

LADYGUNN

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amplify

Paris Hilton



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in memory of

DAVID MCATEE, AUGUST 3, 1966 - JUNE 1, 2020 LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY SHOT: JUNE 1, 2020, LOUISVILLE METROPOLITAN POLICE OFFICER

GEORGE PERRY FLOYD, OCTOBER 14, 1973 - MAY 25, 2020 POWDERHORN, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA KNEE ON NECK/ ASPHYXIATED: MAY 25, 2020, MINNEAPOLIS POLICE OFFICER

DREASJON "SEAN" REED, 1999 - MAY 6, 2020 INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA SHOT: MAY 6, 2020, UNIDENTIFIED INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN POLICE OFFICER

MICHAEL BRENT CHARLES RAMOS, JANUARY 1, 1978 - APRIL 24, 2020 AUSTIN, TEXAS SHOT: APRIL 24, 2020, AUSTIN POLICE DETECTIVES

BREONNA TAYLOR, JUNE 5, 1993 - MARCH 13, 2020 LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY SHOT: MARCH 13, 2020, LOUISVILLE METRO POLICE OFFICERS

MANUEL "MANNIE" ELIJAH ELLIS, AUGUST 28, 1986 - MARCH 3, 2020 TACOMA, WASHINGTON PHYSICAL RESTRAINT/ HYPOXIA: MARCH 3, 2020, TACOMA POLICE OFFICERS

ATATIANA KOQUICE JEFFERSON, NOVEMBER 28, 1990 - OCTOBER 12, 2019 FORT WORTH, TEXAS SHOT: OCTOBER 12, 2019, FORT WORTH POLICE OFFICER

EMANTIC "EJ" FITZGERALD BRADFORD JR., JUNE 18, 1997 - NOVEMBER 22, 2018 HOOVER, ALABAMA SHOT: NOVEMBER 22, 2018,

UNIDENTIFIED HOOVER POLICE OFFICERS

CHARLES "CHOP" ROUNDTREE JR., SEPTEMBER 5, 2000 - OCTOBER 17, 2018 SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS SHOT: OCTOBER 17, 2018, SAN ANTONIO POLICE OFFICER

JORDAN EDWARDS, OCTOBER 25, 2001 - APRIL 29, 2017 BALCH SPRINGS, TEXAS SHOT: APRIL 29, 2017, BALCH SPRINGS OFFICER

CHAD ROBERTSON, 1992 - FEBRUARY 15, 2017 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS SHOT: FEBRUARY 8, 2017, CHICAGO POLICE OFFICER

BOTHAM SHEM JEAN, SEPTEMBER 29, 1991 - SEPTEMBER 6, 2018 DALLAS, TEXAS SHOT: SEPTEMBER 6, 2018, DALLAS POLICE OFFICER

ANTWON ROSE JR., JULY 12, 2000 - JUNE 19, 2018 EAST PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA SHOT: JUNE 19, 2018, EAST PITTSBURGH POLICE OFFICER

SAHEED VASSELL, DECEMBER 22, 1983 - APRIL 4, 2018 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK SHOT: APRIL 4, 2018, FOUR UNNAMED NEW YORK CITY POLICE OFFICERS

STEPHON ALONZO CLARK, AUGUST 10, 1995 - MARCH 18, 2018 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA SHOT: MARCH 18, 2018, SACRAMENTO POLICE OFFICERS

AARON BAILEY, 1972 - JUNE 29, 2017 INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA SHOT: JUNE 29, 2017, INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN POLICE OFFICERS

CHARLEENA CHAVON LYLES, APRIL 24, 1987 - JUNE 18, 2017 SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

SHOT: JUNE 18, 2017, SEATTLE POLICE OFFICERS

FETUS OF CHARLEENA CHAVON LYLES (14-15 WEEKS), JUNE 18, 2017 SEATTLE, WASHINGTON SHOT: JUNE 18, 2017, SEATTLE POLICE OFFICERS

JORDAN EDWARDS, OCTOBER 25, 2001 - APRIL 29, 2017 BALCH SPRINGS, TEXAS SHOT: APRIL 29, 2017, BALCH SPRINGS OFFICER

CHAD ROBERTSON, 1992 - FEBRUARY 15, 2017 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS SHOT: FEBRUARY 8, 2017, CHICAGO POLICE OFFICER

DEBORAH DANNER, SEPTEMBER 25, 1950 - OCTOBER 18, 2016 THE BRONX, NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK SHOT: OCTOBER 18, 2016, NEW YORK CITY POLICE OFFICERS

ALFRED OLANGO, JULY 29, 1978 - SEPTEMBER 27, 2016 EL CAJON, CALIFORNIA SHOT: SEPTEMBER 27, 2016, EL CAJON POLICE OFFICERS

TERENCE CRUTCHER, AUGUST 16, 1976 - SEPTEMBER 16, 2016 TULSA, OKLAHOMA SHOT: SEPTEMBER 16, 2016, TULSA POLICE OFFICER

TERRENCE LEDELL STERLING, JULY 31, 1985 - SEPTEMBER 11, 2016 WASHINGTON, DC SHOT: SEPTEMBER 11, 2016, WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN POLICE OFFICER

KORRYN GAINES, AUGUST 24, 1993 - AUGUST 1, 2016 RANDALLSTOWN,

MARYLAND SHOT: AUGUST 1, 2016, BALTIMORE COUNTY POLICE

JOSEPH CURTIS MANN, 1966 - JULY 11, 2016 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA SHOT: JULY 11, 2016, SACRAMENTO POLICE OFFICERS

PHILANDO CASTILE, JULY 16, 1983 - JULY 6, 2016 FALCON HEIGHTS, MINNESOTA SHOT: JULY 6, 2016, ST. ANTHONY POLICE OFFICER

ALTON STERLING, JUNE 14, 1979 - JULY 5, 2016 BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA SHOT: JULY 5, 2016, BATON ROUGE POLICE OFFICERS

BETTIE "BETTY BOO" JONES, 1960 - DECEMBER 26, 2015 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS SHOT: DECEMBER 26, 2015, CHICAGO POLICE OFFICER

QUINTONIO LEGRIER, APRIL 29, 1996 - DECEMBER 26, 2015 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS SHOT: DECEMBER 26, 2015, CHICAGO POLICE OFFICER

COREY LAMAR JONES, FEBRUARY 3, 1984 - OCTOBER 18, 2015 PALM BEACH GARDENS, FLORIDA SHOT: OCTOBER 18, 2015, PALM BEACH GARDENS POLICE OFFICER

ERIC COURTNEY HARRIS, OCTOBER 10, 1971 - APRIL 2, 2015 TULSA, OKLAHOMA SHOT: APRIL 2, 2015, TULSA COUNTY RESERVE DEPUTY

JEREMY "BAM BAM" MCDOLE, 1987 - SEPTEMBER 23, 2015 WILMINGTON, DELAWARE SHOT: SEPTEMBER 23, 2015,

WILMINGTON POLICE OFFICERS

INDIA KAGER, JUNE 9, 1988 - SEPTEMBER 5, 2015 VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA SHOT: SEPTEMBER 5, 2015, VIRGINIA BEACH POLICE OFFICERS

SAMUEL VINCENT DUBOSE, MARCH 12, 1972 - JULY 19, 2015 CINCINNATI, OHIO SHOT: JULY 19, 2015, UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI POLICE OFFICER

SANDRA BLAND, FEBRUARY 7, 1987 - JULY 13, 2015 WALLER COUNTY, TEXAS EXCESSIVE FORCE/ WRONGFUL DEATH/SUICIDE (?): JULY 10, 2015, TEXAS STATE TROOPER

BRENDON K. GLENN, 1986 - MAY 5, 2015 VENICE, CALIFORNIA SHOT: MAY 5, 2015, LOS ANGELES POLICE OFFICER

FREDDIE CARLOS GRAY JR., AUGUST 16, 1989 - APRIL 19, 2015 BALTIMORE, MARYLAND BRUTE FORCE/ SPINAL INJURIES: APRIL 12, 2015, BALTIMORE CITY POLICE OFFICERS

WALTER LAMAR SCOTT, FEBRUARY 9, 1965 - APRIL 4, 2015 NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA SHOT: APRIL 4, 2015, NORTH CHARLESTON POLICE OFFICER

ERIC COURTNEY HARRIS, OCTOBER 10, 1971 - APRIL 2, 2015 TULSA, OKLAHOMA SHOT: APRIL 2, 2015, TULSA COUNTY RESERVE DEPUTY

PHILLIP GREGORY WHITE, 1982 - MARCH 31, 2015 VINELAND, NEW JERSEY K-9 MAULING/ RESPIRATORY DISTRESS: MARCH 31, 2015,

VINELAND POLICE OFFICERS

MYA SHAWATZA HALL, DECEMBER 5, 1987 - MARCH 30, 2015 FORT MEADE, MARYLAND SHOT: MARCH 30, 2015, NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY POLICE OFFICERS

MEAGAN HOCKADAY, AUGUST 27, 1988 - MARCH 28, 2015 OXNARD, CALIFORNIA SHOT: MARCH 28, 2015, OXNARD POLICE OFFICER

TONY TERRELL ROBINSON, JR., OCTOBER 18, 1995 - MARCH 6, 2015 MADISON, WISCONSIN SHOT: MARCH 6, 2015, MADISON POLICE OFFICER

JANISHA FONVILLE, MARCH 3, 1994 - FEBRUARY 18, 2015 CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA SHOT: FEBRUARY 18, 2015, CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE OFFICER

NATASHA MCKENNA, JANUARY 9, 1978 - FEBRUARY 8, 2015 FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA TASERED/ CARDIAC ARREST: FEBRUARY 3, 2015, FAIRFAX COUNTY SHERIFF DEPUTIES

JERAME C. REID, JUNE 8, 1978 - DECEMBER 30, 2014 BRIDGETON, NEW JERSEY SHOT: DECEMBER 30, 2014, BRIDGETON POLICE OFFICER

RUMAIN BRISBON, NOVEMBER 24, 1980 - DECEMBER 2, 2014 PHOENIX, ARIZONA SHOT: DECEMBER 2, 2014, PHOENIX POLICE OFFICER

TAMIR RICE, JUNE 15, 2002 - NOVEMBER 22, 2014 CLEVELAND, OHIO SHOT: NOVEMBER

22, 2014, CLEVELAND POLICE OFFICER

AKAI KAREEM GURLEY, NOVEMBER 12, 1986 - NOVEMBER 20, 2014 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK SHOT: NOVEMBER 20, 2014, NEW YORK CITY POLICE OFFICER

TANISHA N. ANDERSON, JANUARY 22, 1977 - NOVEMBER 13, 2014 CLEVELAND, OHIO PHYSICALLY RESTRAINED/ BRUTE FORCE: NOVEMBER 13, 2014, CLEVELAND POLICE OFFICERS

DANTE PARKER, AUGUST 14, 1977 - AUGUST 12, 2014 VICTORVILLE, CALIFORNIA TASERED/ EXCESSIVE FORCE: AUGUST 12, 2014, SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY SHERIFF DEPUTIES

EZELL FORD, OCTOBER 14, 1988 - AUGUST 11, 2014 FLORENCE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA SHOT: AUGUST 11, 2014, LOS ANGELES POLICE OFFICERS

MICHAEL BROWN JR., MAY 20, 1996 - AUGUST 9, 2014 FERGUSON, MISSOURI SHOT: AUGUST 9, 2014, FERGUSON POLICE OFFICER

JOHN CRAWFORD III, JULY 29, 1992 - AUGUST 5, 2014 BEAVERCREEK, OHIO SHOT: AUGUST 5, 2014, BEAVERCREEK POLICE OFFICER

ERIC GARNER, SEPTEMBER 15, 1970 - JULY 17, 2014 STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK CHOKE HOLD/ SUFFOCATED: JULY 17, 2014, NEW YORK CITY POLICE OFFICER

DONTRE HAMILTON, JANUARY 20, 1983 - APRIL 30, 2014 MILWAUKEE,

LADYGUNN x NO.20

CHAMBERS OF THE HEART
THE EDIT MASK ON
CUNTY CLUB
NAPPY HEAD CLUB
REFORMATION TRANSFORMATION
RUNWAY MY WAY
THE RISE OF LOCAL POLITICS
INSTIGATOR
REVOYOUTION
PUNK AS FUCK
TOUCHING ARMS
TOVE LO
VINCINT
KIMORA LEE SIMMONS

PARIS HILTON
RYAN DESTINY
SOKO
TINASHE
JOEY KING
DEATH BY ROMY
DONNA MISSAL
QVEEN HERBY
HEIDI GARDNER
TKAY MAIDZA
RIELA
MANCHADO
TAINY
HOME ALONE

Holy shit. This year was wiiiiiiiiiiiiid. We all knew when Trump took office it was going to be a dumpster dive into the depths of Hell. Our actual reality was like a low budget version of The Walking Dead with red hat racist zombies frothing at the mouth while we all dodged COVID-19, and bullets. We have an actual governing body led by the ghosts of America's most sinister past with an urgent agenda to fuck shit up. It played out like prime time snuff porn. The anchors on every major station seemed to relish on the reality show that the White House had become. But it wasn't entertaining, it was one civil liberty at a time, one black body at a time. Clowns and jesters making policies over our world while the rest of us entreated for the madness to stop.

This constant resurgence of white supremacy in America is not a cute "history has a way of repeating itself" trope. It's an assault on our consciousness, our livelihoods, our freedom, our time. It's a cruel design to ensure we never feel comfortable or safe. It's meant to trigger, to linger in your soul, and never give you a moment of peace. Every chapter of America has played on this narrative while profiting off the trauma and brilliance of Black people. If it's not a reminder of an awful past, it's the promise of a future that will be equally riddled with unnecessary strife.

If you can imagine it makes being black emotionally draining. Everything is a microaggression when you live in a society that is designed to hate you. The Trump presidency had me holding our breaths for the last four years. I never knew when a trip to the grocery store would turn into someone yelling "nigger" in my face. I thought about Ahmaud Arbery when I went jogging. I started to hate driving.

I always felt so small and powerless when it came to society and its paradigms. But this year, for the first time, I found that to not be true. In one of the greatest Civil Rights movements in history, there was a worldwide movement to restore civil decency. A rallying cry of humans screaming for justice, for peace, for the opportunity for black lives.

The Presidential Elections were hard to watch. I kept CNN on the whole week because I feared that like four years ago, the polls would make my heartache. This time though, we could not afford to lose, and we didn't.

One of the best lessons I have learned from life is that using your voice is not just about being loud; it's about amplifying love and lessons and finding solutions. It's about seeking how to unify all of our hopes and our dreams, not just for our lives but for the world.

black lives matter.

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chambers of the heart

WISCONSIN
SHOT: APRIL 30,
2014, MILWAUKEE
POLICE OFFICER

VICTOR WHITE III,
SEPTEMBER 11, 1991
- MARCH 3, 2014
NEW IBERIA,
LOUISIANA
SHOT: MARCH
2, 2014, IBERIA
PARISH SHERIFF
DEPUTY

GABRIELLA
MONIQUE
NEVAREZ,
NOVEMBER 25, 1991
- MARCH 2, 2014
CITRUS HEIGHTS,
CALIFORNIA
SHOT: MARCH
2, 2014, CITRUS
HEIGHTS POLICE
OFFICERS

YVETTE SMITH,
DECEMBER 18, 1966
- FEBRUARY 16,
2014
BASTROP COUNTY,
TEXAS
SHOT: FEBRUARY
16, 2014, BASTROP
COUNTY SHERIFF
DEPUTY

MCKENZIE J.
COCHRAN, AUGUST
25, 1988 - JANUARY
29, 2014
SOUTHFIELD,
MICHIGAN
PEPPER SPRAYED/
COMPRESSION
ASPHYXIATION:
JANUARY 28, 2014,
NORTHLAND MALL
SECURITY GUARDS

JORDAN BAKER,
1988 - JANUARY 16,
2014
HOUSTON, TEXAS
SHOT: JANUARY
16, 2014, OFF-DUTY
HOUSTON POLICE
OFFICER

ANDY LOPEZ, JUNE
2, 2000 - OCTOBER
22, 2013
SANTA ROSA,
CALIFORNIA
SHOT: OCTOBER
22, 2013, SONOMA
COUNTY SHERIFF
DEPUTY

MIRIAM IRIS CAREY,
AUGUST 12, 1979 -
OCTOBER 3, 2013
WASHINGTON, DC
SHOT 26 TIMES:
OCTOBER 3, 2013,
U. S. SECRET
SERVICE OFFICER

BARRINGTON “BJ”
WILLIAMS, 1988 -
SEPTEMBER 17, 2013
NEW YORK CITY,
NEW YORK
NEGLECT/DISDAIN/
ASTHMA ATTACK:
SEPTEMBER 17,
2013, NEW YORK
CITY POLICE
OFFICERS

JONATHAN
FERRELL,
OCTOBER 11, 1989
- SEPTEMBER 14,
2013
CHARLOTTE,
NORTH CAROLINA
SHOT: SEPTEMBER
14, 2013,
CHARLOTTE-

MECKLENBURG
POLICE OFFICER

CARLOS ALCIS,
1970 - AUGUST 15,
2013
BROOKLYN, NEW
YORK CITY
HEART ATTACK/
NEGLECT: AUGUST
15, 2013, NEW
YORK CITY POLICE
OFFICERS

LARRY EUGENE
JACKSON JR.,
NOVEMBER 29,
1980 - JULY 26, 2013
AUSTIN, TEXAS
SHOT: JULY 26,
2013, AUSTIN
POLICE
DETECTIVE

KYAM
LIVINGSTON,
JULY 29, 1975 -
JULY 21, 2013
NEW YORK CITY,
NEW YORK
NEGLECT/
IGNORED PLEAS
FOR HELP: JULY
20-21, 2013,
NEW YORK
CITY POLICE
OFFICERS

CLINTON
R. ALLEN,
SEPTEMBER 26,
1987 - MARCH 10,
2013
DALLAS, TEXAS
TASERED AND
SHOT: MARCH
10, 2013, DALLAS
POLICE OFFICER

KIMANI “KIKI”
GRAY, OCTOBER
19, 1996 - MARCH
9, 2013
BROOKLYN, NEW
YORK CITY, NEW
YORK
SHOT: MARCH
9, 2013, NEW
YORK POLICE
OFFICERS

KAYLA MOORE,
APRIL 17, 1971 -
FEBRUARY 13,
2013
BERKELEY,
CALIFORNIA
RESTRAINED
FACE-DOWN
PRONE:
FEBRUARY 12,
2013, BERKELEY
POLICE
OFFICERS

JAMAAL MOORE
SR., 1989 -
DECEMBER 15,
2012
CHICAGO,
ILLINOIS
SHOT:
DECEMBER 15,
2012, CHICAGO
POLICE OFFICER

JOHNNIE
KAMAHI
WARREN,
FEBRUARY 26,
1968 - FEBRUARY
13, 2012
DOTHAN,
ALABAMA
TASERED/
ELECTROCUTED:
DECEMBER 10,
2012, HOUSTON
COUNTY (AL)
SHERIFF DEPUTY

ALESIA THOMAS,
JUNE 1, 1977 -
JULY 22, 2012
LOS ANGELES,
CALIFORNIA
BRUTAL FORCE/
BEATEN: JULY
22, 2012, LOS

SHELLY MARIE
FREY, APRIL 21,
1985 - DECEMBER
6, 2012
HOUSTON,
TEXAS
SHOT:
DECEMBER 6,
2012, OFF-DUTY
HARRIS COUNTY
SHERIFF’S
DEPUTY

DARNISHA
DIANA HARRIS,
DECEMBER 11,
1996 - DECEMBER
2, 2012
BREAUX BRIDGE,
LOUISIANA
SHOT:
DECEMBER 2,
2012, BREAUX
BRIDGE POLICE
OFFICE

TIMOTHY
RUSSELL,
DECEMBER
9, 1968 -
NOVEMBER 29,
2012
CLEVELAND,
OHIO
137 ROUNDS/
SHOT 23 TIMES:
NOVEMBER
29, 2012,
CLEVELAND
POLICE
OFFICERS

MALISSA
WILLIAMS,
JUNE 20, 1982 -
NOVEMBER 29,
2012
CLEVELAND,
OHIO
137 ROUNDS/
SHOT 24 TIMES:
NOVEMBER
29, 2012,
CLEVELAND
POLICE
OFFICERS

NOEL PALANCO,
NOVEMBER 28,
1989 - OCTOBER
4, 2012
QUEENS, NEW
YORK CITY, NEW
YORK
SHOT: OCTOBER
4, 2012, NEW
YORK CITY
POLICE
OFFICERS

REYNALDO
CUEVAS,
JANUARY 6, 1992
- SEPTEMBER 7,
2012
BRONX, NEW
YORK CITY, NEW
YORK
SHOT:
SEPTEMBER 7,
2012, NEW YORK
CITY POLICE
OFFICER

CHAVIS CARTER,
1991 - JULY 28,
2012
JONESBORO,
ARKANSAS
SHOT: JULY
28, 2012,
JONESBORO
POLICE OFFICER

ALONZO ASHLEY,
JUNE 10, 1982 -
JULY 18, 2011
DENVER,
COLORADO
TASERED/
ELECTROCUTED:
MARCH 12, 2012,
AURORA POLICE
OFFICERS

ANGELES POLICE
OFFICERS

SHANTEL DAVIS,
MAY 26, 1989 -
JUNE 14, 2012
NEW YORK CITY,
NEW YORK
SHOT: JUNE 14,
2012, NEW YORK
CITY POLICE
OFFICER

SHARMEL T.
EDWARDS,
OCTOBER 10,
1962 - APRIL 21,
2012
LAS VEGAS,
NEVADA
SHOT: APRIL
21, 2012, LAS
VEGAS POLICE
OFFICERS

TAMON
ROBINSON,
DECEMBER 21,
1985 - APRIL 18,
2012
BROOKLYN, NEW
YORK CITY, NEW
YORK
RUN OVER BY
POLICE CAR:
APRIL 12, 2012,
NEW YORK
CITY POLICE
OFFICERS

RAYMOND
LUTHER ALLEN
JR., 1978 -
FEBRUARY 29,
2012
GALVESTON,
TEXAS
TASERED/
ELECTROCUTED:
FEBRUARY
27, 2012,
GALVESTON
POLICE
OFFICERS

ERVIN LEE
JEFFERSON, III,
1994 - MARCH 24,
2012
ATLANTA,
GEORGIA
SHOT: MARCH
24, 2012,
SHEPPERSON
SECURITY
& ESCORT
SERVICES
SECURITY
GUARDS

KENDREC
MCDADE, MAY 5,
1992 - MARCH 24,
2012
PASADENA,
CALIFORNIA
SHOT: MARCH 24,
2012, PASADENA
POLICE
OFFICERS

REKIA BOYD,
NOVEMBER 5,
1989 - MARCH 21,
2012
CHICAGO,
ILLINOIS
SHOT: MARCH 21,
2012, OFF-DUTY
CHICAGO POLICE
DETECTIVE

SHEREESE
FRANCIS, 1982 -
MARCH 15, 2012
QUEENS, NEW
YORK CITY, NEW
YORK
SUFFOCATED
TO DEATH:
MARCH 15, 2012,
NEW YORK
CITY POLICE
OFFICERS

JERSEY K.
GREEN, JUNE 17,
1974 - MARCH 12,
2012

AURORA,
ILLINOIS
TASERED/
ELECTROCUTED:
MARCH 12, 2012,
AURORA POLICE
OFFICERS

WENDELL

JAMES ALLEN,
DECEMBER 19,
1991 - MARCH 7,
2012
NEW ORLEANS,
LOUISIANA
SHOT: MARCH
7, 2012, NEW
ORLEANS
POLICE OFFICER

NEHEMIAH
LAZAR DILLARD,
JULY 29, 1982 -
MARCH 5, 2012
GAINESVILLE,
FLORIDA
TASERED/
ELECTROCUTED:
MARCH 5, 2012,
ALACHUA
COUNTY
SHERIFF
DEPUTIES

DANTE LAMAR
PRICE, JULY 18,
1986 - MARCH 1,
2012
DAYTON, OHIO
SHOT: MARCH 1,
2012, RANGER
SECURITY
GUARDS

RAYMOND
LUTHER ALLEN
JR., 1978 -
FEBRUARY 29,
2012
GALVESTON,
TEXAS
TASERED/
ELECTROCUTED:
FEBRUARY
27, 2012,
GALVESTON
POLICE
OFFICERS

MANUAL LEVI
LOGGINS JR.,
FEBRUARY 22,
1980 - FEBRUARY
7, 2012
SAN CLEMENTE,
ORANGE
COUNTY,
CALIFORNIA
SHOT: FEBRUARY
7, 2012, ORANGE
COUNTY
SHERIFF DEPUTY

RAMARLEY
GRAHAM,
APRIL 12, 1993
- FEBRUARY 2,
2012
THE BRONX,
NEW YORK CITY,
NEW YORK
SHOT: FEBRUARY
2, 2012, NEW
YORK CITY
POLICE OFFICER

KENNETH
CHAMBERLAIN
SR., APRIL
12, 1943 -
NOVEMBER 19,
2011
WHITE PLAINS,
NEW YORK
TASERED/
ELECTROCUTED/
SHOT:
NOVEMBER 19,
2011, WHITE
PLAINS POLICE
OFFICERS

ALONZO ASHLEY,
JUNE 10, 1982 -
JULY 18, 2011
DENVER,
COLORADO
TASERED/
ELECTROCUTED:
JULY 18, 2011,
DENVER POLICE

OFFICERS

DEREK
WILLIAMS,
JANUARY 23,
1989 - JULY 6,
2011
MILWAUKEE,
WISCONSIN
BLUNT FORCE/
RESPIRATORY
DISTRESS:
JULY 6, 2011,
MILWAUKEE
POLICE
OFFICERS

RAHEIM BROWN,
JR., MARCH 4,
1990 - JANUARY
22, 2011
OAKLAND,
CALIFORNIA
SHOT: JANUARY
22, 2011,
OAKLAND
UNIFIED SCHOOL
DISTRICT POLICE

REGINALD
DOUCET, JUNE 3,
1985 - JANUARY
14, 2011

OSCAR GRANT
III, FEBRUARY 27,
1986 - JANUARY
1, 2009
OAKLAND,
CALIFORNIA
SHOT: JANUARY
1, 2009, BART
POLICE OFFICER

TARIKA WILSON,
OCTOBER 30,
1981 - JANUARY
4, 2008
LIMA, OHIO
SHOT JANUARY 4,
2008, LIMA POLICE
OFFICER

DEAUNTA
TERREL FARROW,
SEPTEMBER 7, 1994
- JUNE 22, 2007
WEST MEMPHIS,
ARKANSAS
SHOT: JUNE
22, 2007, WEST
MEMPHIS (AR)
POLICE OFFICER

SEAN BELL,
MAY 23, 1983 -
NOVEMBER 25,
2006

QUEENS, NEW
YORK CITY, NEW
YORK
SHOT: NOVEMBER
25, 2006, NEW
YORK CITY POLICE
OFFICERS

STEVEN EUGENE
WASHINGTON,
SEPTEMBER 20,
1982 - MARCH 20,
2010
LOS ANGELES,
CALIFORNIA
SHOT: MARCH
20, 2010, LOS
ANGELES
COUNTY POLICE

KATHRYN
JOHNSTON,
JUNE 26, 1914 -
NOVEMBER 21,
2006
ATLANTA,
GEORGIA
SHOT: NOVEMBER
21, 2006,
UNDERCOVER
ATLANTA POLICE
OFFICERS

RONALD CURTIS
MADISON,
MARCH 1, 1965 -
SEPTEMBER 4,
2005
DANZIGER BRIDGE,
NEW ORLEANS,
LOUISIANA
SHOT: SEPTEMBER
4, 2005, NEW
ORLEANS POLICE
OFFICERS

JAMES B.

2009
CHAMPAIGN,
ILLINOIS
SHOT: OCTOBER
9, 2019,
CHAMPAIGN
POLICE OFFICER

VICTOR STEEN,
NOVEMBER 11,
1991 - OCTOBER
3, 2009
PENSACOLA,
FLORIDA
TASERED/RUN
OVER: OCTOBER
3, 2009,
PENSACOLA
POLICE OFFICER

SHEM WALKER,
MARCH 18, 1960 -
JULY 11, 2009
BROOKLYN, NEW
YORK
SHOT: JULY
11, 2009, NEW
YORK CITY
UNDERCOVER
C-94 POLICE
OFFICER

OSCAR GRANT
III, FEBRUARY 27,
1986 - JANUARY
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1, 2009, BART
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TARIKA WILSON,
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SHOT: MARCH
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ANGELES
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MASK'S, WIEDERHOEFT.

MASK ON

BY PHIL GOMEZ SHOT BY SAVANNA RUEDY



HOME ALONE

PHOTOS / EVELYN PUSTKA
STORY / LOREN KRAMAR + EVELYN PUSTKA
SHOT @ LOREN'S HOME IN LOS ANGELES

Photographer Evelyn Pustka and musician Loren Kramar are longtime friends who wanted to create something magical during quarantine. Greatly inspired by PPE mask designs from 69us and Lou Dallas, the two artists wanted to bring the idea of starving isolation and performance. What they ended up with was a hauntingly domestic set of photographs that complement the avant-garde and our everyday mundane lives. Together in Loren's home in LA, the friends combined their artistic expertise to produce eight photos that are visually complex and lush.

In addition to this project, Loren has been working on new music and visual elements. One of these projects includes the music video for his song "Cover Girl" which features his soulful voice and a vertical video. These artists' ideas are out of the box and will leave you wanting more.

LADYGUNN to both Evelyn and Loren: These photos are stunning and yet leave you with a hauntingly domestic vibe. How did you get here in the process? What was the inspiration process?

Evelyn: I exceedingly admire Loren's fusion of deep emotions, surprising styling, and nuanced humor within his music and performances. I wanted to amplify in the images this persona he has so well curated. I imagined Loren in a dream-like state – stuck in his house like the rest of the world. What would it look like to spend a day with Loren in a lush realm that surrounds his isolation? I was thrilled with the designers we collaborated with – Eckhaus Latta, 69us, Mondo Mondo, and Lou Dallas. I have been following each of them for years. The pieces we were given to work with inspired me to create this extravagant and isolated sad clown, who no longer is performing for a live audience but instead performing banal tasks around the house, existing only with himself and the adjoining greenery and domestic setting. A sense of play is important within my work behind the scenes and within the image. I want the viewer to chuckle a little while finding themselves elsewhere on the spectrum of emotions. A mixture of humor and beauty can become a skeleton key into a world of possibilities.

Loren: Evelyn and I had worked together on a few Lou Dallas shoots and it was clear that we had a special collaborative bond. Creative relationships are extremely important to me and I do my best to honor them. What always impressed me about Evelyn's work is its narrative tension. Her pictures imply complex histories and scenarios, which is to say they have lives. She has a real gift for creating and capturing drama. Going into this quarantine shoot, I think we both wanted to create images that explored the theater of solitude.

Read more on LADYGUNN.COM



CUNTY

PHOTOS / FRANNEY MILLER
 MAKEUP / NATALIA LOPEZ
 HAIR / CHRISTINA BEMAN
 SET DESIGN / SOPHIE PARKER
 MODELS / THOM JANA , ANASTASIA @ STATE, BIANCA @ INDUSTRY

The reality was that I could feel a collective shift in the air and was being called to acknowledge it from within as well. So I got back in touch with my roots: feminist performance art, goddess centric spirituality, and cunts. Cuntly was born from a pulsating need to reconnect, reclaim, revitalize, and renew. Being in a contracted place and relating to many of the women in my life who also felt the pines of old societal constructs weighing them down; I felt compelled to take my creative energy/endeavors out of the self and contribute to this collective powerful feminist wave that was gaining momentum.

Designer Dominique Palladino Wants To Know, "Are You A CUNT?" If So You Have Cum To The Right Place. Cuntly Club Is The Insignia That Marks Cunts Who Live, Thrive, Survive, And More Than All Three Of Those Elements Combined, Are

Welcome. Palladino Didn't Start The Brand As A Fashion Line As Much As A Collective For Like-Minded Warrior Spirit Of Female-Identifying Energy.

Palladino's Background In Visual And Fine Art Married With Her ECommerce Venture Provides The Wearer With No Hold Barred Experience Of Fashion, Protest, And Art. Cuntly Club Is A Sustainable Fashion Mission That We Can All Get Behind. Dominique's Rally Call To All Of Us Is Full Of A Better World Where Matriarchy Thrives And Coexist With Every Element That Mother Earth Has To Offer.

We Chat With One Of Our Favorite Cunts About Being Eco-Oriented In The Fashion World, Her Inspirations, And What It Takes To Be A CUNT.

Read more on LADYGUNN.COM

NAPPY HEAD CLUB

FEATURING RACHEL DANIELLE + RIKKI-RICHHELLE
 PHOTOS / SABREEN JAFRY
 STYLING / RIKKI-RICHHELLE + NIKOSI
 MAKEUP / CIRSTY BURTON



Nappy Head Club has become an enlightening community of like-minded spirits to uplift the mental, creative and physical health of people of color. We chat with Rachel about being in the club.

Did You Guys Ever Go Through A Return To The Natural State? What Was That Like For You?

I Remember Years On Perming, Cutting, Perming Pieces, Cutting Until I Said "NO" About 15 Years Ago.

My "big chop" moment happened for me in college. I'd tried to do a perm myself at home (see: broke college student) and ended up severely damaging my hair. At that point, I really didn't have much of a choice, and a few of my friends either just went natural or were considering it, so I took the plunge. I remember being at my dad's house for spring break, marching upstairs, and just cutting it all off. I came to dinner unbothered with a whole new look. I really loved it in the

beginning, it was very short and so easy to manage. I felt like it gave me a bit of edge and it was fun to discover what my curls looked like.

At the beginning of the natural hair movement there wasn't much representation of type 4 hair, so what started out as fun and exciting very quickly turned into feelings of inadequacy as my hair was growing in, kinky as ever, and I was desperately trying to mimic YouTubers with looser curl patterns. After about 6 months of that, I started wearing wigs and weaves again. My natural hair really wouldn't make another appearance for about 3 years.

I'm still on that second journey, it still feels new. I'm still learning my hair, still building a relationship. Some days I love how I look, and some days I give myself permission throw on a wig. I try to be gentle with myself.

Read more on LADYGUNN.COM



REFORMATION TRANSFORMATION W/ KNORTS

PHOTOS / ALEX DE LA HIDALGO
 CREATIVE DIRECTION + STYLING / PHIL GOMEZ
 STORY / GLYNN POGUE

Picture this: you've been quarantining at the crib for the past two weeks, you know, trying to lay low. But to be real, you're going a little stir crazy. So when your friends text: "beach today?" You write back: "downnnnnn."

Before you leave the house, you pack a bag: tanning oil, towel, speaker, water bottle, and a bandana, just in case.

You and your friends have ambitiously decided to get citibikes and ride two hours to the beach. You're not looking forward to it, but your friend who's always looking on the bright side, says: "when we get there, it'll be like we earned it!"

45 Minutes into the ride and you're sweating bullets. When you pull over for a break, you pour water down your face, pat it dry with the bandana, then tie it around your head to push your hair back. It's secure, but soft around your crown, the fabric is light, but sturdy.

Your homegirl was right. Once you start feeling the salt hit your face, and see all that blue on the horizon, working so hard for this does feel sweeter. When you get to the shore, you and your friends don't even bother setting up a whole section, you just throw your shit down and run straight into the sea with your clothes on.

Afterwards, you offer to go cop a few beers. Instead of putting on your heavy ass n95, you tie your bandana around your face. Back on the sand, you and your friends stretch out to sip. The cap of the bottle is slippery, so you use your bandana to grip it.

At dusk, you all gather for a moment of silence to watch the sun dip away behind the surf. Then it's time to make the journey home. Your shirt is damp and sandy, so instead of putting it back on, you tie your bandana around your chest.

"Ohh, check you out. You just made a whole new look!" Your girl says.

You look down at the bandana, and it strikes you how good of an investment it was. It has highkey held you down all day. It's a wardrobe staple that's lived new lives every time you've used it, or styled it differently. How interesting, poetic even, how many purposes it served and places it's been with you.

READ MORE ON LADYGUNN.COM

RUNWAY MY WAY

PHOTOS / JAE EUN SEOK

STYLING / ANGELINA SCANTLEBURY

MAKEUP / SHANE MONDEN WITH NEXT MANAGEMENT

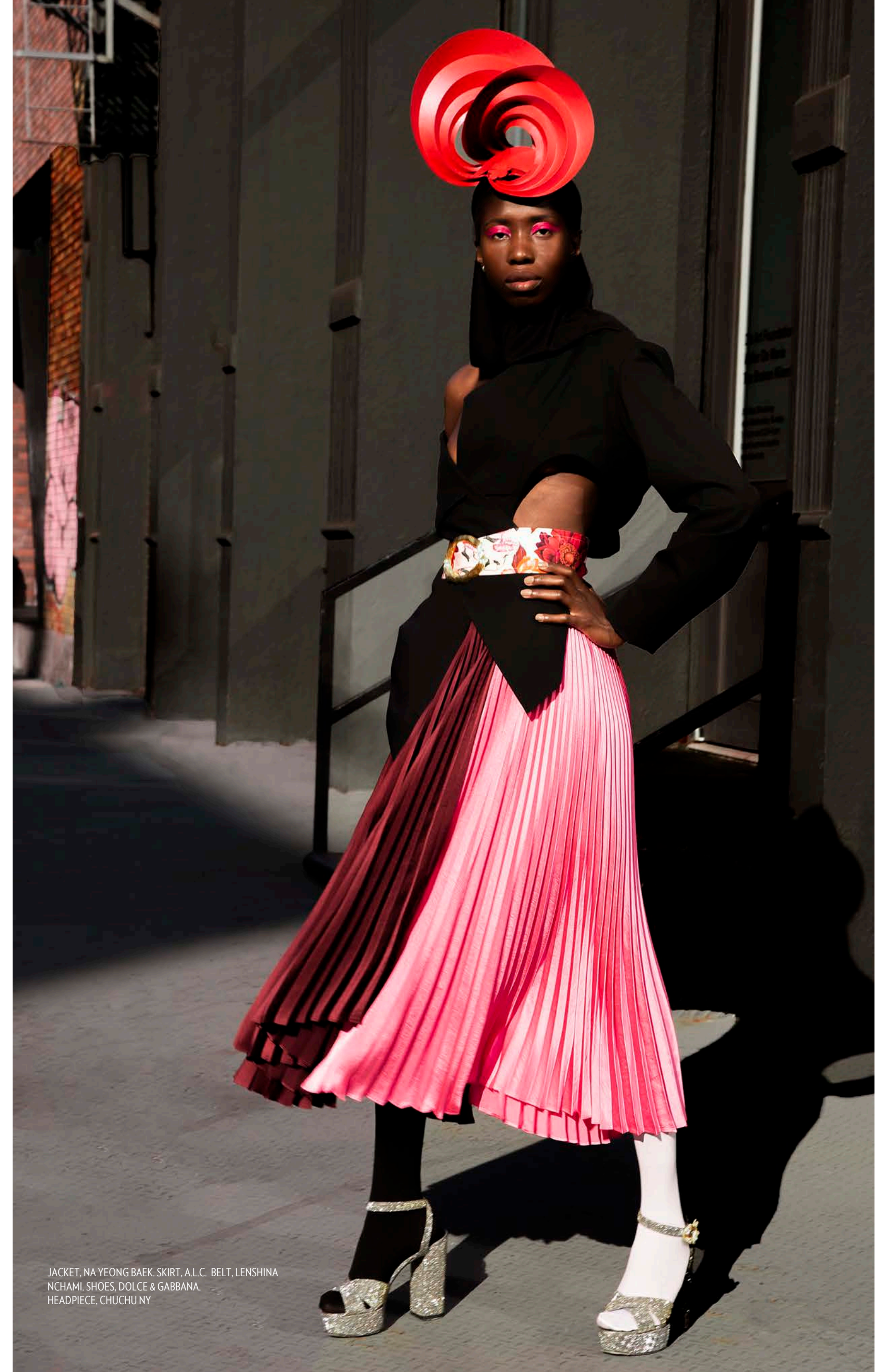
MODEL / GIANNINA OTELO @ NEW ICON



TUNIC, CAROLINA HERRERA. SKIRT, MAX STUDIO.
SHOES, MARC FISHER. HAT, LYNN PAIK.



DRESS, NA YEONG BAEK. HAT, LYNN PAIK.



JACKET, NA YEONG BAEK. SKIRT, A.L.C. BELT, LENSHINA
NCHAMI. SHOES, DOLCE & GABBANA.
HEADPIECE, CHUCHU NY



DRESS, NA YEONG BAEK. HAT, LYNN PAIK.





DRESS, GUCCI.
GLOVES, DOOWAY.
SHOES, GUCCI.



DRESS, MIHANO MOMOSA.
SHOES, ABOUND.
HAT, LYNN PAIK.

THE RISE OF LOCAL POLITICS

STORY / EVE SIMONSEN ILLUSTRATIONS / JULIETTE TOMA

As more minds are opening to the truths that throughout history America has worked so hard to keep from its people, the gap between “ignorance is bliss” and “knowledge is power” is quickly narrowing. While some eyes have always been open to the political landscape, thanks to the last four years all anyone has had to do to have an oh-shit-our-country-is-trash-and-what-can-I-do-to-help-fix-it moment is wake up in the morning. But where does one start? With information more immediately at hand than ever, and outspoken beliefs ranging from complete abolition to “we’ve just gotta get Trump out,” it’s hard to see what the most obvious jumping-off point is. For Deesha Dyer, CEO and founder of social impact consulting firm Hook and Fasten and former Social Secretary at the Obama White House, this means we should focus on the full political spectrum. “We need to completely dismantle systems and start over again, but one of the ways to get there is to get the current president out of office. The damage he continues to cause daily, like hourly at this point — we can’t afford that anymore.”

While yes, Trump needs to GTFO and literally every-one needs to get out the vote for Biden/Harris on November 3rd, there also lies a recognizable truth that he’s not the entire problem. In fact, it feels right to say that if it weren’t for Trump’s presidency, the great unveiling of 2020 would probably not be happening — at least not in the way that it is. As painful as the realities of racism, capitalism and the division of American people are, this is where the most important work comes from — the most real, raw, and transformational time period that has maybe ever occurred. “People, who stick to the same model and system of operating a country are not thinking outside the box of, What other world is possible, knowing that this one was made without everybody in mind?” Deesha continues, “How do you fix an entire system with the foundation so cracked? At this point, it just needs to be torn down and built back up. It seems hard... but I’m learning how to imagine that.”

Thinking about hitting a compassionate reset button on the entire government might feel a little far-reaching. But a lesser-known area of the political system where real change just actually might be possible is coming into the limelight: local offices. Local government, Deesha believes, is “more important than what people give credit for. People don’t see the trickle-down effect, how the Senate, House, City Council, the school board — they don’t see the direct correlation to the community. These are the people that represent you in the halls of Congress, speaking on behalf of constituents. We don’t even know who they are, what they stand for, yet this is how people [in office] stay accountable. If residents have no idea who their City Council is, how can they be held accountable? We need to do a better job of educating people about how local politics directly affects the community and then I think people will be like, Oh I need to care about this.”

There’s a magnitude of an impact having the likes of AOC in Congress, following activists who stand up for justice for marginalized people or the current uprising sparking interest in looking deeper at how many tax dollars are, say, funding a city’s corrupt and brutal police department. Local politicians actually have the power to tear down the toxic layers of

bureaucracy and focus on the things that make towns and cities stronger — education, healthcare, community.

Enter a surge of young, radical voices inserting themselves into the political game. Like many people, 22-year-old Crown Heights, Brooklyn native Chi (pronounced Chee) Osse (son of the late Reggie Osse, known professionally as Combat Jack), used the solitude that came with the COVID-19 shutdown as a time to work on himself. A young, gifted, Black, queer man with a background in the creative world, he was at the beginning stages of launching a fashion brand, but instead found himself coming out of quarantine protesting the murder of George Floyd.

“I was definitely a rookie protester. I showed up in shorts and I had a bag with water and chapstick. It was a nonviolent protest yet the response from law enforcement was...they were pepper spraying people, knocking people over with barricades, being very violent. Instead of it scaring me, it gave me a fire and a passion to continue going out. So I went out the next day, and the day after that and after that. And then I started to find my voice.”

Marching and getting loud in the streets of NYC led Chi to his next chapter: organically forming what has become one of NYC’s most-followed activist organizations. “Those initial days... it’s kind of a blur: wake up, protest, eat, sleep. None of us knew each other prior. We started seeing each other at protests and recognizing each other as leaders. We knew our voices would be louder if they were amplified together. And that’s when we became Warriors in the Garden. We needed each other, that solidarity, we needed that family in order to get through what is going on.”

Timing is everything: Amid the protests and calls to defund police departments in cities like Minneapolis, Portland and Seattle, NYC was facing a budget vote. Something that had historically been overlooked by the average person was now in the spotlight, and outreach to City Council members was at an all-time high — and it became a pivotal moment for Chi’s future. “Realizing the power that councilmembers have really made me do more research into who they were and their voting records, especially when it came to police reform. What is also online is who is funding these campaigns. And when you take a deeper look, it’s coming from large corporations, real estate companies, police unions. It gave me another push to do something about it. It’s another branch in the Black Lives Matter movement.”

Chi’s “do something” was made public in early June, when he announced his candidacy for City Council in NYC’s District 36, which, if he wins, will make him the youngest member ever. “Too often, individuals like myself are dissuaded from running for these positions of power. And I’m trying to engage people in politics because they need to be engaged. We can no longer be angry and dissatisfied with politicians that aren’t listening to us and chant that we should vote them out — we need to be talking about who we’re going to vote in. We can use our voice to change what’s happening. I’m hoping that I — no, I WILL BE — that source of inspiration to not only be a pariah for people to vote for but someone that they themselves feel



like they can run campaigns as I do, progressives of all ages — for people to feel like they can run for public office.”

If one thing is becoming clearer, it's that politics needs representation not only across race and gender but sexuality and age as well. People are realizing the power of having a voice in the office that matches theirs. What voters want are “people like them, that they can relate to,” says Paperboy Love Prince, who is on November's ballot in NY's District 7 for a seat in Congress. “A big part of [getting people to vote] is having interesting candidates. That's why Trump is in office. People have given up on career politicians ... people don't want that anymore.” themselves feel like they can run campaigns like I do, progressives of all ages — for people to feel like they can run for public office.”

If one thing is becoming clearer, it's that politics needs representation not only across race and gender, but sexuality and age as well. People are realizing the power of having a voice in office that matches theirs. What voters want are “people like them, that they can relate to,” says Paperboy Love Prince, who is on November's ballot in NY's District 7 for a seat in Congress. “A big part of [getting people to vote] is having interesting candidates. That's why Trump is in office. People have given up on career politicians ... people don't want that anymore.”

For years Paperboy has not only been a student of the political field — they once interned for a congressman and was a delegate for former presidential candidate Andrew Wang — but also has used their voice as a rapper and performer, noting that their shows would double as voter registration sites and rallies. They've made platform issues into songs, such as “Cancel Rent,” as a way of connecting with new constituents through music first, then politics. They ran in the June primary as a Democrat and lost to incumbent Nydia Velasquez (who has held the seat for 27 years — term limits, anyone?!). But they succeeded in the very daunting process of petitioning enough signatures to make it on the general election ballot anyway. “One of the reasons we didn't give up,” says Paper, “was the people. It was overwhelming to me how many people at the polls would tell me they were an immigrant or had just turned 18 and were voting for the first time because they believed in my message. By putting out love, I got so much of it back. I can't quit.”

Paper's platform calls for Medicare for all, universal basic income and a unique initiative called Democracy Dollars, which offers a \$500 stipend paid from the federal and state governments that can only be used for citizens to donate to political campaigns. Taking absolutely no big money or corporate campaign donations has been both rewarding and challenging. Promoting family, community and unity, Paper's team is 100% volunteer. They've gone head to head with campaigns that are fully staffed, who employ attorneys to do things like scouring petitions to find errors to validate throwing them out (small things

like an illegible letter or a missing or incorrect apartment number can disqualify a signature). But running against a career politician has only fueled Paper with more of the heart and passion that they began with. “I want to help people, to do the best I can, and inspire others to pick up that mantle.”

Put simply, love is Paper's platform and is actually the name of their newly minted independent party. “The Love Party is a way to show love to everyone. The other parties like to divide people; we use all those same reasons [of difference] to bring people together. It's not easy, but people see me as a young Black man. And as a young Black man in New York, the last thing they think that I'm here to do is spread, love...”

We already have everything we need to create effective change: fresh voices with progressive ideas, plentiful city and state budgets that need reallocating, police departments that need defunding — as Chi points out, to put money “into things that matter more than police helicopters, armored vehicles, and riot gear.” A growing number of people are ready for this change and are willing to get a little uncomfortable in conversations while learning to unlearn, to fight against systems of oppression, and step into individual and community power.

Part of the path of this movement, as Deesha puts it, is that “people need to learn how the government works, how their votes work. We need to talk about race, Black lives, police force, economic and disability justice, and all these things at every level of government. It needs to be a regular part of the conversation to push toward equality and equity.”

To begin the painful yet transformational process of realizing that instead of lifting its people up, America the beautiful and its governing entities have always been about control and keeping people down, Paper believes that “we have to do more things to hold the system accountable, not just the individuals.” When asked for an impromptu freestyle with the inspiration being resilience, Paper quickly dropped the following bars:

When They Think About Paperboy
They Think About Resilience
We Spreading So Much Love So I Know They
Gonna Feel This
Ideas So Great So The Politicians Steal Them
The People Been Hurtin' So We Came
Through To Heal 'Em
So Much Fake It's Hard To Tell What Real Is...
I Said So Much Fake It's Hard To Tell What
Real Is

2020 has already been a year for the books, and the rest of its outcome lies greatly in the hands and hearts of the collective us. This is a moment for narratives to be written, or rewritten. This is a time to awaken. To rise up together, for the greater good, for the children who we pave the way for, to vote like our lives depend on it, because... they do.

BY PUTTING OUT LOVE, I GOT SO MUCH OF IT BACK. I CAN'T QUIT.” - PAPERBOY



PHOTOS / JULIET WOLF
FASHION DIRECTION + STORY / JAY KHENDAR
LOCATION / SHOT @ MI CASA NYC

An instigator by definition is a person who brings about or initiates something . In my life I've realized how often I am seen as an instigator for wanting to discuss and tackle issues head on - and for never wanting to be silenced. As the Black Lives Matter Movement grew and with the tragic deaths that occurred this year , I felt our voices being even more stifled. I decided to use my platform to highlight my original muses (women) but more specifically ; black women . I met with Livia Rose Johnson to hear her thoughts :

An instigator by definition is a person who brings about or initiates something. We (black and brown people) are often referred to as instigators for protesting and speaking out about issues that are affecting us daily. I constantly encourage this especially in our generation. What's your take on this?

An instigator is really just someone who can awaken something in someone else... The power of an instigator is completely dependent on the amount or extent in which they can awaken people and draw awareness to a problem. Instigators are ESSENTIAL because of their ability to draw exponential influence .

You are extremely vocal and vulnerable with your audience. People can often stereotype as the "angry black woman/man" trope. I often try to explain how our "anger" is actually extremely valid in any form- Instead of asking if we are angry / we should be asking why. So , WHY are you angry?

I would say definitely don't mistake my anger for passion. I am passionate about black lives and I just want to see them flourish.

There's been a lot of performative activism and discourse specifically towards those who are not being more active. What do you have to say to those people and why is it important for EVERYONE to fight?

Everyone feels pain differently in a way; protesting is just one way of dealing with the pain so I don't want to tell certain people to be on the streets if that's not the best way of healing/ dealing. However there are different methods for us to fight. You can be donating , calling your local legislation, trying to get people to vote, it's a team effort that involves much more than just marching. Just because you're focusing on a different part doesn't make you performative. We cannot be gatekeeping how people participate in activism or fight for black lives especially, for the black community .

What does freedom mean to you?

Freedom means accepting myself and my purest form in my true dimension. I feel that as a black woman I'm told to be this or that conform to one stereotype or another, and I never truly get to be myself. Society doesn't want. I've learned how to be comfortable in my skin down to the bone , and to unapologetically be my most authentic self.

Lastly , how are you feeling ? Do you have any projects coming up that you want to share ?

I feel drained yet there's a flame that has been fueling me since May and it won't stop now. A lot of the new work that I've been doing is creating digital space that reflects what we had in the streets ; making it accessible for everybody. Unfortunately not everyone is able to physically go out and protest , mainly due to the pandemic ; so I'm focused on activism that is accessible to those who aren't able to go outside , especially with the state of the world. We want activism to be able to be utilized by everyone!

CORSET+VEIL, HAUS OF KHENDAR.
JEWELRY, JOHNNY NELSON



INSTIGATOR

“DON’T MISTAKE MY
ANGER FOR PASSION. I
AM PASSIONATE ABOUT
BLACK LIVES AND I JUST
WANT TO SEE THEM
FLOURISH.”





WHEN THE REVOLUTION

COMES SOME OF US WILL

PROBABLY CATCH IT ON TV...

Initially, I Had No Intention Of Attending The Protests Because Of COVID 19. I Really Wanted To Be Out There But After Being Quarantined For Weeks, I Couldn't Risk The Health Of Myself And Others.

However, I'm Extremely Empathic And After Hours Of Watching Live Footage Of Police Brutality Toward Peaceful Protestors - I Finally Cracked And Joined The Others In The Streets. I Realized My Fear Was Intertwined With Guilt And That Sacrificing My Body On The Frontline Was The Least I Could Do.

As A White Person, I Don't Feel It's My Right To Speak On The Behalf Of This Movement. Contrarily, As A Filmmaker, I Feel It Is My Artistic Duty To Preserve Such A Heartbreakingly Profound Moment In History Through My Female Lens. I Wanted To Do My Best To Document This Spontaneous, Bottom-Up Movement In A Raw And Honest Way. Some Of These Images Are Not Pretty To Look At But That's The Point, As It Is Important To See The Emotional Pain That Has Manifested Into Physical Reality.

I Asked Some Of My Beautiful, Smart, And Talented Black Friends To Lend Me Their Voice For This Series. This Movement Is Theirs And I Am Merely Here To Listen, Learn, And Be An Ally In Their Search For Justice.

ALL PHOTOS SHOT ON YASHICA T4 ON 35MM FILM BY ERICKA CLEVENGER



"THIS IS MORE THAN JUST A BLACK OR WHITE ISSUE, IT'S AN ISSUE OF WHAT'S RIGHT AND WRONG. EVERYBODY DESERVES TO BE AND LIVE COMFORTABLY IN 'AMERICA' NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK OR WHERE YOU'RE FROM."

- @JOHHNYG



PUNK

AS FUCK



2020 HAS BEEN PUNK AS FUCK. TO SAY THE LEAST, THESE REVOLUTIONARY VOICES HAVE RUNG THROUGH THE ECHO CHAMBERS OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO DISMANTLE AND CELEBRATE INDIVIDUALITY, ACTIVISM, BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS AND BEYOND.

ALL OF OUR SUBJECTS HAVE STYLE AND BEAUTY THAT STARTS FROM WITHIN. WE PARTNERED WITH T.U.K. TO AMPLIFY PAULI, CAKES, LUST SICK PUPPY, AND P.S. KAGUYA WARRIORS ON THE STREETS AND IN THEIR STYLE.



PHOTOS / JULIA PITCH
STYLING + CREATIVE DIRECTION / PHIL GOMEZ
HAIR / YUKI YAMASAKI
MAKEUP / MORGAN MATOUS



BELT DRESS, RICKY KING. BRACELETS, ALEXISBIT TAR EAR CUFF, NINA BERENATO. SHOES, T.U.K.





KINK

ART DIRECTION AND POETRY / KATIE BEASLEY
PHOTOGRAPHY / CULLY WRIGHT For ART DEPARTMENT LA
STYLING / JULIA PLATT-HEPWORTH
VIDEO EDITING / MADELAINE TURNER
PRODUCTION / PORKCHOP PRODUCTION LA
PHOTO AND PRODUCTION ASSISTANC / ELLIOTT CROWE

SOULFUL
ARTS

STARRING:
HAILEY BETH AT FREEDOM MODELS
RIVER AT VISION
KJAY AND EVA AT WILHELMINA
DAOUDA AT TWO MODEL MANAGEMENT
SADJO AT DAVID TODD LA
GENEVIEVE AT MERAKI MODELS LA

TOUCH



T SHIR, T TRAVIS SCOTT.
NECKLACE MODELS OWN
TOP, COLLINA STRADA.
JEWELRY, MODELS OWN.
DRESS, VINTAGE.
JEWELRY, MODELS OWN.

ON SADJO
OVERALLS NIKE
T SHIRT MODELS OWN
JEWELRY MODELS OWN
ON GENEVIEVE
SHIRT PALOMA WOOL
SHORTS VINTAGE
JEWELRY MODELS OWN
ON DAUDA
BANDANA VINTAGE
TANK VINTAGE
TOP MODELS OWN
SWEATSHIRT BY STUSSY

the sun will start to set, but we hardly notice

ON HAILEY:
NECKLACE, LAURA LOMBARDI.
SWIM TOP, FISCH.
JEANS, MODELS OWN.
ON RIVER:
JEANS, MODELS OWN.
NECKLACE, MODELS OWN.

the heat from touching arms, dismisses our need for sweatshirts



LADYGUNN

QUARANTINE



TOVE LO

VINCINT

MICHEAL MUSTO

KIMORA LEE SIMMONS

ASHNIKKO

ALEX NEWELL



DIRECTOR / JASPER SOLOFF
 PHOTOS / CHARLIE TWADDLE
 CREATIVE DIRECTION + STYLING / PHIL GOMEZ
 JEWELRY / ALEXIS BITTAR
 STORY / ARIANA TIBI

I don't think anyone anticipated we'd have to be doing photoshoots over zoom. Yet here we are.

Exactly, here we are. It turned out really cool! In terms of the lockdown, I haven't been in one place this long for at least 7 or 8 years! I just feel lucky that I live with people that I love, and still enjoy their company.

Have you developed any sort of quarantine routine? Anything keeping you sane?
 When I got back from tour in March, it was like "Okay, you're locked in now for a month." I'm gonna work out, gonna be cooking more...after getting locked in for longer and longer, everything's kind of fallen apart *laughs.* I just kind of do what comes to mind when I wake up. I've had no inspiration to write, really, but I've been making tracks. Just sort of getting into the technical and getting better at producing.

The way your music has developed, you've maintained a genuinity that's autobiographical and edgy - when 'Habits' came out all those years ago, did you have a vision for yourself as an artist, and how does that compare to where you are now?
 Thank you, first of all, that's so great to hear! When 'Habits' started to take off, I was like, 'Is this happening now?' I thought I was going to have a career as a songwriter, and that my artist project would be my indie career on the side where I could do whatever I wanted. And that's the thing that's stayed constant. I've always done what I've wanted to do.

For my soul, it's really really important. I get uncomfortable pretending not to have an opinion about something if I know it's wrong. Not toning myself down has been the key all the way through. And that's become provocative or political, but...just stay honest. And don't say something that you don't have within you.

Did you ever have a period of finding yourself as a songwriter, being able to strip back and say what you wanted to say? Or was that natural?
 That took a minute. I've been writing my whole life, journals, short stories and poems, so I used writing as a way to say what I wanted to say. But there was still four or five years of writing and getting rejected before I got a publishing deal with people that were giving me good feedback, and could highlight my strengths. When you're doing it on your own and no one is believing you, you're fumbling and in your own head. I think you need other people around you to really get you forward. By this point I feel really confident in my lyrics, but I know when it's time to challenge myself. As soon as you get too comfortable in your art, you have to change things up!

Speaking of changing things up, you released these really unique short films Fire Fade and Fairy Dust. For you, how are acting and music similar?
 To me, music videos and acting in them shows more layers of the song. Because...it will be interpreted in different ways by different people depending on their own experiences. But whenever I add an acting element to it, it gives it more life. It's all about body movement and tone, rather than what you're actually saying. So you're showing these layers physically rather than with your voice. When I write about something, I think back to that moment and connect back to it, and I feel like I'm in that emotion. It's kind of the same thing with acting, you have to gather from your own experience no matter what your part is.

Right! When you come off stage, which I guess is kind of a fargone feeling now, but do you have sort of like a comedown ritual? Or sort of something to pull back all of those emotions at the forefront?
 Yeah...it depends how many shows we've done. If the band and I have had a great show, we're right away dancing around, laughing, cheersing, keeping that energy level up. If I have a show where I feel like I didn't do as well,

or have the crowd with me, I'll lock myself in a room and just bang the walls. It's such an intense moment...your adrenaline is still up and you're vulnerable but powerful up there and you shift between those feelings constantly. Either way, you need to take a couple breaths. Take in what just happened, have a moment with the band, the crew, and the team.

I like how you touched on those really extreme and intense emotions that every single human feels at some point. Going back to Fire Fade, there's a sentence in the poem "Someone told me long ago that you're way cooler if you don't care about anything but still act like you've seen it all." Does that sort of reflect in your new song 'sadder badder cooler' too?

If you go through something making you feel really small, like you're not worth anything...that's what you start to think. Then you realize, I can't keep letting your lack of love for me shape how I feel about myself. It's a mix of getting jaded but still trying to keep your heart intact. It can stop you from falling into those kinds of people again. The general feeling is that you get intimidated by someone who doesn't react to things. They all of a sudden have the power instead of being emotional.

I wish it was the other way around that showing your emotions and being honest and vulnerable about being hurt - that that's what makes you stronger and cooler. I have a hard time pretending that I don't

feel anything. I find it actually provoking when someone does that to me.

Right. Do you feel like we're going toward a society that is more open? Or are we going toward a society that is telling us to hide how we really feel?

I think there's a mix...everyone is longing for people to share how they really feel. With social media – which is our most powerful tool – ...you need to care right now. The general message that I'm getting from reading all the posts on my feed is that you can't not care and you have to show that you do.

It takes a lot for people to come out of their comfortable shell of posting "Everything's great!" It's almost like we're fed up with people only posting the perfect parts of life. You rarely get the real image. It's become this massive marketing tool for people to disappear into the dream life that they could have.

But now it's getting used for what it's good for – to make people aware, engaged, and take a stand. Getting information that they would never see. Now it's being used for the right thing.

A couple of weeks ago, I paused everything that had to do with me...I've been out protesting quite a lot, and educating myself to be a better ally to the black community and very focused on that. That's been a new routine to watch, listen and read things I hadn't before.

Right. I feel like everyone is kind of rewiring, first because of COVID and now because of the protests and black lives. Your Pawprints edition had just come out before George Floyd was killed...how have things changed for you?

I've really been trying to work on not making it about me and my feelings. For an artist, everything is about me and I'm always digging around in my feelings. So this has been a good lesson for me to learn more about the country that I spend most of my time in – and learn about the history. Yes, I know there is a lot of racism in this country. But to the degree that it's put in the system...I didn't know enough about! I'm trying to learn more everyday, be a good ally to the black community and my friends.

All the protests that I've been to have been really peaceful. As soon as there's police, you can tell people just get tense. When there hasn't it's been so chill. People are just marching, and chanting...it feels really powerful and really hopeful. I find it really amazing to see so many people using their voice for a good thing. Then I feel...fuck, there's so far to go. When you're paying the right amount of attention, it's so heavy and hopeful at once. But I'm trying to just be there, and be a part of it.

Sweden is not America. LA is not America either *laughs* but just making myself read and listen to the opposite view on this – people that I completely disagree with – just to understand the actual view of people in this country and you realize that a lot of people are running this country. I hope it doesn't fizzle out when June is going because it needs to keep going.

Well said. Thank you for all that. "What the world needs now, is _____?"

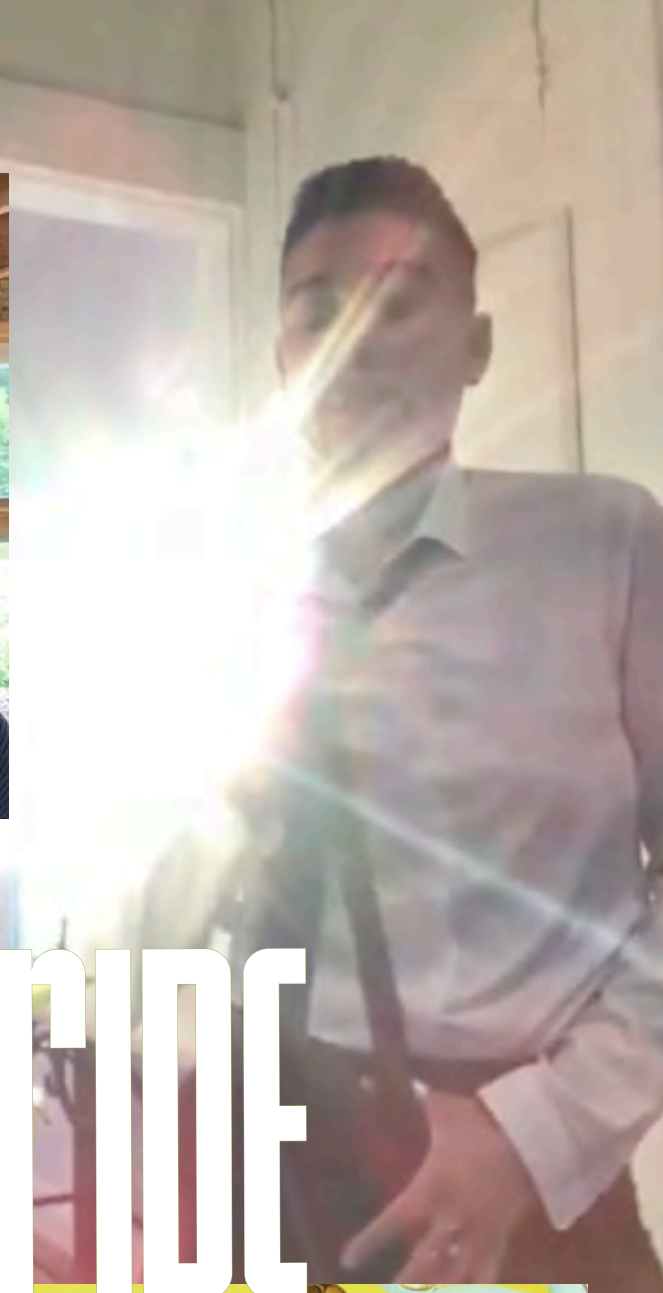
What the world needs now...is for everyone to wake up, stay awake, and keep fighting for equality. All around. For the black community, for people of color, for LGBTQIA+, WOMEN!

Yes!! Let's talk about Pride for a second. What was it like coming out as bisexual?

The funny thing is that I didn't identify myself as bisexual, it was a fan who asked me. Haha I knew I liked girls, but there was no stigma attached to it for me growing up, it was more figuring it out for myself. After the Habits



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:
@PAUL.CAKES, @NICKYOTTAV,
@MICHAELXOMICAHIEL,
@PUERTORICANINJA, @SARO,
@SOKOTHECAT, @AMANDALEPORE,
@MUSTO184



QUARANTINE

LADYGUNN PRIDE



LADYGUNN

· LadyGunn Pride 2020 ·



VINCINT

PHOTOS / SAVANNA RUEDY
CREATIVE DIRECTION / PHIL GOMEZ
STYLING / LEE VELVET
BEAUTY / JAIME DIAZ
STORY / CATHERINE SANTINO

VINCINT's Instagram bio, which reads "the boy who cried POP", perfectly encapsulates who he is. A megaphone of self-love and authenticity pressed to his lips, he stands on the shoulders of pop greats before him, preaching to all who will listen.

The Philadelphia-born singer first made waves as a finalist on the first season of FOX's singing competition show, The Four, where he left judges in awe with his soulful rendition of Radiohead's "Creep". He then released a series of singles including "Marrow", "Mine", and "Save Myself", all leading up to his EP, The Feeling, which dropped earlier this year.

VINCINT's powerful vocals (and jaw-dropping range) elevates his already-emotive songs into his own brand of pop that simply cannot be ignored. The Feeling details the aftermath of a breakup, a subject matter that pop music will never tire of. From the addicting synth to gospel-inspired harmonies, VINCINT pours his entire soul into each track, making the EP almost impossible to sit still while listening to.

Earlier this month, VINCINT's soul-stirring anthem "Be Me" was featured in the trailer for Season 5 of Netflix's acclaimed show, Queer Eye, solidifying him as a powerful and necessary voice for the LGBTQ+ community. LADYGUNN recently caught up with the singer on his recent accomplishments and his journey to self-acceptance.

Your song "Be Me" was featured in the trailer for season 5 of Netflix's acclaimed show "Queer Eye" — congratulations! The track is so empowering and I'm sure very close to your heart. What were your emotions as you created and released it?

Thank you!!! It's been such an exciting adventure with them! Writing this song was really surreal for me because I've been a fan of the show since the original 5 started, so to be asked to be a part of it was a childhood dream come true. I wanted to make sure when I wrote the song it reflected the true feel of the show and be an opportunity for people to see that even with all the help of the Fab 5, true change has to come from within.

You released your EP, The Feeling, earlier this year. From the synth-heavy production to crisp vocals, it really feels like a true pop album (I find it hard to stay still when listening to it, the ultimate mark of a true pop album in my book). I also know that some of your biggest inspirations are icons like Madonna and Robyn. Did you go into this project intending it to have this authentic pop sound? What is it about pop that inspires you?

Thank you so much, that's really nice of you to say. I didn't go into this thinking that it would be a traditional pop sound but more the kind of pop the way that I hear it, if you will. I love pop music — Madonna and Robyn and Whitney and Mariah. I have always been in love with iconic pop divas and their music.

The modern 80s/90s sound has the most delicious melodies and catchiest beats that make it feel like an everyday song you can listen to in any era. That's what I've always wanted my sound to be able to encompass — nostalgia and the feeling that I put into it. To me, pop should be simple yet complex and to the point. It's honest and heartbreaking and it feels good even when it's sad.

The EP reflects on a past relationship and the difficulty of getting over someone who had a huge impact on your life. What's the main thing that's helped you cope with heartbreak in your life?

I think writing and singing about all the things that I go through has helped me more than anything. Communicating my emotions and really expressing them has done things for my emotional therapy more than I ever thought it could until I started to write music and really began to delve into making my personal life public.

I remember noticing that in Sam Smith's first album (before he was openly gay/nonbinary), he didn't use pronouns at all, presumably to avoid any assumptions about his sexuality. Was there ever a time in your career when you didn't feel like you could truly be yourself? If so, how did that impact you as an artist?

Yeah, there was definitely a time I had that moment of "Do I say he or him? Do I let everyone know that I'm talking about a boy?" When I listened back to the first demos I recorded, I didn't really speak my truth and it really didn't resonate with me. If it didn't resonate with me, I knew they wouldn't with others either, and I wanted my music to be honest. I wanted my listeners to hear exactly who I was talking about and to be able to feel the true feeling of all of it; that it's not some kind of masked emotion, but rather very straightforward and honest. I want people to know that it's okay to sing about who you're in love with and not to be scared of that. True self-expression should be the goal.

I know that gospel music was also a huge part of your upbringing, specifically because your father was a gospel singer. How did those early days of being immersed in this type of music impact the artist you are today?

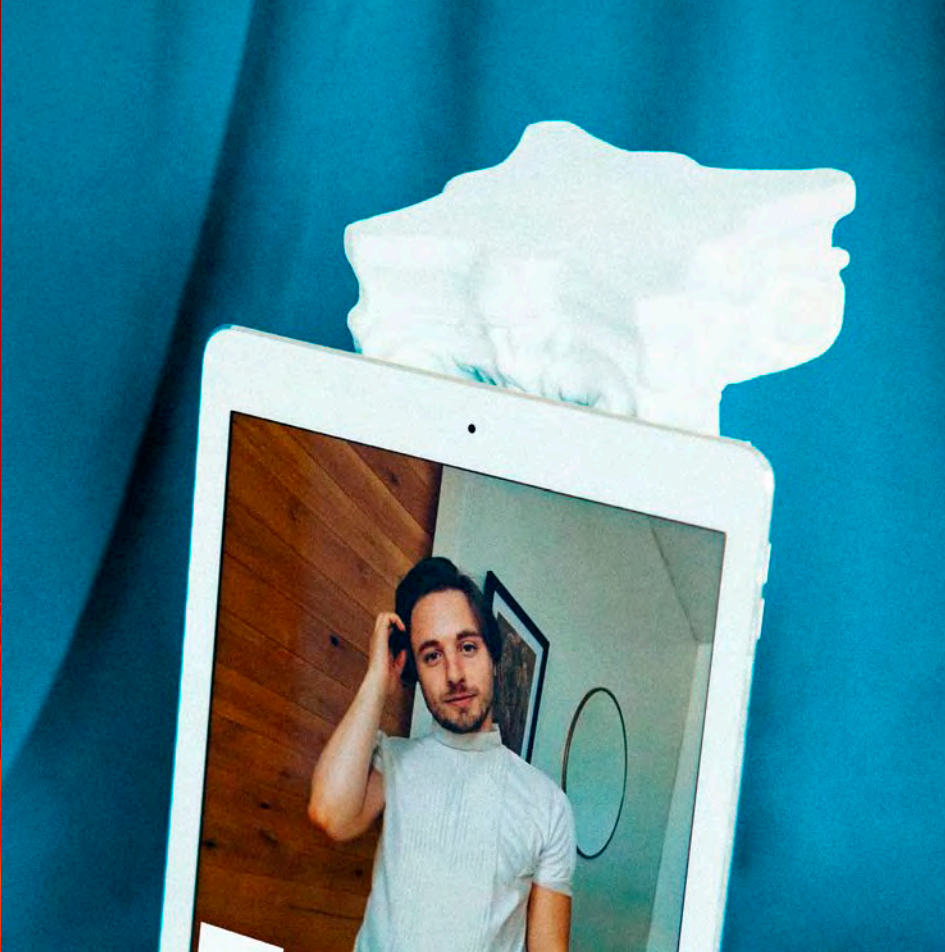
[My father's] sound inspired a lot of my harmonies and a lot of the melodies that I think of. It was never really a church thing for me, but more so my dad and his group, the way that they harmonized, and their blend that really stuck with me.

I can't possibly understand what it's like to be a Black, queer artist right now. How do you anticipate your music being impacted by the current unrest? What changes do you hope to see in the music industry when it comes to systematic racism?

Yeah, it's not been the easiest for us, but I think it's an artist's job. As Nina Simone said, an artist's sound should reflect the times and also reflect how YOU feel during those times. I think it's an important part of what we do. I think, for me, it's going to let me be free in the way that I sing, in the way that I write, and in the way that I express my emotions even more so than the previous album.

I want to make people feel good because I think we have so much going on and there's so much talk about change and freedom coming. I want to be able to be a part of the freedom when it gets here, and I want people to have something to move to, to dance to. It's essential that an artist is unashamedly themselves in times like these because it's important for the world to hear the person being themselves and know that it's okay. You can't always feel rage all the time; or joy or peace or sadness. Sometimes you have to feel other things, and I think it's our job to orchestrate those emotions.

TIYANA GRULOVIC + ANNA BULBROOK CURATED A WHIMSICAL GALLERY OF WHAT OUR FAVORITE CREATIVE TYPES WERE DOING DURING LOCKDOWN. SEE "ONE THING" ON LADYGUNN.COM



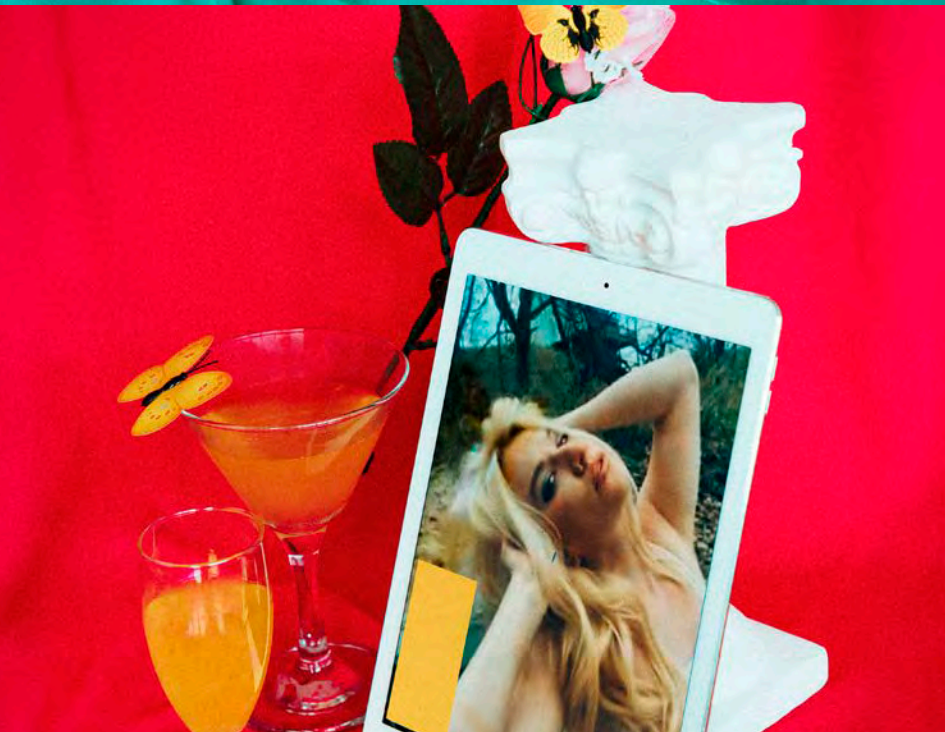
QUARANTINE



QUARANTINE



QUARANTINE





FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: @NOMIRUIZ, @ZURI, @MARGIEPLUS, @KIMORALEESIMMONS, @P.S.KAGUYA

GIRLS IN BED INTERVIEW WITH KIMORA LEE SIMMONS

PHOTOS / ARTURO EVARISTO
CREATIVE DIRECTION / PHIL GOMEZ
STORY / ARIANA TIBI & KOKO NTUEN



To witness strength, perseverance, inspiration, and innovation, meet Kimora Lee Simmons. A model who paved the way for other mixed race beauties to walk the runways, Kimora has been at the helm of the fashion industry since her early teens. She converted her supreme height into a coveted career, signing a contract with Karl Lagerfeld who designed for Chanel. Soon after, she received modeling contracts from a number of other brands, including Valentino and Yves Saint Laurent.

And of course, it wasn't long before Kimora started her own line. Based on trends she liked to wear herself, the beloved brand Baby Phat emerged in the late 90s and instantly became part of an iconic fashion movement among women and girls. The womens' streetwear market was soon blooming with Baby Phat apparel; alongside bedazzled flip phones and apple bottom jeans was the BP logo on velour jumpsuits. If you've ever stepped outside, you know the tracksuit craze is still in favor today and thanks to leading brands like Baby Phat, they come in all shapes and sizes.

On International Women's Day on March 8th, 2019, Kimora was the keynote speaker for the "She Innovates" initiative led by the UN Women and the Gender Innovation Coalition for Change (GICC). There, and to Bloomberg News, she officially announced the relaunch of her archetypal streetwear brand, Baby Phat by Kimora Lee Simmons.

Now a mother of five, and as Ladygunn's May digi-cover girl, we caught up with Kimora to find out more about the womens' wear market, pressures of quarantine, and life with kids.

THE LINE WAS SUCH A STATEMENT PIECE FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE 90'S. HOW DO YOU THINK THAT WILL TRANSLATE INTO TODAY'S MARKET IN TERMS OF THE SHARE ATTITUDES AND STYLE THEN?

"I think the statement Baby Phat made back in the late 90s and the 2000s is the same sentiment shared by the market

today. To claim space, live out loud and never settle. The mission has always been to shine a light on a generation of women who are clear on what they want and more than willing to work to get it."

WHAT ARE 3 TIPS TO STAYING LOOKING AND FEELING FABULOUS DURING QUARANTINE?

"I don't like this pressure I see people putting themselves under to emerge from quarantine looking a certain way. These are unsure times for so many people. Their lives, careers and their health is at jeopardy. Parents are struggling to work and provide as well as educate their kids. Displaced students are trying to fulfill the promise of their education miles and miles away from their schools and students. I believe it will be a triumph for anyone to come out of this healthy, optimistic and hungry to connect."

One of the side effects of a global, connective trauma such as this is vivid, strange dreams at night. Have you been experiencing anything like that?

"I have five kids so my dreams - when I have them - are primarily to-do lists."

ARE YOU STILL SHOPPING? WHERE?

"I haven't been doing much shopping. We bought some art supplies for the boys so they can work on projects."

WHAT'S YOUR DAILY ROUTINE?

"My daily routine is really organized around my kids. I have three boys that need to be kept busy. The girls are older and working on final exams and projects for their schools remotely. We take each day at a time and try to focus on the positive parts of all this."




LADYGUNN.COM

DIRTY BLONDE™ BY RAZIEME IBORRA RAZIEME IBORRA



paris
hilton

PHOTOS / BUKUNMI CREATIVE DIRECTION + STYLING / PHIL GOMEZ
MAKEUP / ETIENNE HAIR / EDUARDO PONCE MOTION / JONAH SKYE
NAILS / RARA STORY / KOKO NTUEN
PA'S: MELISSA GOMEZ, KELLY VINES, RUSH DAVIS, ALLY GILLAM



DRESS, CHRISTIAN SIRIANO.
JEWELRY, ALEXIS BITTAR.
GLOVES, LILITH VIPER.
SHOES, JEFFREY CAMPBELL.



DRESS, LAQUAN SMITH.
JEWELRY, ALEXIS BITTAR.

“WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE SO FAMOUS?”

“Are you naturally skinny or do you...?”

These are questions I find myself asking Paris Hilton in the middle of a global pandemic. I didn't think we would be doing a video interview. I specifically asked, in a fleeting sense of vanity, while setting up our call so that I could wear mascara and perhaps stage a cacti, rose light and wooden table background. When we are connected by her publicist via Zoom, I'm five minutes out of the shower, wearing underwear and standing in my closet when Paris' image begins to digitally metamorphosize onto the screen. I throw on a silver lamé dress, put my braids in a side ponytail and sit down when she appears. Her face is as bright as the Pacific Standard Time zone, clad in an effortless baseball cap and blonde tresses falling down her shoulders. Her boyfriend is in another room and a husky puppy, a present from him, is at her feet. Paris is working out of her home office and I'm situated comfortably on the carpet of my walk-in silhouetted by shelves and dress ends. We are both having groundhog day syndrome. It's hard not to and immediately jump into The Great Quarantine of 2020.

“This is nothing like anything I've ever experienced before. I'm used to traveling every two days. This is the first time I've actually had to force myself to pause and stay at home,” she says about Really scary time right now. It's just, I feel so terrible

for all the people around the world who are losing their jobs and their homes, their lives. It's just, people are scared to leave their house. It's just, it's terrifying. I'm just praying every day that the stumps cause it's just crazy. “

It's a relatable position for most which strikes a jarring note on the state of the world. While “Celebrities. They're Just Like Us: They suffer during a plague.” is my least favorite edition, there is a mawkish sentiment to be found in the ability for people across all classes and celebrities to be unified by hours at home, washing groceries and using hand sanitizer religiously, all while picking up new ticks and quirks from your loved ones. Why does my husband have to vacuum while I'm on a call? When did he start liking oat milk and why did he finish all of it before I could even pour myself a cup of coffee?

“The divorce rates are at an all time high. My husband is driving me crazy.” I tell her.

“I'm so lucky,” she laughs, “I have the most incredible boyfriend. I don't know what I would do without him. He's just so sweet and so kind and so brilliant. And just, I just listened to them all day every day. Like, cause we're both doing our business and work, but I'll walk into the office room at our house and just, just listen to him. Cause he's just so smart. And I just think that it's just like such a turn on to hear like a businessman talking.”

Paris is very warm akin to talking to someone who has a sister or a best friend. She has a grounded approachability that makes me want to talk about boys and girls I can't stand. Most of the “off the records” come in the form of eye contact and giggles. We speak on the eve of the release for This Is Paris, a documentary that lifts a velvet veil into the dysfunction of her youth. Something that she has never spoken about till now.

“I never put myself out there in such a way and just been so raw and honest and real. So it was an amazing experience, but it was also really hard because I didn't know that was going to happen. The movie was just supposed to be about me as a little girl and my life and then becoming a business woman. Basically that was it. I was traveling in Korea and on such a crazy schedule as usual and I just broke down. I was so upset. The director, [Alexandra Dean] and I have this sisterly bond where



I felt like I could tell her anything. We just started talking about it. And then I started remembering all these things that I had stuffed down. I didn't want to feel them anymore because they were so painful, so I kind of almost forgot about them in a way, because I just had not thought about it since I was a kid. It was a very therapeutic experience for sure.” It is the abuse she suffered at Provo Canyon boarding school while she was a teenager. The wild child socialite that Paris Hilton was turning into on the streets and in the clubs of NYC during her burgeoning years was a point of contention for her parents. They enacted a covert operation that involved forcibly removing a sleeping Paris from her bed in the middle of the night and flying her with handlers to Utah.

“They say trauma, the mind may forget but the body never forgets. And it's trapped in you and it can come out whenever.” Her sister Nicky Hilton Rothschild says in This Is Paris.

For years the press and social media had skipped over a pinnacle part of her backstory and served her up in provocative David LaChapelle photos and front page stories.. The documentary unmasks harrowing Paris Hilton years most assumed were going

to debutante balls and shopping. The trauma inched its way up like an earthworm after the rain, uprooting years of “I’m fines”, fake smiles and long nights that Paris was known for. Her armour became her fame.

“I developed that character from being at these schools. I think I built a shell around myself to protect myself. I always was a very naturally shy person. I think putting on that mask and being that character, was a way for me to kind of hide. So I wouldn’t have to fully expose myself to the world. Because I felt like the world thought they knew me so well and it was taking so much from me already that I wanted to do something for myself. I just kind of got lost in it and almost forgot who I was because I was so used to doing it all the time that I kind of like when you’re having to constantly travel and be on and like performing every single day. When I wasn’t working I slept so I could get the energy back to go and do it all over again the next day. I didn’t really have time to even think about it. I like how I would just be completely used to it.”

She stops for a minute, composed and insightful, “I’ve just gone through so much. I wanted to be so successful that no one could ever control me again. That gave me the drive to be who I am today.”

Paris Hilton’s defining role in the early 2000s was the act of a lifetime. That era gave us low rise jeans, It was the a no-holds-barred, boundry pushing , celebrity and sex obsessed, scandal ridden time. The age of the personality. The bigger the better. Hair, account, scandal, and Paris Hilton had it all with a landmark last name and cheek bones that never found a bad angle, she was a likely star for this era. Thin, blonde haired blue eyed, vocal fried her tabloid relevance took hold of the publishing world and created an industry of its own.

She was able to parlay her love of nightlife into a career as reality star, a top DJ and a beauty empire that has amassed billions. The influencer industry was basically created to give her a historic seat at the head of the Hilton dynasty. While her grandfather pioneered hospitality and gave her father a less obtuse start than some of the pther family Paris pioneer d news, cycles, paparazzi economy, tabliod lashings and yes the infamous sex tape, during the golden days of the internet.

At the height of her fame an exclusive photo of Paris could fetch up to one million dollars.

“When I was a teenager it was exciting and so much fun for paparazzi to take my picture. I loved it. I felt like, Oh my God, like this, my Marilyn Monroe moments. I loved it. But then it just became crazy and just, they got too aggressive. Sometimes hundreds of them would chase me in cars, almost causing car accidents, fighting over the photo or each other and just, it just got so overwhelming.

I was scared because I knew what was happening and they just wanted a picture so bad that they would basically go to any length. I would tell them, ‘I don’t want to be followed today. I don’t want everyone finding out where I live.’ So I would drive as fast as possible trying to get rid of them. And it was just impossible. Stalkers and psychotic people would show up at my house. It was scary. I’m very independent. I don’t like going out with bodyguards, I get annoyed. So my family get nervous like Paris, you’re just too free somebody’s going to kidnap you.”

“I’m excited because this is definitely the next phase in my life. I finally feel like a grownup and I finally know myself, so I’m so excited to start a family and just move on to the next step in my life and just be happy and just know that I’ve worked so hard and built something. I’m so proud of it. Now I can finally just enjoy my life.”



DRESS, REY ORTIZ.
JEWELRY, ALEXIS BITTAR.
BOOTS, JEFFREY CAMPBELL.



MASK, TOP & BOTTOM, WIEDERHOEFT.
JEWELRY, ALEXIS BITTAR.
GLOVES, LAERKE VALUM.

DRESS, RVDK.
JEWELRY, ALEXIS BITTAR.



HAT, REY ORTIZ.
DRESS, NICOLE SHANTE.
JEWELRY, ALEXIS BITTAR.
SHOES, CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN.



ENTIRE LOOK, MOSCHINO.
JEWELRY, ALEXIS BITTAR.



BODYSUIT, LAQUAN SMITH.
BOOTS, AQUAZZURA.
BOOTS, AQUAZZURA.



RYAN DESTINY

PHOTOS / BUCCI
STYLING / SCOT LOUIE
MAKEUP / SCOTT OSBOURNE JR
HAIR / IGGY ROSALES
STORY / CATHERINE SANTINO

Ryan Destiny is not letting the pandemic put a halt to her career. Only 25 years old, Destiny has already gained serious momentum in the industry, both as a singer-songwriter and an actor. She got her start in music as part of a trio that made it to the third round of America's Got Talent in 2011. It wasn't too long before she found an outlet for both her singing and acting chops; Destiny then landed a lead role in Fox's musical drama, *Star*, which debuted in 2015.

Since then, she's booked various big-league acting roles such as Jillian on the third season of Freeform show *Grown-ish*, and late last year, it was announced that she would star as American boxing champion Claressa Shields in *Flint Strong*, a Universal Pictures biopic.

But music will forever be at her core. Born in Detroit, Michigan, the home of Motown, Destiny was heavily influenced by her father, who was a member of the 90s R&B group, Guess. Since COVID-19 has turned Hollywood sets into ghost towns, Destiny is focusing her energy on music. Over the past few years, she's released a series of sleek R&B singles — all in anticipation of her forthcoming debut EP, *On One's Own*.

Needless to say, Ryan Destiny is determined to make a name for herself in entertainment — and so far, she's doing a bang-up job.

Check out our conversation with the budding star below.

How have you been handling quarantine and these times of unrest? What have you been doing to cope?

I don't know if I'm handling it or just living through it. Some days are better than others. I love working a lot but I've seen an uninspired side of me like others during this time and that drives me crazy! I've never missed normal so much. My family has helped me not to go too insane.

You've had so many exciting projects recently. Since the pandemic/quarantine has paused a lot of aspects of the entertainment industry, how have you kept your momentum going?

Since filming has been on pause, it's given me an opportunity to focus on music. In a very independent fashion though. A lot of us have had to get creative. I've recorded music and shot a video and plan to do more of that before I have to go back to sets.

Congratulations on your role playing Claressa Shields in the upcoming biopic, *Flint Strong*! Did you have to go through physical training for the role? What has that experience been like?

Thank you! I had intense boxing training last year for about 4 months straight. Then stunt training for a month. I continued after we were put on hold and I'll have to do more training before we go back. So I didn't imagine it being quite like this. Never in life would I have thought I'd be chosen for a boxing role. It's mentally different. I'm blessed and feel the pressure.

I hope people embrace the film. You don't get a female boxing film often. I can only think of *Million Dollar Baby*. So I'm honored to be creating such an important true story with such amazing people.

You've been very vocal about the racial injustices both within the entertainment industry and the world at large. Have you ever felt stereotyped by the industry or limited in your pursuits? If so, how do you combat these feelings?

I have felt stereotyped before I even knew what that word really meant. You become numb to it then realize later how the mistreatment that comes with it is more than wrong. It's simply not fair. People look at you and think you can't reach certain heights. After a while, you feel like there is a glass ceiling. I have to still snap myself out of it sometimes and remember who I am. It's a battle.

What other musical artists have you been loving lately?

I've been playing Giveon's album a lot. As well as Tanerëlle, Blxst, Jayla Darden to name a few. They're all so special.

A lot of musical artists have expressed frustration with being penned into a single genre. Your music is so multidimensional — do you identify with a specific genre? What are your thoughts on this?

I'd love to get to a certain point in my career where I don't have to say a genre. I love and listen to different genres so I want to be a reflection of that but organically. Right now I'm definitely R&B but still bringing in a few other elements that make a great combo. I say, do whatever the hell you want to do. That's the artistic part. The fun part.

What can you tell us about your upcoming EP, *On One's Own*? What can fans expect?

I can tell you that it'll be worth the wait. My first project is important to me so it's been in the works for years now. I'm also an over-thinker so that never helps. You can expect some fun features and styles. Visuals too! I'd make a whole visual project if I could.

How do you define success and what are your main goals for the future, short and long term?

I think I define it by living out my true purpose and having a sense of peace with what I do. Also, longevity. Being able to do what I want for as long as I want. It's also tough for me to think short term when I'm always living in the future. Which isn't a good thing but long term I simply want to be the best version of myself. I want to conquer my acting and music career. To really be my own brand. All the things I've wanted since very young, I plan to achieve. I don't want to disappoint my younger self.

Have you ever felt pressure to choose between acting and music?

Usually yes, but I don't plan to.



TOP, RUI.
PANTS, ACNE STUDIOS.
BOOTS, ALEXANDRE VAUTHIER.

TOP, ECKHAUS LATTA.
PANTS, LOW CLASSIC.



TOP, AUNÉ.
SHORTS, COMMANDO.
SHOES, FEMME.



TOP/NECKLACES @VERSACE
EARRINGS @CHANEL @BROKENENGLISHJEWELRY
SKIRT @GUCCI



SOKO

PHOTOS / YANA YATSUK STYLING / JARED ENG HAIR + MAKEUP / LETICIA LLESMIN STORY / KOKO NTUEN

For me, the best thing about soko is that she feels like a feeling. “This feels very soko,” i’ve said more times than i want to admit trying on faux gucci and something sparkly in a high-end consignment store.

Listening to her music conjures up a mixed bag of emotions that exercise the soul and mind. It’s this cool girl for cool girls thing that wraps you in love and female empowerment and makes you feel happy to be in whatever club she is in. It’s an intelligent quirk that’s both aware and flawed but still trying. It’s a high-end meets dive bar, famous meets the cute barista next door that you hope is working when you get your morning coffee. What can i say, she has a je ne sais quoi, apt since she is french which just makes the whole thing even more apt.

I am wrapped up in a white down comforter on my sofa and she is sitting in bed, strands of brown hair falling unto her face eating pancakes whilst we talk. Her third studio album feel feelings is set to release the next day and she is both nervous and excited like any artist wearing their heart on their sleeve.

The album is a time capsule of sorts. She recorded feel feelings in 2016 and 2017 collaborating with a commune of a top-tier indie elite that she also calls friends: sean lennon, dustin payseur of beach fossils, meg duffy of hand habits, and james richardson from mgm, just to name a few. The album was a therapeutic journey set between what soko describes as dreams and consciousness, “in-between purpose and letting go.” It’s an album that documents her growth in real-time. All the songs were written during her self-imposed celibacy and dedication to making art in a mindful way. “I wanted to make sure it captured perfectly every aspect of all my thoughts to be the most truthful memory of a moment.” She says in the notes.

She was set to release in march. But then the quarantine, george floyd, breonna taylor, and countless other black lives lost at the hands of police saw the u.S come to a standstill in one of the great civil rights movements of our times. She withdrew her from the attention economy and sat back watching, listening, learning.

We are both a little raw. I can hear it in our voices. She recently recovered from a bad bout of covid and by that point, i’d been consumed with news cycles and race fatigue.

“How are you doing?” I ask her.

“It was horrible, man. I don’t wish that for anyone. My girlfriend had it, my baby had it...but how are you doing?” She asks me.

How am i doing? I can’t remember the last time anyone asked me that so earnestly. Her brown eyes peer inquisitive and compassionately into mine. I’m so used to saying “i’m fine” that the muscle memory on my tongue starts to pull my mouth apart. I pause for a moment while a flood of thoughts circles my brain like buzzcocks. How am i? I feel

angry. I feel oppressed. I feel like i don’t know enough about black history in america and the more i read the more the cycle of oppression spins. I’ve spent the last few nights reading james baldwin’s books cover to cover and waking up feeling nauseous.

I don’t hesitate to let her know everything swimming in my mind, “this is part of my experience. It’s very interesting. It can be very depressing sometimes too,” i say. “But it’s part of an experience that i’ve got to live. I have love, i have my family, i have my friends, but it’s still heartbreaking. Especially when people are so rooted and affected by it. Dna is said to carry trauma. So generations are holding this oppression, this fear, this anger, and having people telling you you’re never going to be anything. We’re all connected in some way, america as a whole is especially so mixed yet so divided. There were so many bloodlines being shared during slavery. So everyone has this trauma in them. And then trying to deny that bond while fighting for positions of power. It’s very, i don’t think it should be this complicated, it’s barbaric to me.”

She nods her head, “half of my family died in concentration camps. I definitely feel the jewish trauma. I wasn’t even raised jewish because they all denied their religion and whatnot. I was raised catholic. I definitely still feel that jewish trauma in me. I feel persecuted sometimes and i have to tell myself ‘it’s not you.’ I have not been persecuted. It’s something that my family tree went through.

There is a comfortable silence as we sit with our respective traumas and state of the world.

“It took a fucking pandemic for people to have nothing to do, so they could finally focus on what’s important in the world.” She blurts out.

We both laugh at the absurdity of our pain.

Soko moved from southern france to the international spotlight when she was just a teenager, pursuing the arts and achieving fame along the way. She has done it all: acting, singing, writing, and queer momming. She’s even reached a sort of enlightenment that we hope all of our readers can soon find. She’s fully aware of her ego and that is what drives her passion for music that much further. In 2020 alone, soko starred in two movies (set to drop in 2021), a 12-track ep, 4 music videos, and countless other artistic enterprises.

“I’ve been working like a dog since i’m 16, i’ve done and overdone. I’ve accomplished all of my childhood dreams. I’m much further in life than i ever thought i would ever go. I think i needed that validation. I needed to feel relevant, like, you know, i was good at something. When i play feel feelings i play it straight through. This is not how i usually play a record but this album feels like a conversation, excerpts of an old secret diary you have to decode from her multifaceted life. When she started the record she was wrapping up a movie and in the transition back to herself.

JACKET/TOP @MSGM
EARRINGS @ALEXANDERMQUEEN
SUNGLASSES @GUCCI
RING @LANGANTIQUES



"When i do a movie, i'm just so deep in it that i just get lost. I've had people tell me that told me i need to protect myself. But then it takes me a while to shake that skin off that doesn't belong to me and to get back to my life. I knew i was going to start my record and i knew that i needed to take some time off. I decided to go to the hoffman institute, and literally, i kid you, not the minute i booked it, everything in my life was trying to tempt me. I got offered a huge gig in china and i was just thought, fuck the money. Money comes and goes. This is a time that i've allotted to myself to take care of myself. And if i'm happy from within, no amount of money is going to make me happier. If i don't do the work."

Feel feelings was the byproduct of soko's intensive work on herself and her soul. Multiple facets of pain, love, sadness, and insecurities are threaded through the songs in soft juxtaposing dimensions that make it both easy to sit with and sometimes hard to swallow. It's pop-noir that tells the story of broken hearts being set free.

"Everyone's working on their physical appearance, you know like people go running and get addicted to sports and beauty products. Everyone has a health routine and a beauty routine, but who has a fucking mental health routine. It's so important to start talking about that. I'm doing that with my record. I'm taking care of my mental health. I was celibate during hoffman. I was really focusing on my triggers, my patterns, my trauma, and working on becoming the 2.0 Version of myself. I'm new and improved, constantly and forever changing, forever eager to learn and to better myself..."

Soko 2.0 is a happier, more aware human that is able to love and be loved. We end our conversation in what feels like a smile.

"If i'm talking to my little soko self coming from a small town in the south of france. I would say, 'It's okay.' I've done everything i thought was impossible. So now that i've already done the impossible what am i missing? You know, having a stable relationship, a home, and a baby. That's really what i want to focus on right now. And so i did it. Right, when i was done with the record i made a fucking awesome baby. I'm in a super healthy relationship... i have a house and a girlfriend and a baby, and it's awesome."



JACKET @NOUSETUDIONS
SHOES @ALEXANDERMCGQUEEN
DRESS @ROWENROSE
NECKLACE/EARRINGS @SUSAN_ALEXANDRA
SOCKS @WELOVECOLORS



SWEATER @LANEUS
SHIRT @VANS
PANTS @R13
NECKLACE @VERSACE
RINGS @GUCCI
EARRING @EMANUELEBICOCCI



JACKET @TAKOMEKVABIDZE
HOODIE @BROKENPROMISESCO
LARGE CROSS NECKLACE @GUCCI
THIN NECKLACE/EARRING @EMANUELEBIOCCHI
RINGS @LANGANTIQUES @EMANUELEBIOCCHI



TINASHE

PHOTOS / JASPER SOLOFF
CREATIVE DIRECTION & STYLING / PHIL GOMEZ
FASHION ASSISTANT / BRANDEN RUIZ
MAKEUP / FRANCIE TOMALONIS
HAIR / EDUARDO PONCE
STORY / CATHERINE SANTINO

2020 has not panned out the way anyone thought it would. Not only are plans being cancelled and delayed, but entire institutions are being reevaluated. Collectively, we're being forced to take a good, hard look at ourselves, for better or for worse. Though the events of this year are unprecedented for all of us, Tinashe is no stranger to navigating tumultuous waves of change. The agility, grace, and resilience in which she's navigated her career thus far proves that she's a force to be reckoned with — and she's just getting started.

Like many musicians before her, Tinashe burst onto the scene with a chart-soaring hit (2014's "2 On") and was hastily swept up into the machine that is the mainstream music industry. She was signed to RCA Records two years prior following her debut solo mixtape *In Case We Die*, but now, she was an extremely visible figure in music. However, being slapped with labels like "Urban" and "R&B" quickly became suffocating for the now 27-year-old.

"These categories can be damaging to artists in terms of limiting how we're presented, marketed, what spaces were allowed to perform in, what playlists we make it on. Those are all really affected by the genre that gets placed over an artist," Tinashe tells me over the phone. "I think that that's just something that we should all be more cognizant of."

In early 2019, after seven years with RCA Records, Tinashe announced that she had departed from the

label and was moving forward as an independent artist. To me, the words "independent" and "artist" just make sense together, but choosing to leave a major record label is to go against the grain of the industry. It's a risk. But for Tinashe, it was well worth it. Her fourth studio album, *Songs For You*, was released independently last year, and is arguably her best work yet. On the 15-track project, the artist floats freely between genres, from slinky R&B ("So Much Better", "Save Room For Us") to breezy pop ("Perfect Crime") to hard-leaning hip hop ("Link Up"). This fluidity, she says, is natural for her.

Unlike her previous records, she isn't concerned with pleasing her label or hitting certain streaming goals. "I think I just feel more liberated," she said of her newfound independence. "I just make my music and I don't worry. That's the stuff that makes all the darkness come in. When you're considering 'Oh my gosh, is this gonna do well? Is this gonna chart? Are people gonna like it?' It just like, kills art."

Despite, or perhaps even because of, Tinashe's lack of interest in public opinion, critics raved about *Songs For You*. Welcome praise, surely, but the singer mostly cares what her fans think. The title of the album speaks for itself; these songs are for her ride-or-dies, the ones who have stuck by even when the charts weren't so kind to her. "I think my fans are excited to see me in my element," Tinashe says. "They can feel the difference."



“That was something that I definitely had to grieve over for a little bit and kind of just let that *go*.”

Of course, not being able to tour the album has been a major letdown. “That was something that I definitely had to grieve over for a little bit and kind of just let that go,” she says. “And yeah, just change your expectations of how you planned on this all going. I do think that one thing that I pride myself in is being very adaptive and I’ll always just kind of like figure it out. So I stay really busy in that sense.”

And 2020 has certainly been busy for Tinashe. Eight months after the release of “Songs For You” Tinashe gave listeners a taste of her new music with “Rascal (Superstar).” On Twitter, Tinashe referred to the cheeky track as a “braggadocious bad bitch anthem.” Along with the single, Tinashe dropped a quarantine-style music video in which she plays a socialite performing for a drone that’s documenting her lavish home life.

“Obviously, we’re having to adapt all of our videos to be able to shoot them with really minimal crews and that really affects the creative process,” she said of the video’s production. “It is kind of interesting how that’s being reflected in the content and just yeah, making a video that was kind of that theme. The feeling of just being stuck in the house going crazy.”

This year, Tinashe also lent her vocals to “Love Reggae,” a brand new track on the Deluxe version of JoJo’s recent album, good to know. After initially connecting, JoJo and Tinashe attended a Black Lives Matter march together. “She came with my family and I, and that was like the first time we hung out,” Tinashe says of their relationship. It’s not lost on me that both artists had similar experiences distancing themselves from major labels, but Tinashe says that they didn’t commiserate.

She has, however, discussed her journey at length with Australi-

an rapper Iggy Azalea, who also recently cut ties with her record label. In August, the pair released retro-style track “Dance Like Nobody’s Watching”, the first single off of Azalea’s independently-released third studio album. “We’ve kind of had that discussion at least from a creative perspective,” Tinashe says, “She feels so much more like she can do what she wants and more sure about who she is as an artist and I can relate to those feelings as well. Just like the psychological impact it has on you to have control of your art. How much that empowers you. I think that’s really important.”

I then ask a question that I desperately hope she doesn’t take the wrong way: Do you consider yourself an underdog in the industry? “It was something I used to identify as, but I actually completely switched my mindset,” Tinashe replies. “Now I don’t see that as a way at all. I feel like if you think of yourself as a victim, then like you are. If you think that I’m always underrated then like, I’m always putting that energy in the universe, I’m always gonna be underrated. So no, I just think that like, for sure, I’ve got like work to do. I’m moving up. I just don’t see it as like, a sad story.”

No, I assure her, her story is anything but sad. It’s inspiring, truly, to watch an artist grow into herself, to tune out the siren song that is external validation and choose to prioritize her own intuition.

“Everyone sees my content whether or not they put it on the playlist or whatever,” she says. “I know that the people that I respect see my work. I know that other artists see my work. I think that’s what makes me successful. I’m still in the game. And I feel encouraged to know that if I make like, really amazing art and focus on just making really amazing content, and then like, whatever happens happens, and that’ll speak for itself.”



DRESS, ADI KARNI VAGT.

PINK SUIT, ICEBERG.
PRINTED SHIRT, MSGM.
SUNGLASSES, MCM.
HEELS, LE SILLA.
EARRINGS, STYLISTS OWN.



JOEY KING

PHOTOS / LEILA FAKOURI
STYLING / JESSICA LORIA
MAKEUP / ALLAN AVENDANO
HAIR / DIMITRIS GIANNETOS
LIGHTING / MIKE P. PEDERSON
ART ASSISTS / KATI REDIGER + JONATHAN COLIN
STORY / SAM BERLIN

It's that time of the year: fall weather, matching sweatsuit sets, and the impending election that has left many Americans on the edge of their seats. Joey King is ready for it all with a new Blumhouse horror film ready to promote, the LA sunsets to keep her golden, and her first election to prepare for. At just 21, Joey's career is full speed ahead, appearing in countless projects and rightfully having the internet crown her the newest queen of Netflix. But if there's anything the star wants you to know, it's that she is just like you and me.

Joey is warm and natural like that friend from college that was always cooler than you but made you feel like you were an equal nonetheless. Our Zoom call vibe was girly chat meets messy buns, tank tops, and our dogs. Mine: three loud ass hounds, Joey's: a modelesque yorkie named Angel. And even though Joey and I have never met, it felt like we were catching up on old times. I forgot I was talking to an Emmy nominee, the girl who was my summer envy as she kissed all those boys in that booth. I was just talking to Joey.

Joey is the type of actress to never fall into a typecast. At just 11, the star made a name for herself alongside Selena Gomez in "Ramona and Beezus." From there she's bounced between music video appearances, quintessential rom-coms, horror, animated comedy, drama, and of course, *The Kissing Booth* (which deserves its own genre as a Netflix, young adult comedy filled with beautiful men.) And while it seems that no matter what Joey does it is impossible to hit new ground, she just proved us wrong: She will try her hand at executive producing her newest project of Netflix's adaptation for "The Uglies" book series. Pre-COVID, Joey took her idea of a movie adaptation to network and they loved it.

"Ever since I was young, this was my favorite book series ever. I

was always obsessed with the idea of playing Tally Youngblood and was always just hoping and praying that one day they made a movie of it so that I could," she says. "I just have a desire to create things that make me happy and just work on things that ignite a fire in my heart. So I was like you know what? I'm just gonna do it myself," she says smiling into the camera. She credits Scott Westerfeld, the author of the series, for allowing her to star and produce this project. I noticed her body shift closer to the camera as I felt her passion. "It's been a dream of mine for a very long time," she says.

She cites the series' relatability as the fuel to her fire. "I got told when I was younger that I wasn't pretty enough for a few roles," she says. "People's perception of you really changes your own perception of yourself and so this book was always something that was so near and dear to my heart. That these 'uglies' were finding ways to really embrace their own actual beauty."

One thing about Joey that is quick to note is how confidently she carries herself. She knows she's a badass – in the least Hollywood asshole way possible – and reminds people that it doesn't matter what people think. "It's really hard with the amount of people that say really creative mean things," she says. "It's important to remember that for every person who says something like that, there's so many more that feel a different way about you. There's also your family and friends who love you. So who actually cares about what these people who don't know anything about you besides what they think they know? Who gives a shit!"

Besides serving as a role model to young people, she is also feeling the pressure to do something to ensure that 2021 doesn't end up like the shit storm this year was—is. "My hope for 2021 is just overall betterness. But the thing is like, I think what's kind of scary is that a lot of people

are like, 'oh, I'm so over 2020, I can't wait for 2021' as if New Year's Eve is just gonna magically cure the world. Cause it's not—it's going to be a long road ahead of us." But Joey says her hope for 2021 is a Biden and Harris administration and that, "the whole world stops burning," she says with a giggle, but I know she's not joking. This place is a mess.

Luckily though, Joey is 21 and can actually vote in this year's election. "I voted yesterday and it feels so good," she says smiling and dancing into the camera. "It's the most exciting thing that you can do as an adult. You literally get a say in your future and others' futures and the state of the world. It's just the coolest thing you can do!"

Her personal tip is to do your research before trying to fill out the ballot and listening to each other regardless of party. "People are just listening to respond and no one is listening to listen. I think if you are a Democrat, if you are a Republican, or any other party, I think the most important thing is to not sit on your high horse about what party you're in." For Joey, the values are more important than elephant or donkey, red or blue, conservative or liberal.

While the election is definitely spooky, Blumhouse Productions decided to add to the scares by dropping eight new horror films on Amazon, including Joey's new film, "The Lie." "What initially attracted me to that role was that I liked that it was a Blumhouse movie but it wasn't straight-up horror. It was a mental game," she told me. Having watched the film the night prior, I would agree. The plot twist at the end left my jaw dropped and slightly uncomfortable with all that went down—in the best way. "Performance-wise I was excited to try and figure out how to make someone worth having empathy but also be the villain."

As for keeping sane, Joey is settling down with her intuitions, not caring what people think, and listening to good music. "I am very eclectic with my taste. Right now I'm listening to the new Sufjan Stevens album, and this album called Lagoons by Tigers in the Sky, a lot of Sigur Rós. And then I sort of take it back, I've been listening to Steeler's wheel a lot, a lil Frankie Valley in there, throw in some Billy Joel, I am all over the place."

So are we Joey, so are we.



BLUE SWEATER MATCHING LEGGINGS,
BAJA EAST. NECKLACES, DALMATIA,
EARRINGS, COS.



NECKLACES, DALMATIA. EARRINGS,
COS. COAT, DRIES VAN NOTEN,
SHIRT, ADEAM,
LEGGINGS, LANEUS,
HEELS, LE SILLA.

What do you stand for DEATHBYROMY



PHOTOS / JULIA PITCH
STYLING + CREATIVE DIRECTION/ PHIL GOMEZ
MAKEUP / FRANCIE LUXE
HAIR / HAILEY ADICKES W/ CELESTINE AGENCY
STORY / SAM BERLIN @SPBERLIN

DEATHBYROMY IS NO STRANGER TO THE UNCONVENTIONAL. SHE'S BEEN REFERRED TO AS A GOTH-POP STAR, AND "GEN Z'S DARK PRINCESS OF POP" BY PAPER. BUT IF THERE'S ANYTHING SHE IS NOT, IT'S SURFACE LEVEL. AT JUST 20-YEARS-OLD, DEATHBYROMY IS POPULARIZING A DARK TAKE ON POP MUSIC WITH MATURE AESTHETICS AND PASSION. HER MUSIC ECHOES THROUGH OUR HEADS, SHE'S CATCHY, POP - BUT NOT TOO POP. THERE'S A TINGE OF CHAOS IN HER MUSIC, SULTRY LAYERING, AND MEATY BASS DROPS. CLOSE YOUR EYES AND HER MUSIC WILL TAKE YOU TO A GOTHIC PALACE FULL OF PERFECT ACOUSTICS.

As a member of Gen-Z, DeathbyRomy represents a group of people who have a passion for learning and figuring out who they genuinely are. DeathbyRomy is the perfect encapsulation of a young woman who knows what she wants and will work her ass off to get there. She doesn't fray from being her full self, even if it differs from what everyone else is doing.

If anyone is sure of who they are, it's DeathbyRomy. She doesn't fear vulnerability or different ways of thinking. She doesn't hide behind the mainstream and she voices what she believes in. She reminds us what we all should stand for: not caring what others think, and keeping true to ourselves.

WHAT DO YOU STAND FOR?

"I stand for unity equality and restoring the power to the people. I love music, art and adventure, and food. I think change starts with refusing to stay silent, being willing to work in teams instead of on our own. And I think change starts with using your voice, whether it's through music, poetry, activism, and then any way that you can. And I think change stems from taking advantage of your situation and recognizing your privilege in the midst of the world. Being on pause, I've definitely been feeling a lot more stirred, crazy, and reflective, and kind of manic in my own head. And I think that that's birthed a lot of exciting and up and down the music. There's definitely been a lot more of craving and a lust for life that I've been longing for and expressing through songs. And there's also been a lot more of the hopeless romantic, and me that has been dreaming and dreaming and dreaming."



TOP, M.L.A.E.D.
PANTS, SAGA NYC
RINGS, CHRIS HABANA,
SOCKS, SHOES, T.U.K.

SUIT, JEREMY WILLARD.
JEWELRY, CHRIS HABANA.
SHOES, T.U.K.

DONNA MISSAL



Donna Missal has big fans. Like, big big fans. Shania Twain, for example. But having fangirls means being a role model, and Donna knows how to be one. She is her most authentic self at all times, vulnerable, and filled with a powerful tonality. She's a pusher, speaking openly about her deepest truths, her intimate desires, and her hopes for society.

We asked our role model:

What do you stand for?

"Authenticity and originality and fearlessness. I think a way to inspire and create change would be to look inward. I think sometimes to create change in our environment, it has to start by looking at yourself. What can you change about your own life and your own impact and an awareness of the impact that you make on the world around you?

If you start there, then you can accomplish a lot more as an individual. Personally, I think it's really important to start with your direct community. What's in your direct immediate environment? Start there. I think impacting the world at large starts with small individual changes that then impact your direct community and create that sort of ripple effect.

What do you love?

What do I love? I love my family and I love creating things.

I love the process of watching something go from only existing in your own imagination to then becoming this tangible, accessible thing and involving more than just you, and becoming something that gets shared and can create impact. But where it started was just this little seed of something that wouldn't have existed without you. I just think that's kind of an incredible experience.

I love that this year has been so wild. I think I had these intentions set for myself for this year that I was going to expand in some way, and I'm not even sure I knew what that meant, but take myself. I thought I wanted to take myself and spread myself out and become bigger or wider in some way as a concept. And the shift in the paradigm has really reminded me why I am a creative and why I make things and why I'm making music and why it's important to me. And I think I had lost sight of that prior to this wild experience of having to really reevaluate what's important to you and why. And so the creative process, how it shifted as a result of the environment, I think has only been good for me. It's just a really important reminder of why care about this.

I made a record and put it out. It's crazy. But I anticipated an entirely different experience putting out this record and set all these expectations and I've watched all of those expectations completely change, and I thought that that would break me and it hasn't. So I feel good.

SHIRT, HOUSE OF CAVANI.
BRA TOP, RING AND GOLD NECKLACE, CHRIS HABANA.
SILVER NECKLACE, UNDERPIN.
PANTS, JEREMY WILLARD.
SOCKS AND SHOES, T.U.K.



QUEEN HERBY

There's just something about Queen Herby. I don't know if it's her feel good music, her glowing personality, the fact that she can rap about anything in the world and I'll be fully anticipating every. single. word. Her ability to spew melodic bars is enticing, and rare.

The way Queen Herby exudes confidence is the most enchanting experience. Whether you're blasting her in the car and trying to keep up with her speed or taking those last minute shots before the uber arrives, Queen Herby can make you forget all of your problems. With hip hop and R&B influences, the queen ties her music in a big fat bow with empowering lyrics. She's all about expression and doesn't shy away from speaking her truth.

The queen reminds us how bad ass it is to be confident and completely you. She has a passion for purpose, and her music brings catchy beats and a heavy dose of real talk. She stands for authenticity, but she also knows how hard it is to find yourself. Especially in the age of isolation and political turmoil.

To tune out the noise, sometimes we find ourselves seeking powerhouse role models, and Queen Herby is the one. If you want a reminder of how cool it is to be confident or just how to love yourself, listen to the queen.

What do you stand for?

"I stand up for a lot of things and I think the number one thing for me in 2020 has been that I stand for learning constantly, constantly listening. And I think as long as you do that, you live a happy life."

What do you love?

"I love French vanilla ice coffee from Dunkin donuts. I love nineties R&B music. I love dissecting hip hop rap versus for the art form is still really new to me. I love my two poodles. I have two little miniature poodles that bring me a lot of joy, even though they're a pain in the ass to take care of hate being responsible, but I can't imagine my life without them."



TKAY MAIDZA

PHOTOS / ALEXANDRA ARNOLD
STORY / JACK IRVIN

Tkay Maida had to push our interview back a week because her impacted wisdom teeth were flaring up...again. It's the third time this has happened to her, each time worse than the last: the left side of her face swells up, she can't eat, drink, or swallow, her ears clog, and she gets full-body sweats and chills. The first time it happened, the dentist told her she needed to get them extracted because they were "about to fully erupt." But Maida didn't want to get them removed, so she decided to wait.

During a follow-up visit she was once again encouraged to have them taken out, but, convinced it was a mere financial ploy, Maida refused on the principle of anti-capitalism. The Zimbabwe-born singer/rapper has Medicare in Adelaide, Australia, where she's lived since she was a child, but it doesn't cover dental work, which she sees as a bit of a scam. "I was like, 'It's been eight months since the last time it happened. I don't think it's going to happen ever again, and you guys just want me to pay like two thousand dollars,'" she says over a Zoom call from her apartment.

After receiving antibiotics following a second reaction, she was again pushed to have the teeth removed. "I was like, 'Oh yeah, OK, maybe,'" the 23-year-old details. Still not convinced, she went out and partied over the weekend, felt immense pain the next day, and finally decided it might be time to schedule the surgery.

Maida may be a bit stubborn, but not in a brash way; she just has her priorities straight. She's focused on the promotion of her excellent new EP, *Last Year Was Weird*, Vol. 2, most of which she's had to handle on her own from home due to restrictions caused by the pandemic. She's taken the reins on her own styling, hair, and makeup for photoshoots, as well as even shooting the music video for her Kari Faux collaboration "Don't Call Again" by herself (which featured six different outfits and wigs). Luckily she was prepared, thanks to the racks of clothes and shelves of wigs that fill her apartment. "She's brown, a bit posh. She's really heavy. I never wear her," she says, laptop in one hand and each wig's styrofoam head in the other, as she tours me through her collection.

Despite the unforeseen responsibilities and the fact that she could become overwhelmed with excruciating pain at any given moment, Tkay Maida is actually quite chill on our call. She's just gotten home from the gym to find out that the hyperreal video for her other ignoring-your-calls anthem "You Sad" (filmed safely in a studio post-lockdown) is her fastest-growing solo clip on YouTube to date. "The algorithm is loving it, apparently," she quips. It's the latest win in her plan for the *Last Year Was Weird* trilogy to re-launch her already-successful career. She first gained traction in her home territory with her 2013 debut single "Brontosaurus," which was followed by the hits "Ghost" and "M.O.B." off of her 2014 EP *Switch Tape*. The momentum garnered her some major collaborations with fellow-Aussie Troye Sivan, DJ Martin Solvig, and Killer Mike of *Run the Jewels*, eventually leading to the release of her debut album, the electropop-tinged *Tkay*, in 2016.

It was all a bit of a whirlwind for Maida, who was then only 19. By the time she finished making the album, she no longer felt it represented her. She began to realize that her creative team may not have had her best interest at heart; they were more interested in scoring hits than honing in on her vision. Almost every track on *Tkay* was produced by a different person, which ran Maida into a bit of a sonic identity crisis. She looked at her peers in the industry, the then-rising alt/R&B and rap artists like SZA, Kelela, Smino, and Saba, whom she felt had carved unique lanes for themselves, and wanted to do the same.

"When you look at artists like those, they seem like they just have their people that they work with, and they stick to it, and they just develop, and I think that's how you grow," she says. "I was like, 'This speaks so much more to me in a deeper way. I feel like I can do this.'"

She decided to link up with producer Dan Farber, who produced Tkay's "Castle in the Sky," to discuss the right route to achieve her newly-realized artistic goals. "I had to hand in another album, but I just didn't feel ready to do a second album," she admits. "I asked if I could change it to three EPs, and supposedly when we get to the third one I should understand what I want to do for an album."

So Maida hired a new team (complete with four managers) and began working on the series of projects. Inspired by the tough, emotional year she endured following the release of *Tkay*, she decided to name the trilogy *Last Year Was Weird*. The first two installments explore themes of introspection, growth, and unapologetic confidence—"My ego bigger than the Mack truck," she asserts on "24K." With Farber as her main collaborator, she's able to seamlessly weave through trap, house, and R&B sounds while remaining true to her artistic vision. Her goal is for listeners to finally "connect the dots" of her personality and artistry, but at the same time to create with no intention of pleasing anyone but herself.

"This is my own world, and if you're willing to be a part of it, come along," she says. "If not, I'm still going to be over here minding my business."

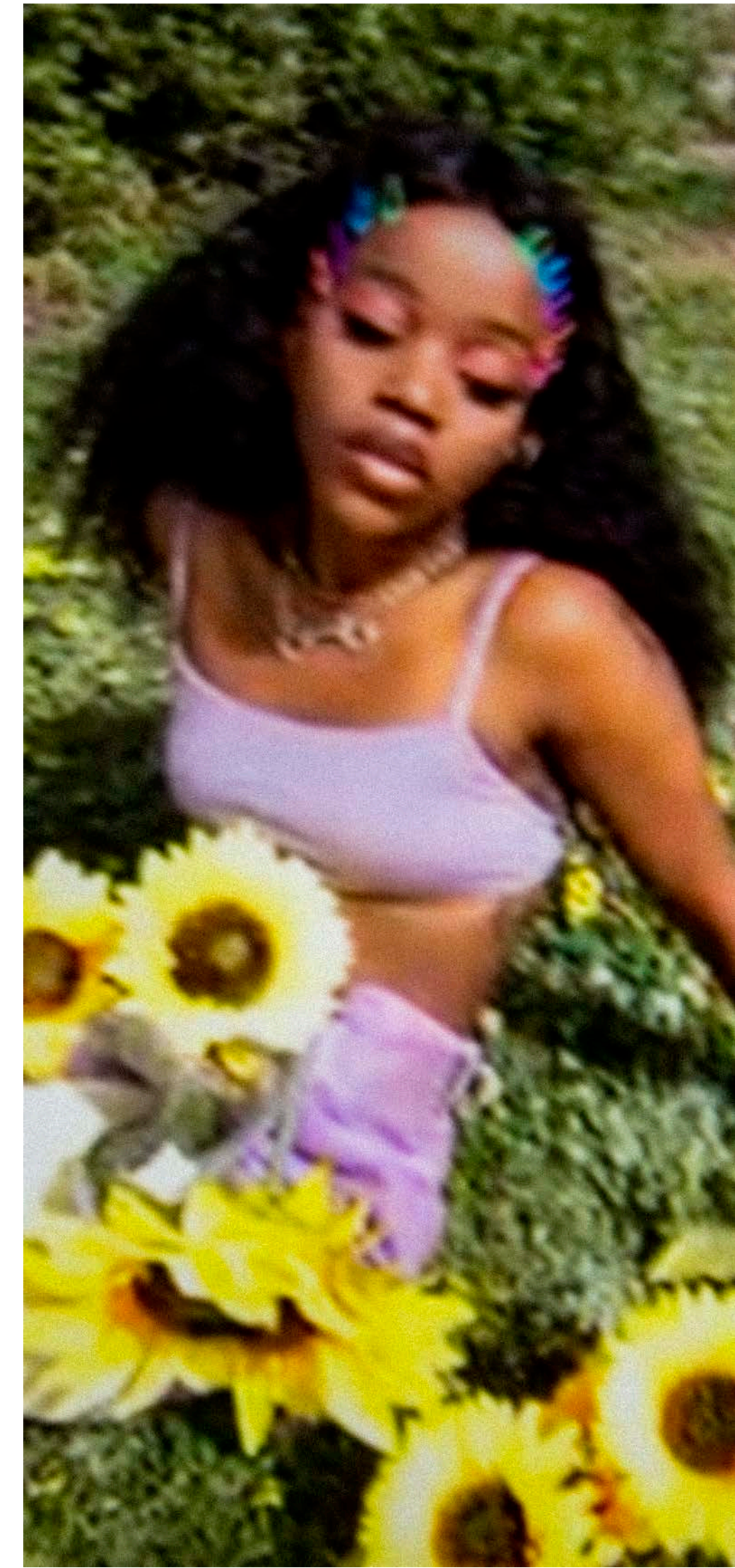
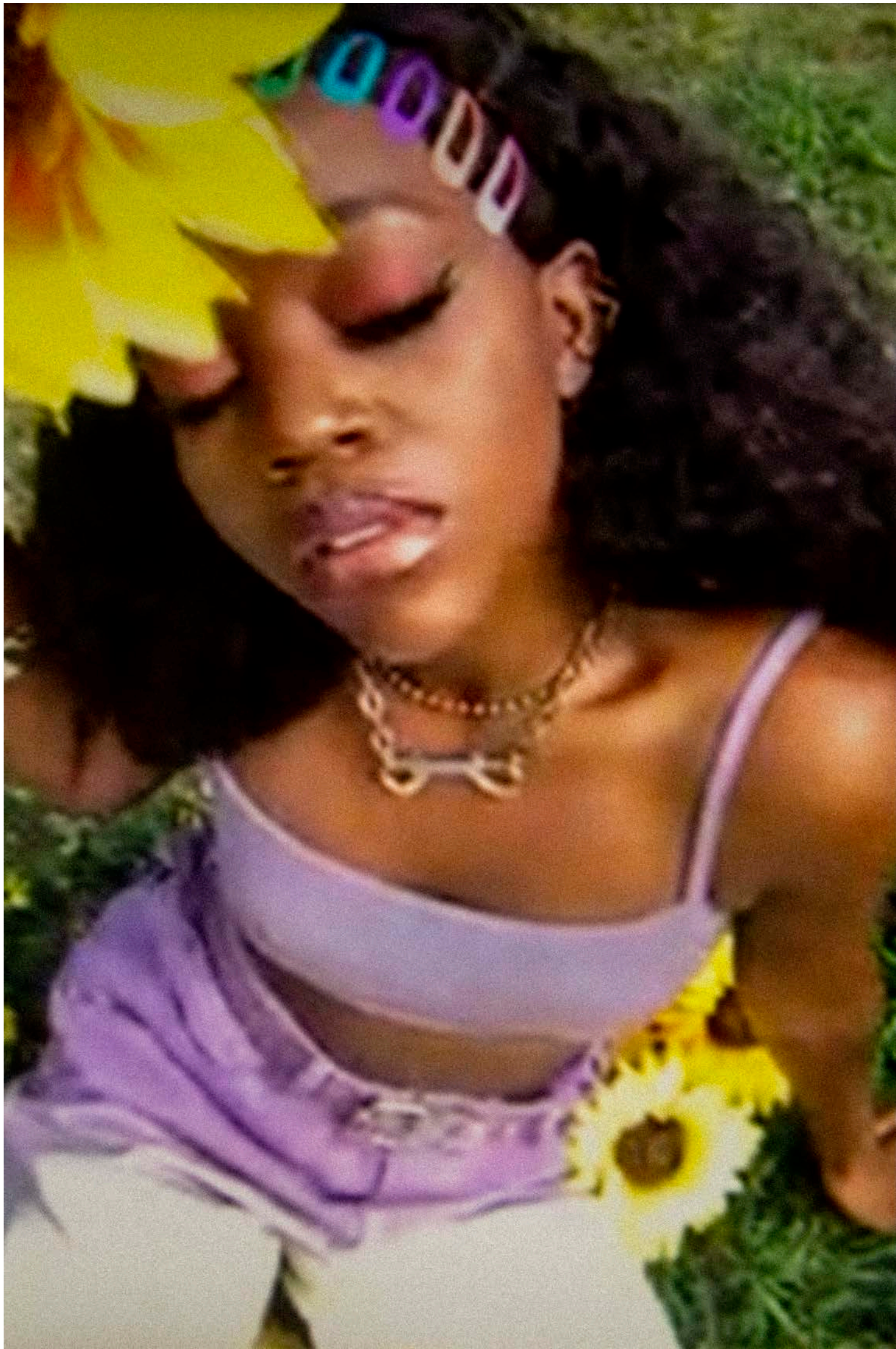
Her vision for *Last Year Was Weird* goes further than just music; she wants it to exist as a brand. Since Vol. 1, she's dropped limited batches of LYWW-branded merchandise with each new release and thrown pop-up events in Melbourne and Sydney, which she plans to expand worldwide once she's no longer limited by the pandemic. She'd also love to make the "LYWW radio," shouted out by a faux-announcer throughout the EP, a real station.

When I suggest that she may like capitalism a bit more than she thinks she does, she laughs. "I mean, it would be fun to design stuff and keep it for myself, but everyone around me is just like, 'Why are you doing that?'" she explains, noting that she's inspired by artists like Tyler, the Creator who have passionately curated brands that provide a sense of community. "It's not like, 'OK, cool, I want to get really rich.' It'd be great to be really rich, but I want to create this world."

It's oddly (and unfortunately) fitting that as she's rolled out the trilogy, the world has only gotten weirder—and that's a vast understatement of the global distress caused by both the pandemic and the explosion of the Black Lives Matter movement. Maida is personally thankful that she had the chance to go through her own personal and artistic journey prior to the hardships of 2020, because she's not sure how she'd be handling it otherwise. "I think I had to go through that personal awakening in order to live a global awakening," she says. "Cause I feel like, especially now, it seems a lot of people might look outwards and blame a lot of things, but they haven't looked within yet, and they aren't fully able to process what's happening."

As for whether or not the material on Vol. 3 is going to reflect the state of the world, Maida would rather keep listeners immersed in the escapism of the LYWW universe. "I think if I am going to reflect on how weird the year is, or the experiences that I've gone through, it'll be in an intro and an outro," she says of the next project, which will start its launch later this year with a new single. "We have a cool feature on that one. It's high energy, and it just makes sense right now."

With the momentum the trilogy is already gathering, the vast amount of work she's put in, and just how much talent she has to offer, her career is bound to soar to unfathomable heights. Considering that the project is headed in the same direction thematically, it's quite the perfect timing. "The first EP was like, 'Where am I?' The second one is like, 'I think I like it here, and I'm going to keep going,' she details. "The third one's kind of just like, 'Alright, we're ascending.'"



ARRINGS + RING, PR SOLO (@PR_SOLO)
TOP, KNORTS (@_KNORTS)



RIELA

PHOTOS / ARTURO EVARISTO
CREATIVE DIRECTION & STYLING / PHIL GOMEZ
MAKEUP / SASHA GLASSER
HAIR / NAOMI SUMMER
NAILS / SOJI
STORY / E.R. PULGAR
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT / DENISSE DAMKEN

Riela knows a thing or two about breaking bad habits. On her debut EP *Tranquila y Tropical*, out this October, the Miami-raised, LA-based musician conjures a variegated soundscape of reggaeton beats, R&B, and pop informed by a multi-lingual, multi-sensory childhood in South Florida. Listing everything from Ja Rule to Sade to reggaeton as an influence, Riela crafts a very particular kind of music, mellow and tortured, tough and tender.

With songs like uptempo “mala maña” (“Bad Habit”) and “no soy yo”, where she sings “Ahora solo salgo de party / Para pensar toda la noche en tu body” she roots her music in a downtempo escapism that you can still dance to, being in love and longing while taking charge à la neoperreo demigoddesses Tomasa Del Real and Ms Nina. A Spanglish-singing, seductively crooning neophyte of the movement’s philosophy of *perreando por fuera, llorando por dentro* (in English, “grinding on the outside, crying on the inside”), Riela is posed to be an exciting voice to watch in the new age of Latinx Music.

LADYGUNN spoke to Riela about the shifting definition of Latin Music, her creative approach, and her debut EP *Tranquila y Tropical*.

Your music goes in a lot of different directions, from rapping in Spanish to making use of heavy trap and R&B-influenced production. The songs are all very disparate, but still convey that *tranquila y tropical* vibe. Can you tell us about how these songs relate to each other and your process?

I’m still getting two songs mixed and mastered on the EP, but it’s done. Growing up in Miami, you hear disco everywhere, you hear reggaeton, you hear everything. I was obsessed with pop; Christina Aguilera, Britney Spears and grew up on Sade, Selena, Celia Cruz, and Ja Rule. It was a mix of all those things, and I was making music in 2016 in school. I was making stuff I thought people wanted to hear, and I fucking hated it; I deleted everything kind of started from scratch, figuring out what represented me in the sounds, how my identity could be translated over into music. Growing up bilingual and speaking Spanglish was also important; that’s just how it is in Miami. I don’t necessarily make it a point to sing or write in Spanglish, I just kind of forget a word in English and I know how to say in Spanish. The other day I was thinking of “conceited” and when I was in the session I ended up saying *creído* because I forgot how to say it. I wasn’t even going to Google it; I was just like whatever let’s just slap *creído* in there and figure it out.

I like that you sing in Spanglish, especially now when Latinx artists are breaking out of Anglo expectations, especially younger rising artists like you, who are blending everything because we grew up listening to all these very different things. Would you place yourself in a genre?

I don’t like to. My goal is to be able to make whatever music I want. I haven’t even released a full project yet, but I want to be able to put out a pop song or puro perreo. I don’t want to categorize myself...I’d say I identify most with like RnB, but

not all my music is RnB influenced. I’m still defining myself.

Tell me about the lyrics and the way you’ve structured the EP. They were all striking but still fun, talking about love, yearning, and the power plays within it. It’s about being in love and in charge of it. Can you give us a peek into the emotional world that inspired this EP?

These songs are about the same person. “Mala Maña” is about this person going back and forth and making it seem like they want to be with me but not actually going for it—that’s the mala maña that they have. “Quien Te Conoce” is me letting you know like “dude, what the fuck?” We know each other so well, we’ve been so close for so long and it feels like it’s common sense to treat someone okay, but it’s not. “Your Place” was about somebody else...I asked them to hang out once—mind you, we hung out a lot—and they were like “you’re being really clingy.” Like quien tu te crees? “No Soy Yo” talks about escaping from all these feelings. The EP is going to be a part of a trilogy...it’s mostly about my experiences and what I’m going through. The second is gonna be called *Llorar y Perrear*, which is processing everything I felt on *Tranquila y Tropical*. I don’t know the name of the third one yet, but I’m gonna wait ‘til I get there because that one’s gonna be about how I grew from those experiences. As far as lyrics, I’m gonna be honest: I get high and then I walk around and I see what influences me.

Can you speak on the shifting definition of Latin Music as the industry starts getting specific rather than lumping everything with reggaeton roots under that umbrella?

I think that there is a really big gap. It’s a very gray area when you say Latin Music; someone like Omar Apollo is put under Latin Music, but he doesn’t make “Latin Music”—he is just a Latino making alternative music. I hate that term...like, yeah, we’re brown, we’re here, we’re making music, but it’s not “Latin.” Even a song like “Your Place” I wouldn’t consider Latin even though it has Spanish in it. They don’t call Cazuu or Bad Bunny trap artists; they say they’re Latin Trap. That’s why I want to make sure that I bring a lot of variety into my music, which I do naturally, but want to make sure it’s prominent so that when people try to fit me into a genre they can’t. I don’t know how this happened, but BBC Radio 1 put me on “Best New Pop”—they didn’t put me on Best New Latin Pop, they didn’t put me on “Latin Pop,” they didn’t put me on a Latinx-centric list. That’s how I want it to be...the term Latin music is outdated and confusing.

What’s the plan after the *Tranquila y Tropical*?

I’m going to keep pushing the EP six months after, so probably in April 2021 I’ll drop the second one. I feel like it’s a very slow process but my main goal is to focus on the creative. I feel like once you start moving, press and these things are going to come naturally so long as I put in the work. I’m gonna lock myself up in the studio and write as much as I can, as honestly as possible.



HEIDI GARDNER

PHOTOS / ERIC T. WHITE
STYLING / SHEA DASPIN
HAIR + MAKEUP / ASHLEIGH CIUCCI
STYLING ASSISTANT / EMILY BURNETTE
STORY / SAM BERLIN

VELOUR TURTLENECK TANK, JUICY COUTURE.
EAR CUFF, LAJOUX.
BLUEHEART EARRING, CLAIRE'S.



We fell for comedian Heidi Gardner when she and Harry Styles played an Icelandic couple at birthing class last year on SNL. “I’m feeling, how do you say in English, cute?” she says to the rest of a struggling birthing class. She’s pregnant, she’s doing sex moves on Harry Styles, she’s in the U.S. on a lip-sync visa, we’re jealous. Whether you know her as teen critic Bailey Gismert, the skank babysitter, Cooch the humanoid super cat, or Goop staffer Baskin Johns, there’s something about her that screams funny.

Gardner’s sense of humor is relatable and reminds you of all the female archetypes we love to hate. Gardner is that funny bitch who can make you laugh with one teenage-girl-worthy eye roll. Choker in tow, personalized YouTube banner and all, Gardner embodies every cringe, hormonal teen girl trying to make it online. “I’ve also turned my dressing room into the bedroom of a teen in the 90’s,” Gardner told LADYGUNN. “So it’s a good place to find fruit roll-ups, Clueless on VHS, or you can play Sonic on SEGA if you’re so inclined.” Talk about getting into character.

But her comedic range does not end there; she can go from hormonal teen to Angel, “every boxer’s girlfriend from every movie about boxing ever,” to Pretty Mandy in one Saturday night. From 15 and innocent to unshowered with a realistic smoker’s voice, Gardner can portray a variety of characters.

When Gardner received the “Most Likely to be on SNL” superlative in high school, she was disappointed. “As far as the yearbook superlative goes I think I lost ‘Most Likely to be an MTV V.J.’ and that broke my heart,” she told LADYGUNN. While young Gardner may have thought being a video jockey was her life’s purpose, her fans believe the superlative manifested a career for her.

Gardner, a Missouri native, packed up her life to move to LA and become a hairstylist. On the side, she joined the Groundlings, an improv school home to comedy heavyweights Will Ferrell, Kathy Griffin, Kristin Wiig, and Maya Rudolph. While she considered her comedy career as a sidegig, she found herself as part of the Main Company in only a few years time. When SNL came for their roundup of the funniest of the funny, they grabbed Gardner. She started SNL on Season 43, and for her, the SNL cast has become a family. The girl was, in fact, funny.

Gardner shared that rather than an anxiety-provoking environment, SNL backstage is more like a communal sleep-deprivation tank with candy. “There’s a constant search for candy to keep your adrenaline going. I’ve knocked on doors asking for gummies. I typically ask my friends in the talent department or Bowen [Yang]. Bowen is good for sugar,” Gardner told LADYGUNN. “Sometimes I’ll

knock on [Chris Redd] and Bowen’s door with a wig on and act like a woman who snuck upstairs trying to hang in their dressing room or meet the musical guest. They tolerate me for longer than they should.”

While everything might seem comedically optimistic in the SNL world, Gardner is not ignorant to the world outside of sketch comedy. “I think the most important part of people with influence using their platforms is simply that they can reach a bigger audience and so they should,” Gardner says. “Sure, it’s fun to share an outfit or a picture of your cat but that’s fluff – all things I do. Fluff is fun but change is where it’s at. At least for me, I can’t really go back to posting sketches or comedy or cute pics right now. It doesn’t seem important.” Gardner cites the NBA as an organization that is utilizing their platforms to ignite change. “I’d rather continue to keep the focus on Black Lives Matter which I truly applaud the NBA for doing. Yeah, they’ve gone back to playing but the players continue to speak on social injustice before and after every game. They’re a prime example of saying, ‘we can’t ignore this.’ I see that as a real inspiration and it motivates me to take action publicly but also consistently in my private life. Listening, learning, donating, reflecting.”

When she’s not a cast member on SNL, she voices an anthropomorphic cat named Cooch on the comedy series SuperMansion. “I hope I did the breed justice,” she jokes. Voiceover is a different ballgame from improv and requires a completely different skill set. “Since your voice is your only tool you’re projecting a lot more and the energy expended is kind of shocking,” Gardner says. “A two-hour voiceover session had similar effects to running on a treadmill. I was done after that. Like done for the day not done with voiceover. Hire me! 1-888-WIL-WORK.”

While the pandemic still has no end in sight, we hope comedy will shine a light at the end of the tunnel. We asked Gardner her favorite comedy movie to keep our spirits high as we await the end of the worst year to date. “Waiting For Guffman,” she says. “The cast are geniuses. It never gets old. It’s quotable as hell. I’m jealous of everyone’s character’s and performances, and it makes me feel like I’ll never measure up comedically. That’s the sign of great comedy.”

As for Season 46 of SNL, Heidi isn’t quite sure what to expect. “My guess is it’s going to feel different. But that’s on the inside. Hopefully to the viewer it’s pretty similar to what it’s been. Obviously there will be a huge political push in the first month of the show. I know everyone involved at SNL and NBC has worked tirelessly to figure out how to pull this off safely. So to them I’m like, whoah, big round of applause.”



MANCHADO

PHOTOS / JENNIFER MEDINA
STORY / ARI TIBI
CREATIVE DIRECTION / PHIL GOMEZ
GRAPHICS / WHATEVERLULU

Colombian singer Machado has come a long way. Nearly done with his debut album, the indie reggaeton firebrand has been bubbling under the mainstream while staking his claim in New York City. The forthcoming ten-track EP, as of yet unnamed, is being wrapped up in his native Bogotá where he has been quarantining since the start of the pandemic.

The multi-faceted creative edits, conceptualizes, and spearheads his own videos with a DIY sensibility. Necessity is the mother of invention, and he's had to get creative. But Machado's more than just another creative—he's an outspoken voice for queer people of color like himself. Melding social justice causes into his work and calling out inequalities in the industry is as important to him as helping everyone get down with his delectable brand of reggaeton beats and electronic production.

"As people of color in the entertainment industry, you become very aware of white supremacy and are affected by it," Machado tells LADYGUNN. "My friends and I have been talking about this for quite a while and when everything went down with COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter gaining traction, it was a reinforcement."

We chat with Machado about the Latin influences in his addicting music, coming out to his family, racism in Colombia, and what the revolution looks like.

What's the direction you are taking your music in now?

The music that I released a long time ago was more indie pop. Now everything is very based on Latin sounds and how I can reinterpret those. The first singles from it were the first songs that I did—very reggaeton vibes. From that, I started developing it more—when I did my shows I have live percussionists and play with salsa sounds so it started evolving. I'm looking forward to it. It feels like you just started tapping into that Latin background recently.

Do you see any changes in your immediate creative process or music?

It was definitely really hard to work on anything when George Floyd died. I couldn't focus on anything. A lot of my album, those sounds we call Latin music, come from Black music. Reggaeton and Salsa comes from Black people. A lot of rhythms that I use come from Black people, so just being mindful that that's what I'm doing. As a Latino, we're so mixed. Parts of us are White and Indigenous and have Black blood. So in a way, it's like where do I stand in all this? Of course, in solidarity with Black people.

That's really good to hear. So how are you coping with the pandemic and how is the Black Lives Matter movement gaining traction in Colombia, if at all?

Bogotá is smaller than New York, about 6 million people. There's public transportation, and that's a big way for people to get the virus. They shut everything down the second week in March. You couldn't use public transportation; I actually got a fine! Colombians won't follow the rules, which is why I think it's so strict. In terms of Black Lives Matter, people think there's no racism, even though this is a very racist country—especially the city that I live in. There are a lot of Black people in Colombia but they're mostly in the Pacific Coast and Caribbean Coast. The city that I'm in is very classist and racist. People see protests and are talking about it a little, just observing whatever happens in America but they don't think it applies here. Recently in the news, they were saying

how all the slave owner statues were being demolished and I always go in the comments because I love to see what people are thinking—people were upset! They were saying this is unnecessary, why are we erasing history, in Colombia! Colonizers really did something to the minds of the people.

I try to donate and educate people as much as I can. My Colombian audience isn't really that big. I've been here for very little, and know a limited amount of people. I try to repost as much as I can, filter through the information and post the most helpful resources. That's the best thing we can do, cause at the same time we're educating ourselves.

Can you speak about your queerness as it relates to your Latinx identity?

I recently came out to my parents. For the first time I'm able to be completely queer and talk about it. I think it was implicit that I was queer but because I knew my parents watched my social media, I didn't want to talk too much about it. This is who I am and I don't care. It took me a long time, especially as a musician, to feel like I don't care. You might not be accessible for other audiences, but I am going to be successful—and the gays do it better!

How was that conversation though?

Well, coming out to my parents was almost accidental. Ever since I came back to Colombia, while I was working on building more of a portfolio to get my artist visa, it was really hard with my mom. She's Christian and every time I've heard her talk about gay people, she had been dismissive. It started to make me really resentful and I started avoiding her. We lived in the same house, and she asked me why I was acting like this and I said, "I'm acting like this because I think you won't accept me because I'm gay. Like, I'm tired." We just had the conversation and little by little, she's getting accustomed to it. It's definitely hard for her. Gay people exist, Black people exist, non binary people exist... recently, Trans people have been dying in Colombia. There was an instance where a Trans woman was denied into an ambulance because she had HIV and because she was Trans. It's important to have these conversations.

What do you think the revolution for POC, queer, Trans, Black lives in Colombia looks like?

In America, people really speak and lash out; they believe in their rights. They believe in the right of change. In Colombia, we were at war for literally hundreds of years with our guerrilla groups, armed groups, military groups. There was a long time where people in power, if anyone spoke out, would just kill you. There's a big fear of speaking out in Colombia because it was recent. In December, there was a huge protest because the corruption is so bad. I think the revolution is POC, queer, Black, Trans people having the opportunities that are given to white people. That's really all people are fighting for, it's not that crazy. People aren't fighting for extra credit; we're just fighting for rights! As QPOC, especially when I was younger, people would completely ignore me even though I wrote all my own music and videos. We're always behind the White girl—why can't we be the "it"?

So what does the revolution look like for you?

It looks like the world with no police. Fair opportunity for everybody. No deporting. A fair society for everybody, not just a few. White people will be a minority in America in 2050—that's not that far.

As the pandemic raged on in Miami, megastar producer Tainy was looking at new ways to keep the creative juices flowing. "I'm a simple kid born and raised in Puerto Rico," he tells LADYGUNN over Zoom. "I always felt I had something to give on the creative side, I never thought it would be music. At first I thought it would probably be art. I started drawing a little bit more again when we started the quarantine, bought a bunch of pencils and different types of chalk. It has been a while since I've had the time to sit down and chill and do something like that."

Not having time to chill is a gross understatement for one of reggaeton's most prolific producers. The hotshot experimentalist who helped shape Latin Trap titan Bad Bunny's sound since the onset has also crafted Latin-Grammy winning records by reggaeton OGs like Wisin y Yandel and lent his Midas touch to Cardi B, Bad Bunny, and J. Balvin's 2018 #1 hit "I Like It." With a bevy of global smashes under his belt, Tainy has become the heir-apparent to the throne of pioneering reggaeton producers like DJ Nelson or his mentor Luny Tunes, who Tainy faced off against in an Instagram Live beat battle at the height of quarantine, "Safaera" going face-to-face with classics like "Gasolina"—and holding his own.

Aside from his continued production work, which includes Kali Uchis' forthcoming effort, the hitmaker released his first solo EP in March. Dubbed The Kids That Grew Up On Reggaeton, the eclectic collection, billed as a NEON16 tape after Tainy's production collective, features the four-on-the-floor surrealist beats and off-kilter rhythm changes that he's become known for as applied to a variety of heavyweights from Spain's C. Tangana and Sean Paul to newer voices like Colombian sister act Las Villa. A strong base in reggaeton is belied by a love of rock and metal that informs his work—this may come as little surprise to those who listened closely to the hard guitar outro on YHLQMDLG's title track.

"The first album I bought was Linkin Park's Hybrid Theories, which blew my mind. It drove me crazy how they could mix these sounds, so by the time I got a chance to create music, all those worlds combined for me," he says. "I started studying everybody's production—Timbaland, Luny Tunes, The Neptunes—and trying to find my place until I was at a level that I could show artists."

Much like his production heroes, Tainy's continuing to branch out, from making "Agua" with J. Balvin for the new Spongebob Squarepants movie à la Pharrell's turn in Despicable Me to his social activism initiative HUMAN(X). On the artistic end, he's pushing the musicians he works with to get out of their comfort zone. Recent release "Un Día (One Day)" sees Dua Lipa's first foray

into a reggaeton-house hybrid, her voice bolstered by contributions from Tainy and usual suspects Bad Bunny and J. Balvin. "When you listen to the beat, it has those percussion patterns where you can feel a little bit of reggaeton but it doesn't scream reggaeton," he says. "I had the beat for like two years, showing it to different artists and none of them connected to the instrumental. We knew we wanted a female vocalist, and when [Dua Lipa] wanted to give it a try, I couldn't wait to listen. I'm a huge fan of her talent, her voice, her tone, her type of music...it became a dream as a producer. Sitting down and giving it those last touches was an amazing experience. I had never given up on the instrumental—I felt it had something and it was just waiting for the right moment, and it was this."

This lust for experimentation and passion in the work is incarnated in the NEON16 house where Tainy and his cohort work. The studio, situated in Miami's Upper East Side, is the cozy embodiment of his production philosophy—co-opened with executive Lex Borrero, creative director Ivan Rodriguez and A&R Pablo Batista, the studio serves as home base and incubator to work and kick back for the budding producers Tainy has taken under his wing and the musicians who come record. According to him, the NEON16 house is more of a community space than your traditionally uptight "scheduled and weird" studio and allows for a creative freedom and openness that's vital to his process.

In this relaxed setting, the specific kind of reggaeton Tainy makes, one that's been full of yearning and sensitivity since he made "Besos Mojados" by Wisin y Yandel and onward into Bad Bunny's Piscean emo trap, can be created as freely as the Biscayne Bay water that borders the studio. Comfort and community aside, the core of Tainy's creative process is rooted in his experimentation, in the oddities made mainstream by his peculiar perspective.

"I want something that connects with me rather than, say, a happy upbeat song," he says. "On X100PRE, for example, Bad Bunny allowed me to combine melodies where the chords had a melancholy to them, where the percussion and reggaeton were sad but had these heavy drums that make you want to dance. That combination of those two feelings is what I really love creating; I think about how 'Callaita' is the perfect combination of both those things. Being able to get out of that comfort zone and create things that the artist wants to accomplish at that moment is something you need to learn and adjust to [as a producer]. When I hear something that is unexpected or different from what I'm used to hearing, that to me is everything."



TAINY

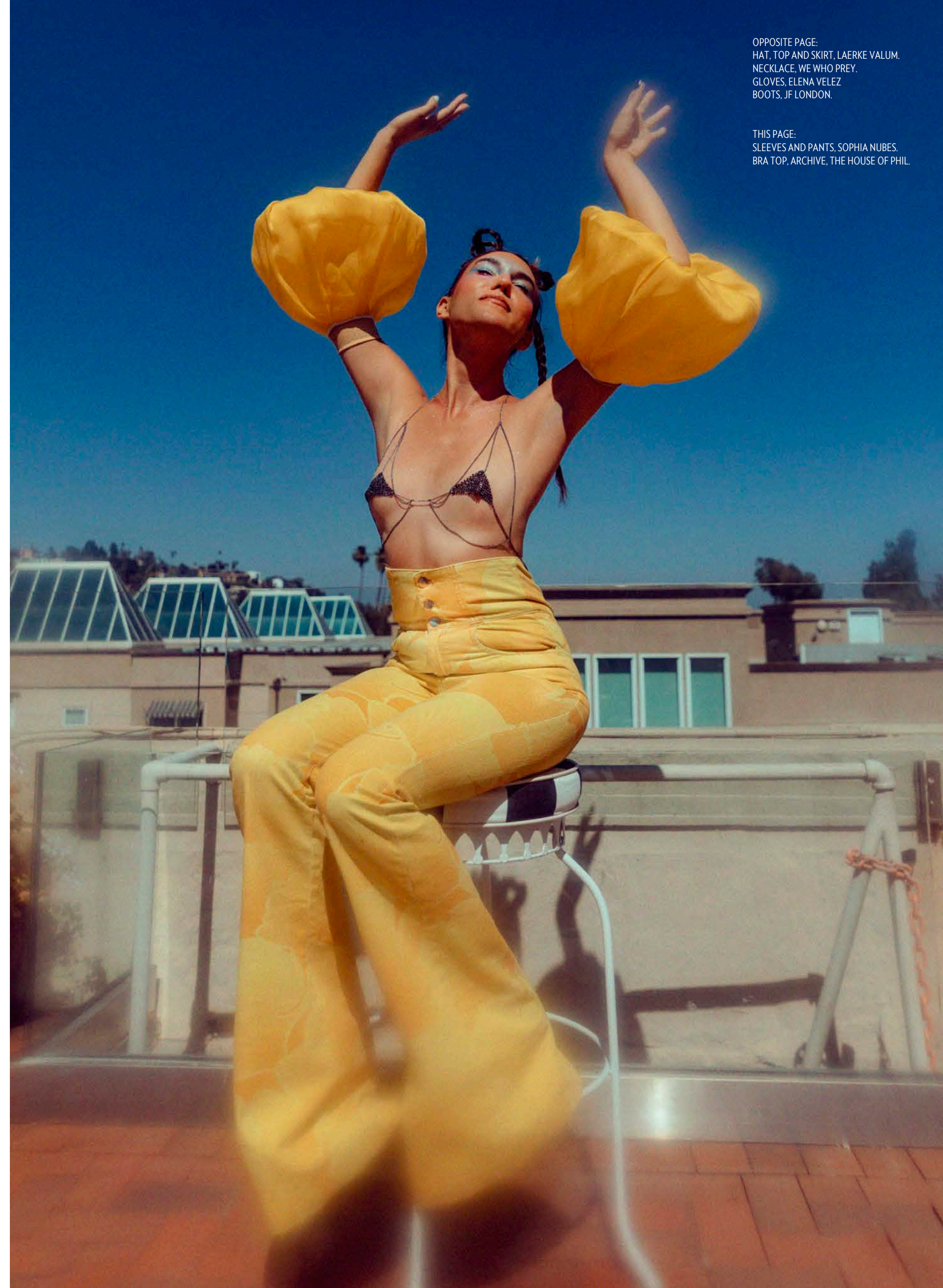
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HOME

Photo / Savanna Ruedy
Creative Direction + Styling / Phil Gomez
Starring/ Alexandra Crotta aka UPPY
HMU/ Francie Tomalonis



OPPOSITE PAGE:
HAT, TOP AND SKIRT, LAERKE VALUM.
NECKLACE, WE WHO PREY.
GLOVES, ELENA VELEZ
BOOTS, JF LONDON.

THIS PAGE:
SLEEVES AND PANTS, SOPHIA NUBES.
BRA TOP, ARCHIVE, THE HOUSE OF PHIL.

DRESS, LAERKE VALUM.
EARRINGS, WE WHO PREY.
BOOTS, JF LONDON



JACKET, LAERKE VALUM.
SHORTS, ASHTON MICHAEL
EARRINGS, WE WHO PREY.
BOOTS, JF LONDON.





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