



at her back—a giant-sized, high-gloss shot of the two divas snapped by legendary photographer Ellen von Unwerth. Pointing directly to the mammoth image of her own lips (sporting a cotton-candy pink lipstick shade M.A.C created exclusively for the campaign), Gaga finishes her thought: “This lipstick should be a reminder,” she says in a louder tone. “If you’re on a date and see it in your purse, it should immediately say to you: ‘Did you bring your best friend, the condom, with you, too?’”

Lauper smiles warmly at Gaga’s antics and mentions that anyone who purchases either of the two M.A.C lipsticks (Lauper’s own Viva Glam shade is a coral red) should be aware that all of the proceeds go toward the M.A.C AIDS Fund. “This campaign will be raising money—not just for HIV/AIDS education,” Lauper explains, “but for drug companies to finally create female condoms, too.”

The joining of these two style titans is no mere coincidence. Lauper has been shaking up the fashion cosmos ever since she danced through the streets in multilayered skirts and cherry-red hair in 1984 (via her “Girls Just Want To Have Fun” video debut). Gaga—who is undoubtedly our generation’s Lauper—is just as individualistic with her image, and revels in tipping the trend scales with her eccentric outfits.

When asked about the parallels between them, Gaga, who happens to be 23—that would be 33 years younger than

Double Diva

Lady Gaga and Cyndi Lauper team up for Viva Glam By Elio Iannacci

Lady Gaga plus Cyndi Lauper multiplied by a great cause equals major news. So major that on the day bloggers got wind of M.A.C choosing the two pop icons to be the spokeswomen behind their latest Viva Glam lipstick campaign, over 40,000 posts flooded the Net.

However, sitting side by side in a salon nestled in the heart of New York City’s Lower East Side, the pair seems oblivious to the off- and online media fracas they’ve created. In fact, while a full-scale party in their honor is getting underway on a floor below them (consisting of more than 200 VIPs, free-flowing glasses of champagne and a TV camera waiting to tape Lauper for *The Celebrity Apprentice*), the twosome quietly chat about a cause they feel strongly about: HIV/AIDS prevention.

“Makeup is empowering,” says Lady Gaga, while adjusting her Marc Jacobs corset. “It changes how you feel about yourself...” Before ending her sentence, Gaga leaps out of her chair and stretches toward the M.A.C Viva Glam poster

56-year-old Lauper—is quick to answer first. “We represent the demographics that are affected the most by this virus right now,” Gaga says. “We’re not mainstream representations of women—they usually don’t have purple hair!—but Cyndi and I have both been trying to push boundaries. What’s beautiful about this campaign is that it’s two women on similar quests at different moments in their lives.”

Lauper then grabs Gaga’s hand, moved by what she has just heard. “We are both fighting for equal power for women and have a big interest in human rights,” Lauper adds. “We want to do what it takes to let young people who think they are immune to HIV/AIDS know that no one is immune.”

The two Grammy Award-winning singers also cite their own mothers as makeup mentors. “I grew up loving makeup,” Gaga says. “When I was in high school, I’d wear my mom’s robe and do a bold-face Marilyn Monroe look. It gave me a sense of myself and a sense of femininity.”

“When I was a kid, it was the ‘60s,” adds Lauper, “and my mother looked like [actress] Susan Hayward—all the ladies in my neighbourhood dressed like movie stars. That’s why I’m always the one to believe that on a rainy day, you just put that lipstick on and pick yourself right up.” □



LAUPER AND GAGA’S VIVA GLAM LIPSTICKS, \$16.50 EACH.