

# PRADA

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

February 13, 2019

## **PRADA ANNOUNCES ARTIST AND ACTIVIST, THEASTER GATES, AND FILM DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER, AVA DUVERNAY, WILL CO-CHAIR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

*The Respected Producer and Artist Will Help Shape and Advise Prada's Initiative to Elevate Voices of Color in the Fashion Industry*

**NEW YORK** — Prada, the Italian fashion house, announced today that artist and activist, Theaster Gates, and award-winning writer, director and producer, Ava DuVernay, will co-chair the Prada Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council (“the Council”) to elevate voices of color within the company and the fashion industry at-large. The Council will advise the company as it invests in diverse talent development and expands opportunities for students of color in the fashion industry. Prada’s Diversity and Inclusion Council will include the voices of prominent academic and cultural experts from high-level social institutions.

In addition to advising the internal processes within Prada’s organization, Prada and the Council will partner with universities and organizations to spearhead internship and apprenticeship initiatives in diverse communities to close the inclusion gap in the fashion industry. Prada will also work with the Council to sponsor scholarships and training programs in the United States and in every Prada office worldwide.

“Prada is committed to cultivating, recruiting and retaining diverse talent to contribute to all departments of the company,” said Miuccia Prada, Chief Executive Officer and Lead Creative Director at Prada. “In addition to amplifying voices of color within the industry we will help ensure that the fashion world is reflective of the world in which we live, and we are thrilled to be working with long-time collaborators, Ava DuVernay and Theaster Gates, on this important initiative. We look forward to working with the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council to help us grow not only as a company but also as individuals.”

Artist and activist Theaster Gates, whose works are notable for evoking African-American identity and the broader historical struggle for civil rights, is also the Executive Director of Chicago-based Rebuild Foundation, an arts, education, and cultural development organization committed to transforming urban communities.

“My work amplifies the voices that have been absent from broad cultural conversations, and I am happy to partner with Prada to advise on processes that will make the company and industry more reflective of the world today,” said Theaster Gates.

Ava DuVernay is known for her directorial work on the Oscar-winning historical drama, “Selma,” the Oscar-nominated criminal justice documentary, “13<sup>th</sup>,” and Disney’s “A Wrinkle in Time,”

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which made her the highest grossing African-American female director in domestic box office history. DuVernay's work amplifies the stories of people of color while emphasizing the role that racial identity plays in society, culture and history.

Prada's Diversity and Inclusion Council will complement the work of Prada Group's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) department, which has invested in the community with a focus on sustainability, scientific research and culture. Working in conjunction with the Group's CSR department, the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council will host a conference to discuss improving diversity and inclusion in the workplace. In the coming months, the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council will examine processes and advise on tactical and strategic approaches to inclusion.

"It is an honor to work with Prada on its Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives," Gates added. "Prada has been my ally in some of the most ambitious artistic projects I've done today including the launch of the Black Image Corporation. Growing diversity efforts in the company is important to Ava, Miuccia and I and I am eager to lead the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council and achieve meaningful impact throughout the fashion industry."

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