoshopped mannequin.” Start with a cream formula to get the shape (Polly used **Flawless Contouring Palette** £35 Laura Mercier), suck in your cheeks and buff it in rather than paint it on. For a more defined look, go over with powder. “I recommend **The Sculpting Powder** (£35 Kevyn Aucoin), because it has the best colour – remember, shadows aren’t orange, they are a grey-taupe tone. I also rate the **Face Master Sculpt** (£6.99 Maybelline), because it’s sheer.” And what about Neelam’s approach to make-up? “When I’m not working, I like to look very natural – just a touch of foundation, a bit of contouring (**Filmstar Bronze & Glow in Light To Medium** £49 Charlotte Tilbury), a tinted balm on my lips (**Lip Glow in Cameo Pink 07** £18.50 burberry.com), and then I curl my lashes, put on a little **Mascara Volume Effet Faux Cils** (£23.50 yslbeauty.co.uk), and go.” **NAIL NOTE** Neelam is wearing **Sofisticato** £15 Kure Bazaar.



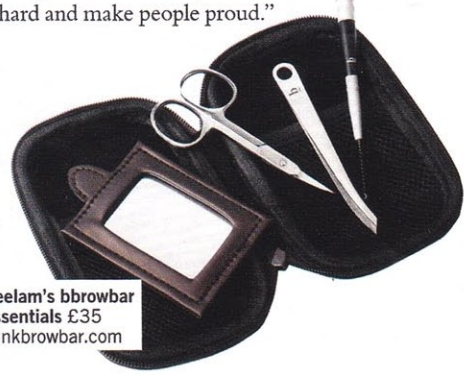
Coat Burberry; rings Ekria

251

◀ I started modelling, I got a lot of racist comments online and I sometimes felt out of place among all these white girls with blonde hair, but Christopher [Bailey, Burberry’s CEO] said, ‘You are a British beauty, you are the future of British beauty.’ I learnt to embrace it and believe. My thick hair and brows, it’s an Indian thing. And I’m so grateful.”

Then there’s that other famous face who’s helped her deal with the haters, of course: Kanye. “As a teenager I saved and saved to see Kanye on tour with Jay-Z – I’m a diehard rap fan. Two years later, I walk into a casting for his Adidas show and spot him behind a rail of clothes, trying to be discreet. I didn’t think I’d get the job – there were so many girls – but he came over and said, ‘Don’t tell anyone I’m here, but I gotta say, I saw your Burberry ads and it’s so dope you’re just doing your own thing.’ I was like, ‘Is this my life?’ It was so surreal seeing him at work and with his family. He’s been so nice, so supportive and given me the confidence I need. Everyone has insecurities – even the top models I’ve met – but you have to love yourself for who you are. I don’t point out what I’m insecure about any more, because then people won’t notice.”

So what’s the next frontier Neelam wants to crack? “I’d love to act and be more of a businesswoman, like Cara [Delevingne] and Rosie [Huntington-Whiteley]. They’ve moved into other things that suit their personalities. I’d love a really big beauty or fragrance campaign, for that close family relationship you get as part of a brand. I just want to work hard and make people proud.”



Neelam’s browbar
Essentials £35
blinkbrowbar.com

THE STROBED SKIN

You just got to grips with highlighting and now all you read about on social media is strobing, which sounds a bit like highlighting, right? It is very similar – the main difference is that strobing is more about creating an all-over diffused glow, rather than just localised sheen. Polly’s pro trick: “First apply concealer to the areas where you need more glow (tip of nose, top of cheekbones, Cupid’s bow, above and below brow bone), as this will ‘highlight’ the area without adding shimmer.” Then layer luminiser on top – we love the two-in-one **Perfectionist Youth-Infusing Brightening Serum+Concealer** £28.50 esteelauder.co.uk (1). And how does Neelam maintain her naturally glowy skin? “I used to just use a cleansing wipe before bed, but since putting time into my skin, I’ve really seen a difference. I like Dermalogica facials and the Akasha Spa at Hotel Café Royal, but I travel so much I have to do my own thing, too.” Here’s her skincare kit: **UltraCalming Cleanser** £27.20 Dermalogica; **The Moisturizing Cream** £108 cremedelamer.co.uk; **Radiant Glow Express Mask** £73 Sisley; **Charlotte’s Magic Cream** £70 Charlotte Tilbury (2); **Eight Hour Cream Intensive Moisturizing Hand Treatment** £26 Elizabeth Arden ▶



Mister
Eyebrow
£17.50
Givenchy

THE SHADED BROW

“I always had my brows threaded by the same woman back home in Coventry, so when I moved to London one of my first thoughts was, ‘Who’s going to do my brows?’” says Neelam. “I go to Blink – the founder is Indian, they use the traditional techniques and keep that thickness to the brow. I go every two weeks, so all I need to do is apply a little **Eyebrow Gel in Cardamom** (£15 blinkbrowbar.com) to keep them in place.” For those of us who don’t have lush brows, Polly has this amplifying trick: “To make them look fuller, apply a wax [she swears by **Mister Eyebrow** £17.50 Givenchy] and then fill in the outer bits first and finish by brushing your brows up to diffuse the colour.” @



Eyebrow
Gel £15
blinkbrow
bar.com