



**NOT YOUR
PERFECT
NATIVE**

by Alycia Cypress

October 2020 Vol XVIII Issue I

Syracuse, New York

Your student fee

THE OCTOBER ISSUE

If you thought print was dead...

no you didn't. ❤️

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Jerks,

You've heard it once, and you're gonna hear it again from me: this year is not like anything I expected it to be. I mean, I have a bleached mullet. Freshman year Vivian did not see that coming (though, sixth-grade Vivian did regularly search "fashion mullet" on Tumblr in hopes of one day getting one). But one thing I did admittedly see coming was running this darn magazine.

Confession time: on a depressingly wet, cold October morning when I toured Newhouse my senior year of high school, I picked up the latest issue of Jerk. A magazine that said the f-word? What more could a wannabe-edgy senior in high school want in a magazine? At that moment, I made it my goal to be editor-in-chief one day. (Okay, we get it! She's a magazine major with dreams!) In what could be called manifestation or freakish dedication, here I am.

Other than that, I could not have expected much of anything else happening this year. From classes online and no DJs happy hour to the ravaging pandemic and widespread protests against institutionalized white supremacy, I don't have to be the one to tell you that every administrator who's emailed you via listserv in the past seven months is right: these are unprecedented times.

In this issue, we explore how these times are affecting us, locally and nationally. On pg. 30, read about the unspoken losses of COVID that go beyond the statistics, or consider whether or not we should share videos of Black deaths at the hands of institutional racism on pg. 16. Learn about the history of Black women expressing sexuality in music that paved the way for "WAP" on pg. 58 and see what it's like to be a half-white Native American growing up in this country on pg. 24.

Maybe the only thing we can expect this year is that things will continue to be unexpected. But we're not powerless. Go for a walk (quick, before the sun starts setting at 4:30!). Wear your mask. Make your favorite soup from scratch. Set up monthly donations to causes you care about. Fight for and protect BIPOC individuals and communities. Put off that one assignment you really don't want to do and laugh with friends. Freakin' vote. And get used to the unexpected.

Keep jerkin',

Vivian Country
Vivian Whitney





IN THIS ISSUE

NATIVE IN AMERICA pg 24

Growing up on a reservation half white made Alycia Cypress feel like an outsider. But so did going to school half Native American.

COVID LOSSES pg 30

We see the daily infected and death toll of COVID-19, but what about the losses that can't be quantified? From lost jobs opportunities to insuperable worry, Syracuse students are facing a whole lot more than a six-figure number can encompass.

WAP pg 58

Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion aren't the first Black female artists to rap about their sexuality. Trailblazing rappers like Lil' Kim and Missy Elliott did it long before "WAP," but not without any backlash from an industry that builds Black women up just to bring them back down.

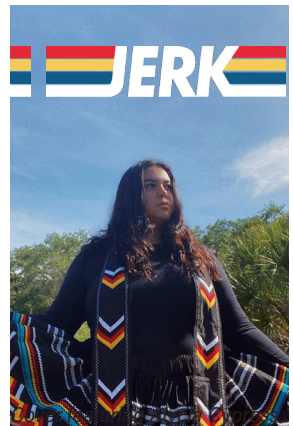


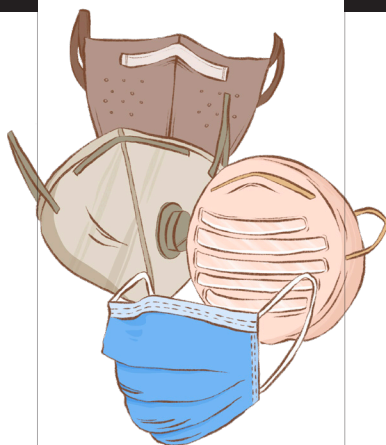
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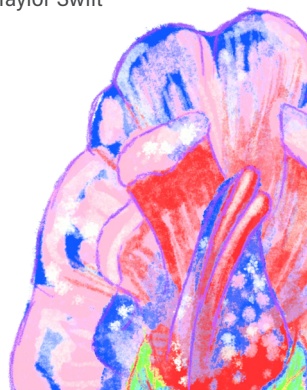
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Assessing Acceptance

Exploring LGBTQ+ acceptance at SU



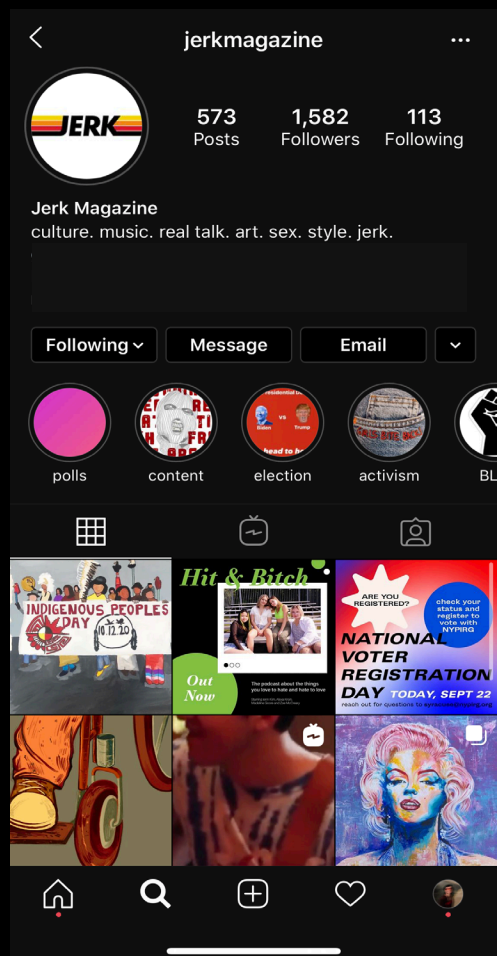
Halloween From Home

What to do to still have a memorable Halloween, even from your room



How to Have “The Talk” This Election Season

A guide to navigating through political discourse this election year





JERK ON THE INTERNET



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Brooke Kato @brookenkato · 5/31/20
I wrote a deeply personal essay about disordered eating in quarantine for @JerkMagazine. I hope my story can shed light on a topic that isn't talked about nearly enough, and that people struggling will feel less alone. Read it here:

 How Quarantine Forced






USER · FOLLOWS YOU

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FOLLOWING ...

11:16
◀ Safari

<



Hit and Bitch


Jerk Magazine

FOLLOWING ...

Welcome to the podcast about the things you hate to love and love to hate! Each week, ... [see more](#)

Society **Culture**

All Episodes **Sort**



Himbos, I Am Free on Thursdays

📺 Hit and Bitch

This one goes out to Chrissy and John. And also to Rihanna.

🎵 **FRI • 37MIN**

⬇

RESPIRATORY CARE WEEK

October 25 - 31

This is already an important week for all you stoners and indie Bandier kids who smoke Marlboro lights to look cool outside of The Deli. But take a little extra care this year, lest we have to remind you there's a highly contagious respiratory disease killing millions. Like, for real, wear a mask and stop sharing your bong!

BLUE MOON

October 31

Potentially the most powerful night of the year, the rare blue moon (the second full moon in a month) welcomes herself on Halloween. Yes, we wish the moon was literally going to be blue, but nevertheless. Grab your broomsticks, jerks, and live this night like it only happens once in a blue moon. (See what we did there?)

THE 2020 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

November 3

Your friends have told you. Your professors have told you. And we know you've seen the endless Instagram stories practically begging you. Vote if you haven't already. Vote like millions of people's lives depend on it, because they do.

NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH

November

Take the time this November — and every other month — to learn about and celebrate the culture, tradition, and history of Indigenous peoples. A land recognition before a football game doesn't help the millions of Indigenous people forced onto reservations by the government gain their sovereignty back.

WEEKEND CLASSES

October 25

We know that it's important to get all of our credit hours in since we have a long winter break, but seriously? The last thing we want to do on Sunday is wake up and spend hours in Zoom lectures that — let's be honest — we barely pay attention to during the week.

HALLOWEEND

October 29 - November 1

Halloweend's a bitch every year, but this year's a little different... The one time Halloween is on a Saturday, and we can't even reluctantly put on our third costume of the weekend and blackout in a muddy basement? I mean, when we have to do it, it's lame, but when we can't do it... You don't know what you have until it's gone, huh?

CHRISTMAS ALBUMS

October 30

We're not sure why Meghan Trainor, Tori Kelly, and the Goo Goo Dolls all decided to release their very own Christmas albums, let alone on October 30. Everyone knows Christmas doesn't start until Black Friday. And when it does, catch us listening to the Bing Crosby and Nat King Cole classics. (No? Just me?)

THE POSTPONEMENT OF DUNE

October 1, 2021

It is with deep sorrow that our chance to see Timothée Chalamet and Zendaya share the silver screen has been postponed to October 2021. I mean, that's the only reason we're seeing *Dune*; we didn't read the book! The sci-fi film was set to come out this December, but... you know, the pandemic.

THE BITCH

SIGN OF THE TIMES:

OCTOBER HOROSCOPES

What do the stars have in store for you?

Words by Meredith Clark | Illustrations by Jane Ciminera

ARIES

You will have the urge to be impulsive this month, Aries. But please, we're begging you, don't feed into it. Last time you were impulsive, you made a drastic hair change that slightly resembled Coconut Head from *Ned's Declassified*.

TAURUS

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, and you're going to take the one that gives the least amount of negative energy and bad vibes, because you just don't have any room for toxicity in your life right now.

GEMINI

You got in a fight with a Barb on Twitter and now you're being doxxed. You don't stand a chance.

CANCER

It's time to budget better, Cancer. You've been spending more money than Trump paid in income taxes for 2016 and 2017! Maybe you should take a financial literacy course, or maybe we should just tax the rich.

LEO

We hate to be the one to tell you this, Leo, but stop settling for guys that ask for your Snapchat when you first meet them. It's 2020! We're forcing wittle baby stwaight men to use big boy words now.

VIRGO

Oh, Virgo. Your stomach lining is literally deteriorating because you've been overthinking every minor instance and interaction. Stop giving yourself so much anxiety or you'll end up with an ulcer.

LIBRA

You're about to experience a major life change, Libra. And no, it's not because you manifested it by writing your intentions 20 times a day in your journal.

SCORPIO

This is your season, Scorpio! Even though you're a little manic all year round, this time it's necessary. Channel your inner bad bitch and embrace your WAP.

SAGITTARIUS

Your yearning is at an all-time high, Sag. You've started brewing your own coffee using a French press and you stare at the window all day dreaming of a cottagecore lifestyle in the countryside. Pack it up, Phoebe Bridgers!

CAPRICORN

Happy Christian girl autumn, Capricorn! 'Tis the season to pray in the name of chunky scarves and knee-high suede boots. While you bask in your fall-filled serotonin, we'll all look on and wish we were as happy and carefree as you.

AQUARIUS

We're on to you, Aquarius. You know that whole mysterious shtick you've been putting on, the one where you act all cool and disinterested around someone that you're into, but internally you're freaking out? You may be fooling them, but you're not fooling us.

PISCES

You've been super dissociative lately, Pisces, and not in a quirky way. We get it, it's your thing. But not everything is about you! Snap out of your dream-like, alternate reality and be there for the people that rely on you.



WHAT A WAY TO MAKE A LIVIN'

SEX:

OnlyFans has created a new generation of sex work

Rozi is a sex worker who hates porn. Sure, they make thousands of dollars a month from creating it, but despite this, they adamantly refuse to watch mainstream porn, especially from popular sites like Pornhub. “The porn industry itself is horribly misogynistic; it’s practically centered around the degradation of a woman’s body,” they said. “Yes, it’s sex. You’re going to be focused on the body, but it’s so clear that it’s extremist. It’s so clear that it’s not a celebration of a woman’s beautiful body.”

Rozi, a student at Onondaga Community College, began posting content on OnlyFans, a paid subscription-based app typically used for porn, in March. After amassing a following on TikTok, Rozi started to receive messages encouraging them to join OnlyFans as a content creator. At first, they were hesitant, but they ultimately decided to start creating what they

words by Zoe Glasser

illustrations by Grace Zhang

call “amateur solo porn” as an extra source of income during the pandemic. “With everything happening, medical bills, wanting to pay rent, and wanting to eat and losing [my] job... Frankly, there wasn’t enough time between losing [my] job and the first stimulus check. At first, you know, you’re very vulnerable on a site like that, but it honestly ended up boosting my confidence.”

As Rozi became more familiar with OnlyFans, they were quickly introduced to the dark side of sex work. The stigma surrounding the profession, not to mention a storm of transphobia and biphobia from users, made their experience less than perfect. For one, Rozi learned first-hand that sex work is seen as an illegitimate profession; that is to say, many people just don’t think it’s real work. In their experience, this could not be further from the truth. In April, they took a few weeks off

from posting on OnlyFans to take care of their mental health. By the time they came back, they had lost 800 subscribers and almost \$5,000 in profits.

"A lot of people view it as 'Oh, it's so easy, you just take a picture and post it,' but it's actually much, much more difficult than anyone thinks," they said. "I thought it would be something easy because I already had the following, but it's very inconsistent. Once you take a loss like that, it's very difficult to win it back, and I haven't even gotten close to starting to win that back."


Posting on OnlyFans quickly proved to be as physically and mentally stressful as a full-time job for Rozi. "You have to post every day. A lot of people don't realize that it's actually a 24/7 job. It's almost like you check it the same way people consistently check the time or their phone. You're constantly on the clock." If content creators don't post multiple times a day every day, they are almost certain to lose followers. Even so much as sleeping can lose you money; if a subscriber requests a personalized video while you're asleep, they may have already bought it from someone else by the time you've woken up.

Not only is Rozi's form of sex work taxing, but it's also expensive. OnlyFans takes a 20% cut of every subscription and every tip that its creators receive through the platform. On top of that, OnlyFans creators are legally considered

to be self-employed, meaning that they must pay 15.3% of their income in taxes to the federal government every year. Add in the price of cameras, lighting, lingerie, clothes, and toys, and you get a financial investment that goes far beyond most people's stereotypes of sex work.

While many sex workers face these obstacles, there are some extra challenges Rozi has to face. In May, they came out as nonbinary on their other social media accounts but posted nothing about it on OnlyFans. Even still, they took a massive hit to subscribers and profits as a result. "That weekend, I had a lot of people come to me and say that they were disgusted by that. They didn't want to pay

"A lot of people don't realize that it's actually a 24/7 job."




for my content anymore, they didn't want to see someone naked if they didn't know their gender and they didn't want to support me because I can't 'pick a gender.'"

Rozi is also bisexual, which comes with its own collection of baggage and prejudice.

Although they had been openly bisexual since they created their OnlyFans account, they still receive biphobic hate comments and messages on a regular basis. "With bisexuality comes preferences, and I heavily prefer nonbinary people and women over men. I get a lot of biphobia, people telling me that I'm not actually bisexual, people telling me that that I'm lying, people telling me that I'm queerbaiting."

Despite their struggles, Rozi loves what they do. They have found an unexpected safe haven in OnlyFans. They believe that, with the rise in popularity of OnlyFans, porn is finally moving in an ethical and celebratory direction. In fact, because of their experience with OnlyFans, they plan to one day open up a small independent porn studio that creates ethical and consensual porn.

"Growing up I always hated my body, but when people start paying you to see your body, and you start being able to take advantage of the fact that you are sexualized, that's actually what's really good about OnlyFans itself. Since the dawn of time, women have been objectified, and now, with the creation of this easy-to-access site, it puts that power back. I've really found a passion within this. Joining OnlyFans really opened my eyes about it. Frankly, I'm really proud to do what I do." 



@lavebyadore



To showcase your work in Framed, email jerkmag@gmail.com.

21 PLUS/MINUS:

THE QUARANTINI



Ingredients

- 2 oz. vodka
- 1 pack orange flavored Emergen-C
- 1000 mg Vitamin C powder
- 2 fruit gummy vitamins

Instructions

1. Fill a glass with ice.
2. Pour Emergen-C powder.
3. Add the vodka. The more, the better. Alcohol kills viruses, right?
4. Stir to combine.
5. Garnish with gummy vitamins.
6. Enjoy and wear your damn mask!

BLACK DEATH: A NEW FORM OF PORN

Do we show these videos, or not?

words by Camryn Simon

This article is dedicated to all the Black lives lost that weren't recorded.

When I was 14-years-old, my father forced my entire family to watch *12 Years A Slave*. My mom chuckled that she needed a tequila shot to manage. Who would've known I needed one too? I had never seen Black death portrayed as gruesomely on a television screen — nevertheless at the hands of a white person. The effects of that movie really made me hate white people for a little while — and I mean HATE.

Fast forward seven years, and I'm continuously seeing Black brutality and death on my television screen. And Instagram stories. And Twitter feed. A lot has changed within that time frame: I've grown to not hate white people for their ancestors' choices, although this is still a work in progress, and I've drunk enough tequila to make up for the shot I missed out on seven years prior. But why do I keep seeing Black people being murdered by white people on my television screen? These days, it's not a movie imitating history; it's real life. The problem with videos portraying Black brutality is rooted in the history of Black death as a means for entertainment.

Black death and suffering have been a spectacle ever since colonizers decided it was a good idea to use us as free labor. The footage of brutalized Black bodies swinging from trees surrounded by celebratory white gatherers (including children) was endless and prevalent in a variety of states during the post-Civil War era, until the 1950s. Nowadays, the obsession with videos of Black death is just as frequent, especially in the consumption patterns of white people. However, the question remains: **do we show and share videos of Black bodies being murdered or do we not?**

NO, WE SHOULDN'T.

There is trauma in being Black and seeing my people killed by the institutions that are supposed to keep us safe. The rampant sharing desensitizes and dehumanizes the lives of the Black people in the videos, creating a frenzy of trauma porn. As one of the two Black television, radio, and film professors at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University, Professor J. Christopher Hamilton understands the role videos like those of Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd's murders can play in dehumanizing victims.

"I'm certain it does [dehumanize victims], but there are a lot of things that qualify [dehumanization]: it's the frequency at which the videos or these kinds of images are shared and the context in which they're shared," Hamilton said.

The frequent nature of these videos is cause for concern. From media outlets to social media posts, the packaging and framing surrounding these videos disregard the humanity of the victims. When people televise, post, or share these videos without context, viewers see a one-dimensional portrayal of Black life and Black death.

For months after the death of Ahmaud Arbery, there was no media circulation contextualizing his life. It was simply the video of him being killed coupled with a headshot of him in a suit and tie. This type of reporting is not only sloppy, but blatantly disregards Arbery's life, reducing his 25 years on Earth to a single video.

The victims of police brutality had lives, families, and loved ones just like everybody else. Those stories deserve the same air time, if not more than the recordings of their last breath.

"This [was] a person, not just a piece of meat," Hamilton said.

YES, WE SHOULD.

I understand that if these videos aren't shared, no one will believe that Black people are being shot, in the back with their hands up, by police. This is the crux of the argument for sharing these forms of content. These videos reinforce the long-winded narrative Blacks in this country have been screaming: this keeps happening to us. When you see George Floyd with a knee in his neck for eight minutes, there is no margin for alternative story endings or hypotheses. That is what the fuck happened.

"No one can claim, 'Oh maybe his hands were free.' No one can say, 'The officer felt threatened.' No one can say, 'Oh maybe he didn't realize how long he had his foot on his neck.' It was a perfect example of what happens to us at the hands of police that it galvanized people across the nation, and then on top of that, it helped to support the movements that were already ongoing," Hamilton said.

George Floyd's death forced America to take a hard look in the mirror and recognize our hideousness. Lynne Adrine, the Director of the D.C. Graduate Program for Broadcast & Digital Journalism at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, argued Floyd's death provided a platform for this summer to unfold the way it did.

"We as a community have extensively said this is what happens to us and the effects are severe. Without the video [George Floyd's] there would not have been what we saw this past summer," Adrine said. The Black Lives Matter movement has been able to rally around the acts of police brutality this summer. Not only has the movement been able to reach larger audiences, but we've also been able to create more action-oriented steps at the grassroots level. The gruesome videos from this summer have even spurred actions from those at the top, with Democratic senators kneeling for eight minutes and 46 seconds in an act that can only be described as performative bullshit. Nevertheless, I doubt we would've seen these progressions (and transgressions) without the videos being recorded and shared.

I had the opportunity last spring to take

a class specifically about this topic and it was profound for me. Every once in a while, Dr. Biko Gray, Assistant Professor of Religion at Syracuse University, teaches Black Lives Matter and Religion. As part of the class mechanics, Gray plays all the videos of black people being killed in one class, only once.

"I've tried different ways. Initially, my response is 'All the black students, you can leave if you want to because this shit's about to get real, don't stay if you can't take this shit, get up and roll. But all the non-Black students have to stay and watch this,'" Gray said.

Even for Gray, an educator who has spent his entire life researching the connections between race, culture, and religion, this is a hard decision to make. On the one hand, you'd expect everyone who's taking a class such as Black Lives Matter and Religion to have already seen the videos, but on the other hand, professors teaching classes of this topic struggle with the reactions they might get from non-Black students. "I've been thinking about this for some time now, most non-Black students, particularly white students are in the class because they 'want to be better.' What does it mean to show this to those kinds of students, when what could possibly happen is that my white students/non-Black students begin to think they're better or they're good because they feel badly about watching these videos?" Gray said.

Gray brings up a valid point about white guilt. Not only is it a nuisance, but if left untreated, it can cause white people to fall in love with Black suffering. I know this is going to hit home for some of y'all, but just because you feel bad about watching Black people die doesn't make you a better white person. It only enforces the dynamic of making white people feel comfortable about Black death. Newsflash, there's nothing comfortable about Black death.

Truthfully, there is no right or wrong answer to the exhausting question of whether or not we should be showing and sharing videos of Black bodies being murdered. Yet one thing's for certain, it's depressing that there are enough videos for me to write this entire article.

"It will always be too much because we never should've fucking died in the first place," said Gray.

THRIFT STORE POVERTY CORE

The actual price of all your discounted trends

words by Berri Wilmore

illustration by Anastasia Powell

I come from a generation of do-it-yourselfers. Events like 9/11 and the 2008 recession encumbered us so much that we've taken the task of saving the world into our own hands — a generation of protestors and thrifters, with the aesthetics to match. Every day it becomes more clear that our generation is leading the movement towards sustainability and environmentally-safe consumption. That's how the ever-popular thrifted look stemmed from the low-waste, earth-hugging attitude that so many young people have.

Thrift stores have been around forever and often serve as places for low-income people to buy affordable clothing. At the same time, they also exist as a great resource for those who want to shop more sustainably and ethically by not buying into fast fashion or supporting clothing industries that exploit their workers.

The intersection of these two groups meet at your local thrift store. Trendy teens and working-class people alike flock to the racks to meet their

clothing needs. Since thrift stores operate on donations, many of the items up for grabs tend to be older, "out of style" clothes that are ultimately reworked and restyled to fit current trends in something I like to call Poverty Core. For years, the practical aesthetics of the working class have been taken, manipulated, and redistributed to the public at a higher price.

This is not to say that people shouldn't shop at thrift stores, or that there is anything inherently bad about second-hand shopping if you are in a financial position to shop elsewhere — but it's important to understand the ways that privileged young people engage with these aesthetics and the real-life implications of doing so.

Let's start with an example: the appropriation of worker clothing. The original Dr. Martens boot was created for workers — postmen, factory workers, police officers, you name it. Eventually, a new audience for the chunky black boot emerged: the 1980's London punk scene. Many

of those individuals in the circle were actually working class, but their loud style demanded that people take notice of what they were wearing. Soon, Dr. Martens were seen not only as a work boot but as an attractive pair of footwear that signified being working class. Slowly but surely, the price of Dr. Martens rose, until they became too expensive for your average worker to afford. Now, Dr. Martens are worn primarily for fashion over function among younger generations.

This cycle of popularization and appropriation can be observed all throughout fashion history. More recently, Dickies pants have become ever-popular — the loose-styled worker pants average



"For years, the practical aesthetics of the working class have been taken, manipulated, and redistributed to the public at a higher price."

\$50 a pair on Urban Outfitters' website. When the company started, the main consumers of Dickies were farm and ranch workers and more recently they've been co-opted by skaters. As skate culture rose in popularity, many skaters reached celebrity status in their own regard. And as skaters rose in popularity, so did the clothes that they wore. Suddenly, Dickies became the trendiest pants you could own, with variations of them going for up to \$70 at Urban Outfitters. The brand even released a statement in 2019 stating that their products would be increasing prices.

There's no way to directly pinpoint a single reason why certain trends explode in popularity. While the adoption of worker's clothing by different subcultures acts as a way to disseminate the working-class chic look, the thrift shop as a fashion epicenter has had a huge impact on the way we dress. The thrifted look has pushed digital clothing resale sites like Depop into the hearts, minds, and wallets of 20-somethings everywhere. Mom jeans, oversized sweaters, an ironic Twilight t-shirt, a hat that says "World's Best Dad," a pair of jeans right out of 1978, a skirt that does have a stain (but it's so small that no one will even notice right?), old running shoes, vintage this, vintage that. As it stands, there is a huge demand to look like you just balled out at your local Thrifty Shopper.

The public perception of thrift stores has experienced a shift. Those who would never have previously considered thrift stores an option now flock to them. In a lot of ways, this transition is great — thrifting offers an alternative to shopping

fast fashion and the ability to find unique pieces to add to your closet. In other ways, the growth of the practice has proven to be problematic for those who rely on thrift stores out of necessity. Much like Dickies and Docs, as thrift stores see more customers, their prices often reflect the increase in popularity. This limits accessibility to clothing for those who really need it. In a similar sense, the rise of the thrift-flip has completely changed thrift store culture. We all



know them: the people who go into local thrift stores, buy any and every item that could possibly be considered Y2K vintage, and resell it for double — even triple — the price it was originally bought. This is the more nefarious side of Poverty Core. As the aesthetics of the working class are commodified and redistributed, those who actually rely on these resources are, once again, left out of the conversation.

As aesthetics are taken from the group they originally belonged to and redistributed to the mainstream, they often go through an increase in price that makes them inaccessible to the people who need them most. We romanticize the style of the working class, but when it comes to actually supporting low-income communities, we fall short. Healthcare has become increasingly privatized and some states still maintain the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour. Much of our society remains anti-poor, both structurally and socially. When we shop at thrift stores or purchase Dr. Martens and Dickies pants for upwards of \$100, we must consider how our desire for Poverty Core affects the communities that need these items most. **JM**

INCLUSION FOR DUMMIES

SEM 100 tries to mend the gap between students of color and equity but fails to deliver

words by **Valentina S. Diaz** | illustration by **Jordan Schechter**

SEM 100 is a six-week course for first-year and transfer students at SU that aims to help students “explore their identities” as they transition into college life, according to the course syllabus. This means understanding how new students will relate to and interact with other students, faculty, and staff and contribute to an inclusive and diverse campus community.

Essentially, the course aims to have students understand that prejudice isn’t cool, and inclusivity is. But, for those from ethnically-diverse high schools like me, the course is redundant. We shouldn’t need to have a class about appreciating diversity; it should already be ingrained into our mindset.

Making the decision to go to a predominantly white institution (cough, cough, which most

colleges are) as a student of color is something that comes with unacceptable, but at this point, expected challenges. While SU claims to be diverse, the 2019 university census shows that BIPOC students — not including multiracial, international, and unidentified students — only made up 21.2% of the total Syracuse University population. But it’s not just a lack of diversity that remains a problem for SU. Let’s not forget the numerous hate crimes last year that inspired the #NotAgainSU movement.

As a woman of color, I know the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion, but can the same be said for other students? Jackson Calhoun, a senior at SU and third-year SEM 100 facilitator, says that SEM 100 allows students to initially focus on themselves and work towards identifying the changes that must be made locally and globally.

“[SEM 100] isn’t supposed to be a ‘one-and-done’ scenario,” Calhoun said. “The goal is to begin dialogues between students and within themselves...about where there are discrepancies in their community, and what ways they can act to rectify those discrepancies.”



I appreciate this reality check. Our campus community won't progress if students are merely being lectured by professors about how to be friends with everyone. And especially for a non-credit course, there's no doubt that students will set SEM 100 on the back burner.

According to Jackson, however, the course has already changed from revolving around a book — how riveting — to creating a more open and “engaging” space. But Soleil Andrews, SU sophomore and first-time peer facilitator for SEM 100, recalls that in her time taking the course, a lot of her white peers dismissed the perspective of other students of color by “shutting down the conversation before they even got started.” Instead of encouraging her peers to empathize with her experiences, SEM 100 merely showed Andrews that Syracuse has “a real cultural disconnect.” Still, she hopes that in some way she can make a small change from the inside.

Perhaps making the class graded would fully engage students and make them more receptive to others, but this response should come naturally. It's absurd that making the world a better place could rely on a superficial letter spectrum. A grade isn't going to improve our reality.

“We shouldn't have to...scare you with the fact that you could fail just to make you care about your fellow students,” Andrews said. “I wouldn't want to see [SEM 100] become a graded course... because I think it'd become less genuine.”

She's right. But let's say that professors kept track of class participation and everyone

contributed, then what? What happens after class? Well, once students get a passing grade, they are no longer obliged to listen to each other and everything returns to narcissistic normalcy.

So, do we then blame the administration for this lack of civility? Well, yeah, partly. In order to tackle the issues brought up in SEM 100, changes on campus need to be made. For Soleil, allocating more money to the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the LGBT Resource Center, and additional affinity services would be optimal.

“One little office...on the fifth floor of Bird where all the people of color are supposed to [regard] their home base [is ridiculous],” Andrews said.

First, we shouldn't need a “home base”; the entire campus should be our home. Second, a hole in the wall shouldn't represent a shared space for students of color. Quite simply, we deserve more.

In addition to more space, those who participate in heinous acts of racism need to face substantial punishment. But as easy and rightful as blaming the administration is, students also have a responsibility to each other and to stopping small, often dismissed microaggressions as much as they do to major ones. Being a bystander to injustice equates to “an act of violence” in Andrews' morality book. And it does in mine, too.

SEM 100 isn't the answer to all of Syracuse's problems surrounding equity, not by a long shot. These problems stem from years of ignoring the issues within our greater community, within our friend groups, within our families, and within ourselves. We must start with the latter in order to fully acknowledge the wrongdoings in our campus bubble. This university environment, which at times is toxic, should not be embraced as campus culture. College usually means good times, but that doesn't mean we can or should ignore the injustice that surrounds us. —JM





REMEMBERING GREG

Jerk pays tribute to a man behind the magazine

words by Vivian Whitney

photo from jerkmagazine.net

Gregory Miller was the 2010-2011 editor-in-chief of Jerk, and from what I've heard about him from peers and colleagues, I know I owe him great thanks for being part of the reason Jerk is still thriving today.

Miller, a former New York Post staff writer, passed away this summer at 30-years-old. While I can only hear and read about his contributions to the Post and beyond, I've dug through the Jerk archives and talked to his past editors to honor him and the work he put into this publication.

Nina Ace, who was the executive editor when Miller was EIC, remembers just how dedicated Miller was to make Jerk the best it could be. "Greg was ahead of his time and demanded greatness of those around him. He was giving 200% all the time, and had little patience for those who gave less," she says. "He was proud of Jerk and wanted to be sure it remained something future gens could be proud of."

I'm incredibly proud of Jerk and it's currently a priority of mine to make sure it's still around for future editors to stress over just as much as I do. I'm so glad Greg was giving Jerk his all in 2010 so that as a scared high school senior, I could pick up a copy and know it was something I wanted to be a part of throughout my four years at SU.

Certain topics that Ace says were a point of passion for him include LGBTQ+ rights and representation, drag culture (his drag name was Boyonce in 2010), reality TV, informative sex content, fashion, and "leaving no prisoners." All these topics continue to be important things we cover at Jerk. (Well, maybe less of reality TV... But hey, they didn't have Netflix streaming in 2010.) He was especially hard on Gawker editors, she says, and I hope that this issue's Gawker feature can live up to his high expectations.

In one award-winning piece for Jerk, "I Love NY," Miller chronicled his sophomore summer internship in New York City, painting an unapologetic scene of his scanty, memory-filled stint at Lucky magazine while living on St. Marks Place. You can find it on our website, which I recommend you do. Ace interned in the city with him for two summers and says there are two things about that time that she will never forget.

"On his first day at Cosmo, he got himself a byline. He met up with me and said, 'I suck at relationships, but I'm really fucking good at this.' Only one of those things was true. He was a great friend but didn't give himself enough credit.

"During a short stint at Glamour, I met him at the Condé Nast café (when Condé was still in Times Square). I remember standing there in my Tory Burch skirt that I bought for \$22 at a sample sale in the Garment District just so I had something designer to wear that week, looking around the room at all these styling people trying to find Greg. And there he was — commanding a corner booth as an intern, surrounded by other assistants and interns just worshipping him. I could hear his laugh from across the room. As a six-foot-something gay man from a religious family in Virginia, Greg stood out. And he leaned into that with his writing and with the little edge to his personality. But in our industry, soon to be your industry, he fit in. He was home."

I hope Miller's memory can find a home in these pages, too. It seems fitting that, after finding his old piece titled "Boy Seeks Porn God," this tribute lies only a few pages away from a story about porn. Wherever you are, Greg, from one jerk to another: keep jerkin'.

OBITCHUARY:

F**K DEPOP GIRLIES

We love the app, we hate the sellers.

words by Kate Regan

art by Lilly Chidlaw-Mayen

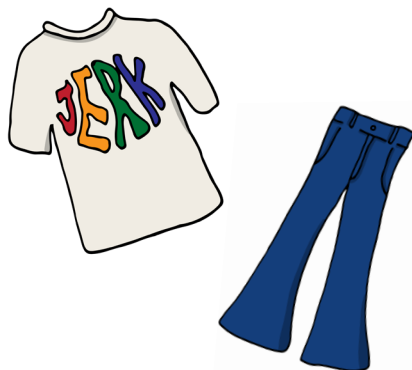
We believe there is a special place in hell for all of the upper-middle-class suburban girlies that are buying out their local Goodwills to “restock” their Depop stores in order to self-identify as entrepreneurs. I present to you the three worst kinds of Depop upsellers.

The children’s section robbers

These are the people that get shirts from the children’s section of a thrift store for no more than \$3 apiece and upsell them for \$30 each. They normally have phrases like “daddy’s angel,” or “princess,” or a cute little graphic across the chest that’s marketed as a ‘90s or Y2K aesthetic. These itty bitty tanks with size 6x tags on the inside are clearly cutting off the circulation of the girl modeling. By passing it off as a women’s XXS, these sellers will somehow get people willing to buy these restricting shirts at such a high cost, which is how they justify doing it again. And again. And again.

The Brandy Melville community

For those who don’t know, Brandy Melville is a size-exclusive brand marketed to the underage size 0s of the world. With only 97 locations worldwide, the store creates a sense of exclusivity in access as well as size. Infamous for their judgemental and whitewashed staff who guard the racks, it’s not exactly the most welcoming environment. As a result, it has made the brand even more exclusive on Depop.



Sellers have figured out that they can sell \$20 tops to innocent and uninformed middle schoolers for \$50 by claiming them to be “rare.” And if the Depop “Brandy community” has deemed it rare, it is. I had an old pair of pants I bought at Brandy for \$30 that I saw selling for upwards of \$200. I simply could not resist, so I sold mine — for a Depop steal — at \$145. These pants were just one of the many specific items that the community has arbitrarily decided to be rare. They drive up the price to whatever their hearts desire. As niche as this may seem, Depop has a “trending” section under their search bar, and Brandy Melville is always at the top.

The “I’m just so tiny in this oversized sweater!”

The final and the worst kind of upseller is the one who buys larger-sized clothing in thrift stores and markets it as “oversized.” For many, thrift stores are the only option when it comes to buying new clothing, and as a result, sizing can be very limited. Larger sizing is historically restricted when it comes to shopping, as there are not nearly as many options for larger sizes. To hoard these items purely to market and resell them to smaller-sized people is taking away from those who rely on these clothes and otherwise cannot afford them at the ridiculous prices set on Depop. Stop trying to look cute and dainty, that sweater is nowhere near close to fitting you. Give it to someone who needs it and whom it will fit. **JM**



NATIVE IN AMERICA

A group of Native American children, likely from the Northern Plains, are shown in traditional regalia. They are wearing white beaded headbands with feathers and red shirts. One child in the center-left is circled in a yellow circle. The background is a textured, reddish-brown surface.

Life as a Native on and off the rez
words by Alycia Cypress
photos provided

I've always been more in touch with my Native side, but my white side is a constant reminder of the unfortunate divide between me and my Native culture. There are times when I feel like I belong, whether it be in society or on my reservation, but I almost always end up feeling like an outcast no matter where I find myself. Somehow, I feel less Native simply because of my blood percentage despite the attempts I make to understand the intricacies of my culture. I realized how removed I was from Native society when my own grandmother called me and my siblings her "white grandchildren."

Until I grasped the fact that I was the white grandchild, I never quite understood that there was a disconnect between us. My grandmother lived through so much hatred in this country at the hands of white people, just to have part of her legacy be me, a half-white grandchild. Even if she didn't mean it in a negative way, this label made me feel like an outsider and a disappointment. This simple statement transformed my entire perspective on how other Natives may perceive me and how I present myself to white society.

I'm a born and raised half white, half Native American from Hollywood, Florida. I'm a member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, also known as the "Unconquered People." My ancestors didn't surrender to the U.S. government when they attempted to relocate us to Oklahoma, therefore earning us the nickname of the "Unconquered." For a good portion of my childhood, I lived in Big Cypress, a reservation in the middle of the Florida Everglades. We lived among towering trees where we'd would spot a few panthers or alligators every so often. I couldn't even drive down the street without seeing someone I knew passing by, it was such a small community. We felt secluded and safe. Big Cypress will always remain a part of me, but Hollywood is where I truly grew up. It's a run-down city about 30 minutes away from Miami, and one of my tribe's reservations is right in the middle of it all. I lived in Hollywood for 14 years in a small home with only three bedrooms and two bathrooms for eight people. Yes, eight people. It was around this time that I started attending my K-12 school where I learned to be polite and well-behaved.



Dealing with the pressure of being the “perfect Native” has followed me throughout my life. If I made one wrong move, I was instantly seen as a troublesome Native and consequently, I was forced to follow the rules of institutional racism. Although I lived in an area with a higher population of Native Americans than most, I attended a predominately white school with students that had completely different views than I had. I was treated in a harsher way than my classmates, and the stereotypes associated with adult Natives were placed upon me from a young age. People assumed my father was a drunk or drug addict, and my teachers expected me to drop out because of the Native students that had. Since first grade, students called me “redskin” or “savage” without even knowing the connotation behind these words.

I remember sitting in the back of my classroom in elementary school when my teacher asked me whether or not my tribe “still lived in tipis.” First of all, my tribe didn’t live in tipis, we lived in “chickees.” And I’m sorry, but why the hell would I be living in a tipi?

American society has this preconceived notion that Natives are “noble savages.” It’s a myth created by Jean Jacques Rousseau that suggests there are people untouched by civilization, that haven’t been spoiled by others’ human nature. This is entirely false. As much as we follow tradition and practice our culture, we live like “normal” people.

On another occasion, someone’s father asked me if I was rich because “my tribe runs an Indian casino.” I was in fifth grade and a grown man asked me if I had money — as if I had any clue about how much financial stability I really had. Dealing with ignorant people is not uncommon, it’s just shocking sometimes to consider how disrespectful people can be. Despite this ongoing treatment, I stayed at that scho from pre-school until graduation because I knew that if I could do that, I would prove so many people wrong.

Outside of school, the ignorance is even worse, especially for people like my father. I have the privilege of being a white-passing Native, so

I haven’t endured as much hatred as my father has. It’s disgusting to see how my people are treated simply because we don’t fit within white society’s standards. When my father and I flew to New York together, I watched TSA pat him down multiple times before we could walk through the airport. Another time a white man swerved in front of us while we were driving, and when my father attempted to confront the man, we were met with instant insults about how we were “redskins,” and we should’ve “stayed on the rez.” My people face discrimination every day, yet it goes unnoticed by a majority of the population. Yet, if we try to break out of the stereotypical mold white America has placed us in, we are instantly seen as rebellious.

When I hit high school, I realized how white-washed I truly was and decided to teach myself about the Indigenous issues that were usually swept under the rug. One issue that has become increasingly important to me is the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women movement, and I’ve dedicated hours to researching how it’s affecting Native communities across the nation. This led me down the rabbit hole of countless Indigenous issues that have yet to be resolved.

*“America
overlooks
our
problems.”*

It seems as though America overlooks our problems and creates negative stereotypes without attempting to understand the source: American history and its ugly truth. Native Americans have endured mass genocide, yet it’s rarely mentioned in textbooks or mass media. The U.S. government has tried to kill off Native Americans by forcing them onto reservations and planting liquor stores and smoke shops in the middle of them. Drug addiction and alcoholism has ravaged so many communities that my father feels the need to remind me to stay on the right path. The U.S. government stole Native children from their families and forced them to attend boarding schools, where the only goal was to “beat the Native out of them.” As someone with family members who had to experience that torture, it’s revolting to see how few people know about our history. America stole our land,



children, women, and it even had the balls to steal our culture.

America has some serious soul-searching to do regarding the treatment of Native lives. Even as white-passing Natives, the mistreatment my siblings and I have experienced is astonishing, and it wasn't until 2020 that I saw any form of large-scale activism regarding Indigenous people. We've lost so many brothers and sisters since colonizers hit our shores, and the mistreatment of Native Americans has gone on for far too long. Although I'm one voice, I won't stop fighting for social reform and the overall improvement of life for Natives in America. I was given the chance to get off my rez and change how others see my Native community and people; I'll be damned if I don't take that opportunity. —JM





BEYOND THE NUMBERS

The losses you might not hear about

words by Chandler Plante

illustrations by Jenny Katz

A global pandemic is made up of numbers. 34,159,512 global cases. 494,000 calls to the CDC. Over 200,000 deaths in this country alone. Losses are meticulously calculated, disputed, and recited to one another, the devastation of the virus reduced to a figure. The numbers are important, but they ultimately serve to deliver the effects of COVID-19 in an easily digestible (albeit, alarming) package, wrapped up in research and sent directly to your daily Twitter feed.

When we talk about COVID losses, these are the statistics that often come to mind, but the reality is these numbers can only capture bits and pieces of what is actually an intensely human experience — one that reaches beyond the data we hear about on the news.

Among the many humans involved in Syracuse University's story is Brooke Tanner, a recent SU graduate who lost more than a graduation ceremony to COVID. For her and her family, their major loss was the house they've been living in for the past few decades. "We always said that once I graduated college, that's when we would decide to move," Tanner said, explaining that with all of the kids finally graduated, it made sense for her parents to downsize.

Hers was the house everyone hoped to be invited to, and it became well-known for its pool parties and summer barbeques. The original plan was to get everyone together one last time to help move 26 years of life out of the house and celebrate the next chapter, but the party was called off due to the pandemic. "I think it's definitely taken a toll on my parents that they can't have a proper goodbye with their friends to the house that they've been in





for 30 years," Tanner said. "I guess now's a better time than ever for new beginnings."

For other SU graduates, like Sam Berlin, their new beginning was precisely what they lost. Berlin had big plans to move to New York City after graduation and become a major magazine editor, but instead, COVID forced her back home to North Carolina. "I felt like I lost a sense of independence and regressed five years backwards," she said. Courtney Owens, another May 2020 graduate, knows the feeling. After completing her double major in forensic science and anthropology, Owens had secured a job and was ready to move to New York City with her older brother. "He's someone I'm really close to, he's like my person," Owens said.

When the pandemic hit, however, all of Owens's carefully constructed plans began to fall through, and her starting date was pushed back several months, preventing her from moving to the city. Now, her brother's employers are asking him to move far away from the rest of the family in order to continue his work. "They said either move to Texas or get a new job, and this economy is so bad, he can't afford to not have a job," Owens explained. Without a job of her own or her brother, Owens has spent the past several months navigating life back at home with her

parents in New Jersey. "I feel like I've kind of dug myself back into that hole I put myself in before I went to school," she said. "Like I lost what four years of college made me find."

"Seek out safe social support."

Daniel Preciado, a class of 2020 international student, also went back home as a result of the pandemic, but under much different circumstances. When in-person classes at SU ended due to COVID, Preciado was in the process of getting his OBT, or optional practical training, which he describes as, "a one-year visa that the U.S. government gives to international students to find work for that year." In order to qualify for the full-year visa, students like Preciado are required to find a job in their industry within the first three months of being issued their OBT. "Literally the day I handed in my OBT application through the mail was the day that campus kind of shut down," Preciado said.

From here, Preciado's desired industry of television, radio, and film was hit hard, leaving very few jobs available. Despite his best efforts, the three months quickly passed, pushing Preciado back to his home country of Panama and stripping him of the ability to work in the U.S. for now. Not only



has this distanced him from Hollywood and the film industry opportunities in the states, but it has also affected him on a personal level. "As a queer man, Panama is a little more conservative," Preciado said. "[In the U.S.], being queer is a little more seen, a little more present, whereas in Panama, [I] can tend to feel a little more... that I cannot be fully that person I want to be."

These stories only scratch the surface of the losses SU graduates have faced—grievances that surpass that one last Bleu Monkey happy hour or spirited tailgate (although these are certainly valid too). But for students still finishing up their years at SU, the tolls from the pandemic have only continued to mount.

After COVID sent students home in March, Lucy Stover, an SU sophomore, said she had to work more than 50 hours a week on top of school in order to support herself and her family. “I was trying to make money because my dad had lost his job, so I was paying for our car payments and groceries,” she said. The financial stress was terrifying to Stover, and with work and school happening all at once, she was left with almost no free time.

Another current SU student, who has asked to remain anonymous, says the death of their father prior to COVID left them living on campus in fear of another loss. “I haven’t really lost much within [the pandemic], but it’s more so just the fear of loss that has really become pronounced to me,” they said. “I only have one parent still alive, and I don’t feel ready to not have any.” This has caused some tension with the student’s family as they try to balance safety with daily life, and being on a campus where not everyone can understand this anxiety has also exacerbated the stress.

According to Dr. Bryce Hruska, an assistant professor in the Falk College Department of Public Health whose research focuses on the physical effects of psychological stress, this anxiety that comes with loss is not uncommon. “What we know is that if people are under conditions of stress for a long period of time, it can result in changes in the body,” he said. “It can increase susceptibility to disease, it can make it harder to manage diseases that a person already has... and it has a substantial effect on mental health.”

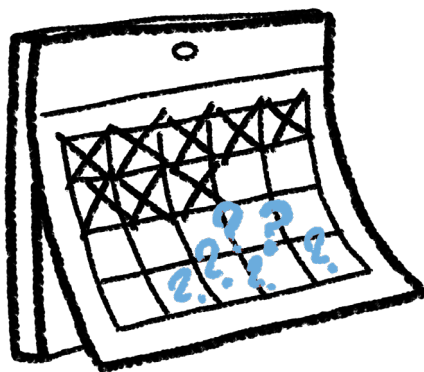
Alex Richards, an assistant professor in

the Magazine, News, and Digital Journalism Department at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, has seen these effects in his own classroom. Having had students who have lost family members to COVID and tested positive themselves, he said it’s evident that students need empathy and compassion now more than ever. “For me, it’s pretty easy to say ‘OK, they need a break,’” Richards said, explaining that, despite all the stress that’s come from the pandemic, it feels good to help make his students’ lives a little easier. “We really do care about our students.”

For other members of the SU community going through loss, Dr. Hruska recommends seeking out safe social support. “One of the functions that social support can serve is to talk to people who you love, and they can help you make sense of the things that are happening,” he said. This can help you get to a more resilient state and make coping with loss a little easier. Dr. Hruska said to also remember that your mind and body are interconnected, so getting enough sleep, exercising, and eating right can all help improve your health.

For more mental health support, SU students can schedule a counseling appointment at the Barnes Center or contact the 24 Hour Support Hotline at 315.443.8000.

The losses our own community has faced since March might not look the way you thought they would. In fact, you probably might not know about them without making it to the end of this article. But what these narratives show is that the impact of COVID deserves to be talked about in much more than just numbers, because when it comes down to it, this isn’t a story about hard facts. It isn’t about the latest data, and it definitely isn’t about condensing the pandemic into palatable quantities. It’s about humanity. It’s about real people. It’s about you. **JML**





Jaleel Campbell

#Buy Black

Your guide to buying Black in 'Cuse

words by Isabel Bekele & Annie Labarca

photos provided

Art

It would be a massive understatement to say that the year 2020 has been difficult for many, especially the Black community. But for Syracuse born and bred artist Jaleel Campbell, 2020 has brought him recognition and prosperity that has been years in the making.

As I opened our Zoom call, I was greeted by Campbell's artistic oasis. He beamed with pride as he gave me a virtual tour of his new place, decorated with murals, large leafy plants, bamboo wooden panels, and handcrafted black dolls. He credited his interior design inspiration to his mother, who he says decorated their childhood home like a "Black art museum" and

created a safe haven for Black people by hosting parties in a space where guests felt like they could decompress and be themselves.

Campbell began taking his art seriously in his junior year of high school, when he admits his peers started "gassing [him] up," and he finally realized art was something he needed to pursue full time. He earned his BFA in visual communications from Cazenovia College and his MFA in media arts and culture at SUNY Purchase in Westchester, NY.

Campbell has been an instrumental figure in the Syracuse art scene, heading marketing at the community art center, teaching workshops,

and hosting exhibitions such as *Feel that Funk*, a multimedia series designed to “capture Black joy in all of its entirety” that debuted at the Community Folk Art Center in downtown Syracuse in 2018. While Campbell’s work has varied in mediums, it’s consistent in its portrayal of Black people as poised, joyful, and multi-dimensional. Campbell explained that his goal with “*Sheba’s Return*” was to showcase a full-figured Black woman who exudes regality. “That woman is a goddess... She’s sexy... She has that oomph,” he explained.

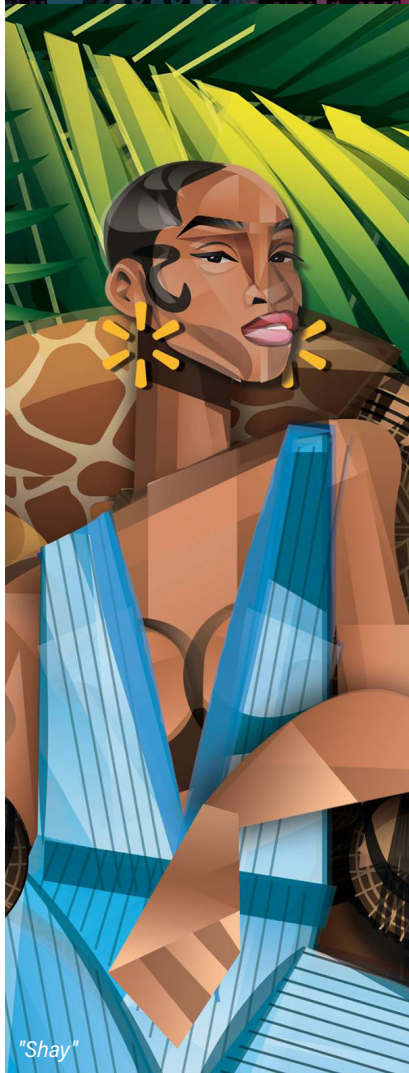
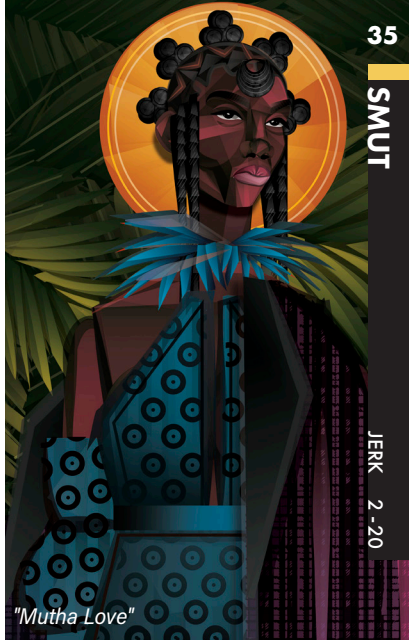
Despite recent praise, such as his feature in *New York Magazine*, Campbell’s art has not always been well-received. Some of his peers in grad school deemed his piece “*Fallen Ones*,” which portrays Black men killed at the hands of police, as “threatening.” He noted that racist experiences like these are not uncommon for Black art students, which is why it’s so important for people of color to find peers they can relate to within the art world.

As a result of the Black Lives Matter movement, Campbell said that there has been a definite increase in sales. “It’s been ridiculous how many white people have been buying my art,” he said. In addition to art sales, businesses have been asking to use his work in pro-Black posts, and most recently, his self-started Jaleel Campbell Art Fund raised \$10,000 in ten days. Campbell’s work and success provides a rare beam of optimism for the future of Black creatives. “It’s a big puzzle, and I’m just putting these pieces together... Yo, I really feel like I’m unstoppable.”

Wellness

For Dr. Marcelle Haddix, wellness is as intentional as it is personal. Growing up in the predominantly Black, segregated city of Milwaukee taught Dr. Haddix how to navigate white spaces, which has helped her feel more comfortable in the predominately white yoga world. Her yoga persona, The Zen G, was coined by her friends who thought it suited her “zen but nonsense” nature. A yoga instructor for over 20 years, Dr. Haddix has over 200 hours of experience and is one of the only Black yoga instructors in Syracuse.

Dr. Haddix believes the wellness industry tends to alienate Black people. “We’re not the target audience for yoga,” Dr. Haddix said. “It’s not supposed to be





Dr. Marcelle Haddix

exclusive, though. Yoga is a restorative way to heal trauma.” To combat the lack of representation for wellness professionals of color, Dr. Haddix believes that we need to become more intentional about how we represent people of color online and in the wellness world.

Dr. Haddix’s practice is centered on healing and community, not vanity or exclusivity. Prior to COVID-19, she taught classes at Café Sancofa, which were largely free or donation based. Currently, she’s in the process of completing her 300 hours of yoga certification, which will allow her to train other yogis, and she plans on training more instructors of color.

Musie

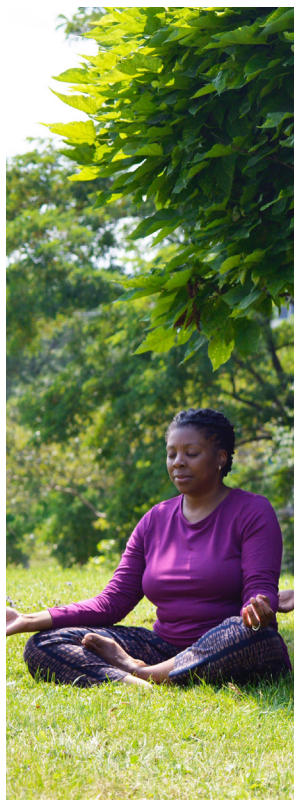
The pandemic has left no industry unscathed, but for entertainment, with an unclear reopening plan, the damage has been especially brutal. For DJ Bella J, the official DJ of the Syracuse University women’s and men’s basketball team, the loss of business has hit close to home.

DJ Bella J comes from a music-loving household and began her career in the industry early on. “By the time I was able to go out to clubs, I fell in love with how DJs would move the crowd.” During her outings, Bella J noticed the lack of

women DJs. She decided to attend Scratch DJ Academy in New York City and has been in the industry ever since.

Unlike most DJs, Bella J wasn’t satisfied with remaining in the club scene. “I went straight to the clubs after graduation. I started in clubs and parties, but as I did that more and more, I realized that it wasn’t always the best environment for me.” Instead of staying in the traditional DJ scene, Bella J went where DJs weren’t. “I would find places where I thought music could be, and if there wasn’t, I reached out.”

This tactic resulted in her position as the official DJ of the Syracuse women’s basketball team. “My manager and I reached out with the suggestion that the team could use a woman DJ.” After she began DJing the



women's games, she started DJing for the men's team as well. "DJing for games is a different energy."

Ultimately, Bella J is motivated by her love of the Syracuse community and her desire to prove that women DJs are just as talented as male DJs. "It's really empowering to prove people wrong about my talent. I wanted to DJ to get that female perspective. I want other girls to know you can go as hard as I do."

Fashion

The 2018 movie *The Hate U Give* inspired a new conversation surrounding race that left a deep impact on many, including SU sophomore Jordan Pierre, who started his own clothing line as a result. Pierre wanted to create the same effect the film had on him through his clothing by giving marginalized communities a way to show they matter. "It was really just a response to the things I've seen growing up and what my community faces, like dying at the hands of gun violence or police brutality," he said.

Pierre always felt confident in his ability to be

a spokesperson. He attended an all-boys school in Brooklyn called the Eagle Academy, where he was an ambassador for the student body. It was in high school that he understand the influence he could have and change he could create through public speaking.

"I understood I was a representation of more than just myself," Pierre said. "So that's how I really came out with VOICE. VOICE is a lot of character, being politically active, and also just being more globally conscious."

Recently, Pierre held a pop-up shop near campus, which sold out completely despite advertising it for only three days before. According to Pierre, students were waiting for certain pieces to drop and were extremely supportive throughout the entire process.

"With VOICE ... I want it to stand for something. When you wear my brand, you stand up for something. When you see people wear my shirt, it's like 'Oh, that's somebody that stands up against social injustices.'" In order to maintain the nicheness of his brand, Pierre chose to slow down profits and put a pause on releasing new designs in preparation for a video campaign he plans to release this fall. He believes advertising



is the is the main way to build his brand.

The Black Lives Matter movement only amplified the message Pierre has been focusing on since high school: marginalized communities are being targeted every single day, and the world needs to listen and understand the seriousness of the injustices these communities face. "I would say the Black Lives Matter movement helped to increase my platform because I think that's when people started to understand the meaning of my brand," Pierre said. "I had a student from my high school text me like 'I never understood the meaning behind the brand, but now that everything is going on I understand where you're coming from.'"

Beauty

Having a niece with eczema, an aunt with sensitive skin, and a mother whose body always aches meant that not taking care of herself and others wasn't an option, said Briah Duncan, founder of SELF, a body and skin care company. Duncan runs SELF with her fiancé, Adly Enoicy, and together, the two have created products from hyaluronic hydroboost serums to massage bars that tackle everything from eczema to hyperpigmented skin.

Local startups similar to SELF have been severely affected by the pandemic, but Duncan found that the pandemic forced her to spend more time on fostering the skills necessary to maintain her body care line. "Honestly, this may be the unpopular opinion, but COVID has actually helped my business quite a bit," Duncan said. "In July, I actually left my full-time job just because of the increase in orders, and the realization of 'Hey, if I focus and hone into it, I can make it grow.'"

Despite the seemingly natural shift to make SELF her top priority, Duncan struggled with brand exposure outside her circle of friends and family. The rise of the Black Lives Matter movement, however, brought customers from all

50 states to the website, wanting to support small Black-owned businesses. Duncan said that often, the first question that customers asked directly on social media was "Are you Black-owned?" She even receives requests asking for international shipping. "I can't say it wasn't terrifying, and there were days when I wanted to quit," Duncan said. "So I thank myself for not listening to the naysayers and for also not turning off on my own journey."

As her success continues to grow, Duncan has found that one thing she wants to improve is her mentality when it comes to facing problems. With her customer base growing, she realized she didn't have to focus on advertising as much as she did ensuring that her inventory was full and reminding herself that packaging 50 orders in one day is a good thing. "Most of your problems that you think are problems are good problems," Duncan said. "Because the situation could be the complete opposite. And you could have none of that."

One of Duncan's favorite parts of running SELF is writing letters to each of her customers on a card with a mantra on the back. With SELF, Duncan wanted to build a community through her products that could support each other and help each other feel loved and included, even if just through a small purchase. The extra detail of a hand-written card, Duncan said, allows for reinforcement of the community she has built.

"I don't like to call them customers, because they're much more than that," she said. "That's really what keeps me going, and that's what gives me that drive to not only better myself but to better this business."

"I thank
myself for not
listening to the
naysayers."

Food

Born and raised here in Syracuse, Tykemia Carman, head baker and owner of Crave Dessert Studio, relentlessly works to create a pastry or design that has never been seen before. With a variety of chocolate covered fruit, cake pops, and sugar cookies on the menu, her work has been recognized by those within the Upstate New York area and beyond. "I get

*Briah Duncan*

emails and messages all the time from people in Chicago like ‘Can you ship them?’” Carman said. “So once we get it locked down here, I definitely want to open shipping up to other places.”

Unlike other bakeries that try to make traditional recipes like croissants their own, Carman completely strays from the rest with everything she does at Crave. “Everything I do is next level,” Carman said. “If it’s a cake pop, it’s a cake pop with roses, detail and curls. Even a sugar cookie, I really take the time to do certain shading or airbrushing details.” Her attention to detail is what she believes truly sets her apart, since the appearance of her desserts is what has garnered the most attention from customers.

Carman attributes her unique ideas to the fact that she is self-taught in everything she knows. She described herself as the leader of every group project, someone who wanted to have the creative freedom to tap into whatever her heart desired. “Traditional [baking] just wasn’t for me,” Carman said. “Being able to have the leadership and freedom to own my own, call it my own and make decisions every day... It’s really, really awesome.”

Working the way she wanted to positively affected her business when COVID-19 hit, Carman said. When customers were still cautious about buying things in person, Carman expanded her delivery service to include sugar cookie kits.

With families stuck at home, Carman thought it was the perfect solution for any parent with kids that wanted an easy and fun activity to keep them entertained and happy. Customers could choose a certain theme, and each kit would come with sugar cookies, sprinkles, and frosting.

With so many new orders to keep track of, there were times that Carman had to remind herself to find time to rest. Carman said something as simple as setting boundaries and picking at least one day of the week to relax is just as necessary to planning a big order in advance. “Your customers won’t be getting the best out of you, your family won’t be getting the best out of you, because you’re empty and you can’t really continue to give from an empty cup,” Carman said.

Carman has always been thankful that her customer support has been strong. The Black Lives Matter movement only gave her more exposure, including a bigger following on social media and more inquiries online asking if Crave was, in fact, Black-owned. One of her favorite parts of the Syracuse community has always been the willingness to support smaller businesses.

“People really do make an effort to find someone local first before going other routes,” Carman said. “That’s always been great. The community is super supportive, and yeah, it’s nice. It feels really good to know that I’m making people happy.”



SPEAKEASY:

The King of RA TikTok

How David Barbier Jr. has taken over the FYPs of Syracuse students

words by Spencer Jones | photo provided

Who cares about their resident advisor on TikTok complaining about their residents doing dumb shit? Apparently, the nearly 7,000 people following David Barbier Jr. (@davidbarbierjr) do. Dubbed the “King of RA TikTok,” Barbier is creating much-needed content for those who think that every RA is evil just because one busted them for having a handle of Fireball freshman year.

Currently, Barbier is a sophomore studying television, radio, and film with a dual major in International Relations. His interest in multimedia along with his background in theater led him to make content on the app. Barbier first

downloaded TikTok in December of 2019 and has become one of the most well-known users of the app at Syracuse University. His videos have reached over 700 thousand views and have been featured on popular ‘Cuse accounts such as BarstoolCuse and CuseChicks.

"Yo, you're that guy from TikTok!"

Barbier became an RA for the Fall 2020 semester and works in a freshman dorm. His content initially consisted mainly of duets and quarantine jokes, but starting this school year, his page took a new route. “Recently I’ve rebranded my page as ‘RA David.’ I feel like I get to give people a pretty cool insight into that life,” said Barbier. His TikToks have helped him reach students, something RAs can struggle with, especially in the middle of a pandemic. Since students often see RAs as less of a friend and more of a dorm party crasher, it can be hard for students to trust them. “I want this to be a transparent relationship. RAs have different sides to them, we’re not just these bad guys that get you in trouble,” said Barbier.

TikTok has sparked a new avenue for connections for Barbier, as many residents now recognize him from his videos. “A lot of the residents I see will be like ‘Yo, you’re that guy from TikTok!’ We’ll spark up a conversation, we’ll talk about the freshman transition,” said Barbier. In a time of facemasks increasing anonymity, seeing an RA making funny videos can lessen the freshman jitters.

After college, Barbier hopes to move to Los Angeles to pursue his dream of being an actor and a director. He wants to have his voice heard in order to elevate the communities that don’t typically get much media recognition. “I want to create more storytelling that’s centered around marginalized groups. I don’t feel like we get to see enough diverse storytelling. That’s my ultimate goal in life. To have more stories being told,” said Barbier.

Follow RA David on TikTok @davidbarbierjr. **JML**

DISCOVER SYR:

A Flower Among the Weeds

How one woman's green thumb spreads joy in her community

words by Kailey Norusis

photo by Benjamin Piers

While walking down Market Place, you'll notice beautiful plants spilling over a porch and covering the front yard below it. This is Mimi's Garden. About a year ago, a broken ankle forced Michelle Konetzki to pivot her career from making and selling Halloween props and costumes to growing and selling plants.

At a young age, Konetzki's grandmother had tried, rather unsuccessfully, to instill in her a passion for gardening. "Plants are really my passion, but I didn't really get my green thumb until later in life," she said.

Mimi's Garden specializes in easy to care for, low to medium light houseplants, with a surprisingly quirky edge. Konetzki's planting assistant Romeo is a rescue dog, who has overcome the label of "landshark." She ornaments plants with googly eyes, decorated planters, and even names them based on literary characters. My personal favorite is a cactus named Fluffy (after the three-headed dog in "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone").

"I do like to read, and of course I read to my grandchildren, and the themes of all the movies definitely play a part in my thinking for naming everything," she said. "I can't help but do that. It's definitely a very big part of my life."

With colder weather beginning to loom over Syracuse, Konetzki believes that selling plants will be seasonal. She plans to make and sell Halloween props during fall then transition into decorating and selling Christmas trees and wreaths in winter. This approach ensures that plants will be budding and ready for new homes by spring. "This is not ever going to become a big booming business. It's just being part of my community," she said.

Konetzki is used to having clients that are relatively new to plants and is delighted to walk them through the process, step-by-step. "Everyone who gets a plant pretty much gets the same advice, and I feel like it's me giving back the same thing my grandmother gave to me. I'm proof that there's hope, that anyone can do it," she said.

Dealing with the newfound challenges of COVID-19 has forced Konetzki to create innovative improvements to the way she does business. She's created an honor system, in which customers can take a plant from her porch or yard and either Venmo the money or leave it in her locked mailbox. Konetzki estimates about 99.9% of people use this system, which allows her to continue doing what she loves while staying safe. "Planting brings peace and comfort and it changes our landscape. So, I think it's a really positive thing that has come out of this unfortunate pandemic."

JM



models: Lucy Cardon, Vivi Collymore, Eve Dillingham, Niaz Goodbee, Isaac Haseltine,
Arora McCargar, Isabela McDonald, Carly Murray, Seth Reed, Jacieon Williams

styling: Madi Bauman, Liz Goldblatt, Tristan Lamson, Kate Regan

makeup: Mackenzie Glaubitz, Annaliese LoBiondo

photos: Benjamin Piers



A photograph of three young people sitting outdoors in front of a white house. The person on the left is a woman with long dark hair, wearing a black face mask and a blue denim dress. The person in the middle is a man wearing a black fedora, a black face mask, and a white button-down shirt. The person on the right is a woman with long blonde hair, wearing a black face mask, a white button-down shirt with a red bandana, and blue jeans. They are sitting on a wooden bench or table covered with a red and white checkered tablecloth. An American flag is draped on the wall behind them. The title 'BROKEN DOWN america' is overlaid on the image, with 'BROKEN DOWN' in large, bold, black serif font and 'america' in a smaller, white, lowercase script font.

BROKEN DOWN *america*

A global pandemic. A historic racial movement. A president who cannot denounce white supremacy, nor wear a mask. How can we be proud to be American when our country is in shambles? We cling to shreds of hope, to change created by the people, for the people. We dream of a better future.















STRIPPED:

MASK ON, FUCK IT, MASK *STILL* ON

The invisible history of our new go-to accessory

words by Danielle Clough | illustrations by Jordan Schechter

When unpacking the history of contagion, there is limited understanding of how infections spread. The Plague was at its highest between 1347 and 1351, killing up to 125 million people worldwide. It reemerged in Paris in 1619, prompting royal physician Charles de Lorme to invent the plague prevention costume. Translated from the *Encyclopedia of Infectious Diseases: Modern Methodologies*, the costume included a mask shaped like a beak with two nostril holes. In other words, a doctor dressed head to toe in waxed leather with a beak mask hovered over the almost-dead and nursed them back to health. Yikes. Mask wearing became commonplace for the public too, beginning in the 1910s with the Manchurian Plague and the Spanish Flu.

As a result of the Manchurian Plague, a new mask was introduced by Wu Lien-tah, the Chinese-appointed Cambridge graduate of medicine, who understood the implications of infections stemming from the lungs. The Wellcome Museum's History of Masks described the layers of gauze as surrounded by cotton and

connected ties that allowed for it to stay behind the ears, becoming the "prototype from which the masks currently used in medicine today evolved."

Eight years later, the Spanish Flu spread across the world. In response, a multitude of countries mandated mask-wearing, including the United States, the UK, and Japan. Mitsutoshi Horii, author of "Why Do the Japanese Wear Masks?", cites how Japanese authorities imitated Western practices to stop the spread. Authorities initially instructed healthy individuals to wear masks so they wouldn't get infected. Soon thereafter, Horii wrote, "mask production, distribution, and use became a national event." Japan rallied around mask-wearing and it became "the symbol of national defense against the invisible threat of the influenza." The lasting result of widespread mask-wearing resulted in community effort and a normalized etiquette. In a *Psychology Today* article, ex-pat Cynthia Kim Beglin noticed that "in Asia, it's considered good hygiene to wear a mask. It's thought to be considerate of others." Mask-wearing transitioned from a means of self-

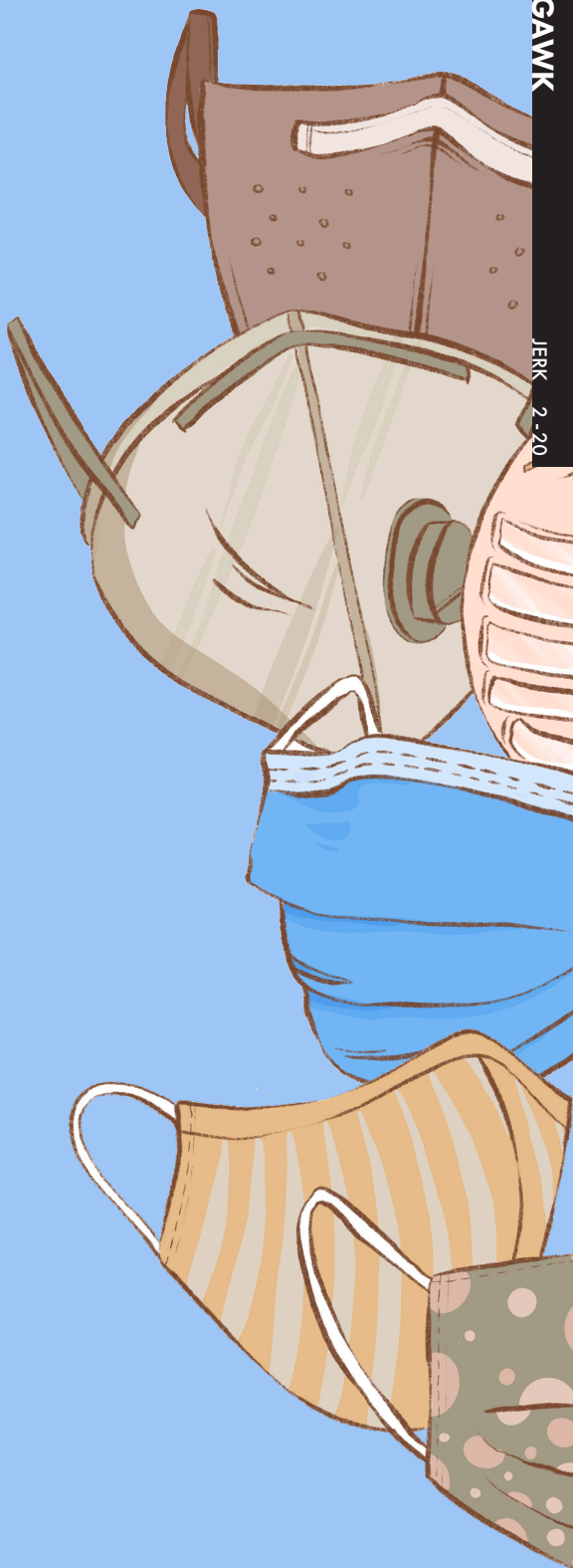
protection to protecting others.

Mask-wearing metamorphosed to the minds of fashion designers as the spread of contagion and pollution continued to increase. In January 2013, Beijing recorded the highest pollution rate in history — dubbing the event the “airpocalypse.” The World Health Organization reported in 2014 that air pollution is linked to upwards of seven million premature deaths. In the fall of 2014, Paris Fashion Week witnessed the first debut of the pollution mask. Chinese designer Masha Ma showcased a handful of designs accompanied with a pollution mask in her Spring/Summer 2015 collection. Her collection of masks were even embedded with Swarovski crystals. During China Fashion Week that same year, QIAODAN Yin Peng Sports Wear Collection debuted their own set of respiratory masks. These masks were Type A pollution protection, ranging from athletic decorated cotton to a straight up gas mask. And in 2018, even Ariana Grande released a collection of masks alongside her fourth studio album *Sweetener*.

After masks made way into couture fashion, they transformed into a staple of streetwear. The original use of the mask in streetwear provided anonymity. These masks covered one’s entire face instead of just the mouth and nose. Interestingly enough, a 2015 article published by *DAZED* suggests mask-wearing in Asia is beyond medical or air quality reasons. Rather, people wore masks simply to hide their faces. Mask-wearing, according to Juvenile psychologist Jun Fujikake, eliminates the need to deal with others. It doesn’t always mean you’re sick or likely to get sick, but that you’re tired of dealing with the people around you. Amen.

The number of benefits that mask-wearing brings makes perfect sense. Anonymity, protection from pollution, and keeping others healthy has curated a growing trend throughout history. Before the COVID-19 pandemic began, streetwear brands such as Anti Social Social Club, Off-White, and Bape capitalized on this market. Off-White sold their cotton face masks last year at an upwards of \$135. The upward trend of protection for oneself only increases so long as pandemics strike the world. Masks are important elements of both couture and public health. Now, if only Brad from Phi Psi who refuses to move his mask up above his chin knew that

JML



CLOSET CASE:

QUARANTINE CREATORS

photos by Benjamin Piers



UNGRATEFUL ART:

At the beginning of quarantine, it was incredibly easy to become absorbed by negative feelings and emotions. Instead of allowing myself to be consumed by negativity, I began to create art that allowed me to express myself and bring vibrancy back into my life. As humans, our emotional state is constantly fluctuating. Similarly, Ungrateful Art is an ever-evolving collection with one-of-a-kind pieces that reflect how I feel. Turns out that people really loved seeing my art, and now Ungrateful Art is my small business! Check it out @ungratefulart!



METHOD TO MADNESS:

During quarantine, I began designing and selling fashionable loungewear to meet the increase in popularity of at-home style. From this, came Method to Madness — a brand meant to empower the many people who felt like the pandemic was making them “crazy”. In my opinion, there will always be madness around us and within us, but we have the ability to balance this with our own methods. Method to Madness means continuing to be the force of stability within chaos, always mixing logical reason with passionate expression, and never questioning unpredictability because it’s one of the only predictable aspects of life itself.



SLOANE SEXTON:

During quarantine I started upcycling a lot of my old clothes with my untouched sewing machine from 8th grade. Eventually, I also got a vinyl cut machine and was able to start pressing my own illustrations into my “designs.” The frankenhoodies were born from wanting to cover the existing designs in a unique way, and each one has been totally different from the last. I like having each illustration be inspired by what the hoodie used to be!

FORM & FUNCTION: How to dress like a...

CHARLI XCX STAN

Eyeshadow:

Slap on that pink eyeshadow like it's 1999.

Clips:

Let's ride! These clips keep my hair back when I'm blasting Charli in my best friend's Toyota Corolla. I don't know how to drive!

Lock necklace:

You know what Charli always says! If you want my love, try to unlock it.

Poppers:

Wait, you've never had poppers? Oh my god, you're seriously missing out. It's like an instant rush. It also loosens your buttohole.

Ripped skinny jeans:

It cuts off your circulation so while you're on a 6 hour bender at the club, so you can't feel the pain in your feet!

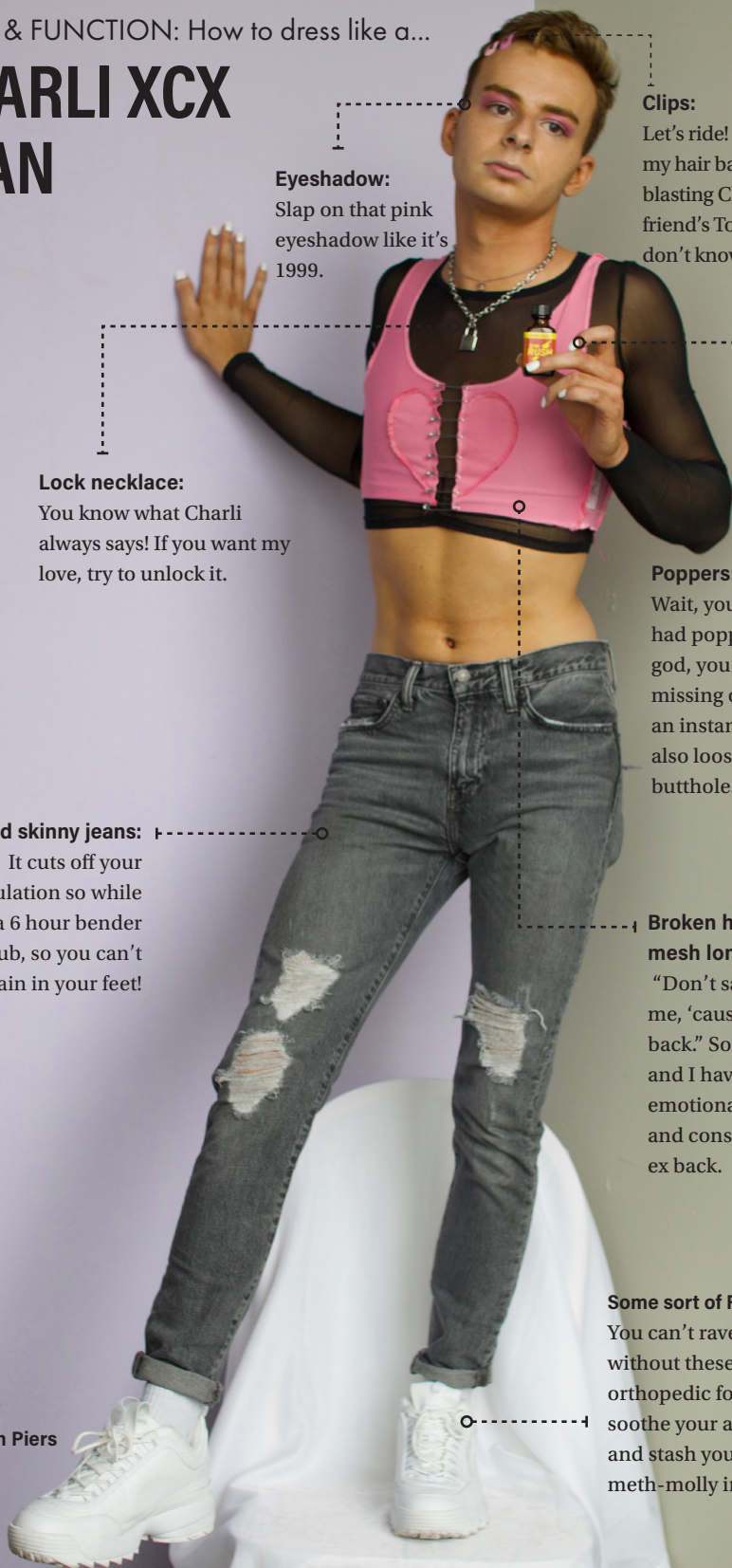
Broken heart tee and mesh long sleeve:

"Don't say you love me, 'cause I can't say it back." Something Charli and I have in common: emotionally unavailable and constantly taking my ex back.

Some sort of Fila shoe:

You can't rave all night without these trendy orthopedic footwear to soothe your aching arches and stash your mostly-meth-molly in!

photo by
Benjamin Piers



FIRST TO CLOSE, LAST TO OPEN

Syracuse music venues struggle with keeping their doors open during COVID-19

words by Luke Maddren

photos by Gabriel Miller-Trabold



Juice Jam this year had an absolute powerhouse of a lineup, with an incredibly diverse selection of rising artists that ranged from trap to R&B to pop. There was just one problem, though. Instead of spending the festival getting absolutely obliterated and being pushed around by a bunch of overly-aggressive frat guys in a mosh pit, festival-goers watched the performances at home on their computer screens (while still getting fucked up, of course).

COVID-19 has devastated America's economy as a whole, but it hit the live music industry especially hard. While, for the most part, most of the entertainment industry found a way to adapt, live music — an industry dependent on cramming as many people as possible into a building — is still struggling to find its footing in a socially-distanced world. This isn't just an issue for large festivals like Coachella or Lollapalooza, either; the pandemic has damaged small independent music venues just as badly. Syracuse's local independent music scene, which includes local venues like The Westcott Theater and The Lost Horizon as well as smaller house venues like The Deli, is trying its best to stay afloat.

THE WESTCOTT —

Nestled in the historic Westcott neighborhood on the east side of Syracuse, The Westcott Theater has been one of the most popular venues for live music in Central New York since its inception in 2008. When the pandemic hit in early March, The Westcott, like most other venues, had to shut its doors. The theater was closed down until late July, when it held its first socially-distanced concert.

The switch from having live, in-person shows to virtual, socially-distanced shows is undoubtedly difficult, but that hasn't stopped Dan Mastronardi. As the owner and talent buyer of The Westcott, Mastronardi is determined to bring live music to Syracuse while following COVID regulations. "We can give up and close the doors, or continue to keep pushing with new and creative ideas to bring the public live music

in some way or another," he said. "I don't give up easy, so we'll continue to do what we do."

In July, The Westcott Theater held a concert featuring guitarist Billy Strings. Even though it was great that the venue was finally hosting musicians again, the event looked vastly different from anything that The Westcott had hosted before. Because of COVID regulations, patrons were required to wear masks, tables were assigned, and drinks and food had to be ordered through an app. Instead of appearing on stage, Strings played the venue virtually from Nashville, appearing on a large screen on the stage. Despite regulations drastically changing the experience of a live event, Mastronardi is confident that the public will learn to love socially-distanced shows like this one. "I think it will take time for the public to get used to streams in venues, but I really like the concept."

The Billy Strings event was The Westcott's big experiment on how a socially-distanced show could work, but as of right now, Mastronardi is unsure if future events will follow the same format.

Even if The Westcott fully embraces this format for their live shows in the future, the limited attendance numbers and extra costs in hosting a virtual show will still put financial strain on the historic venue.

**"WE CAN
GIVE
UP AND
CLOSE THE
DOORS, OR
CONTINUE
TO KEEP
PUSHING."**



HOUSE VENUES —

While independent venues like The Westcott are important to Syracuse's music scene, small, intimate house shows are the lifeblood of live music. House shows are a closer, more personal experience than most shows at professional venues. You don't need to worry about the logistics of reserving a ticket because practically every seat is a front row seat. These shows are rarely for financial gain; instead, house venues host shows out of love and respect for the art of music and to support smaller local or touring artists. House shows emphasize the connection between the performer and the audience, creating an experience that is truly unlike any other.

Like a lot of college towns, Syracuse has a prolific live music scene that was forced to shut down because of the pandemic. Jerk talked to a manager of The Deli, one of the most popular off-campus house venues, for insight on how the pandemic is affecting the independent music scene financially, logistically, and most importantly, spiritually.

JERK RECOMMENDS SOME SMALL, LOCAL ARTISTS TO PEEP BELOW:

- NONEWFRIENDS.
- Lunes
- Winter Beach
- Mollie Edsell
- Sarah Gross
- Erin Manion
- Peter Groppe
- Anish Ghosh
- Settle For Sadler

THE DELI

Jerk Magazine: How has the coronavirus affected you personally?

I feel like the pandemic has made me much more reflective, I think, for the first time in my life, I got the chance to sit with my own thoughts long enough to fully digest them, which, honestly, can be pretty overwhelming. Overall, I've become more honest [with] myself and more reflective about me, my friends, and the world as a whole.

JM: How has the lack of live music had an impact on you, personally?

The lack of live music, plainly, has just really sucked. I've always wanted to work in live music because it's always been a happy place for me, so being unable to see or play live music has definitely been rough. I am optimistic though. Concerts will return eventually, but for now we just all have to do our part in keeping people safe.

JM: Why do you host live music?

My friends and I went to house shows our freshman year and loved the community that came along with the great music. We actually first started hosting small acoustic shows in our apartment on South Campus (sorry, administration), and by the time we were looking for a house, we all knew that we wanted to throw more shows. Mainly, we just wanted to provide a space for people to feel safe, see great bands, and meet some new people.

JM: What are your thoughts on virtual concerts? Do you think they're a satisfactory replacement for live venues?

While I don't think anybody sees virtual concerts as an equal replacement to live shows, I do think that virtual shows can be really cool. It shows that artists and venues still really want to get good music out to music lovers, and while the situation is certainly not ideal for anyone, I'm grateful that people are making an effort. I'm glad that live music has a chance to live on, in some shape or form, despite everything that's happening.

JM: Have you considered hosting a virtual event or one with social distancing in place?

I'd be interested in making more virtual/socially-distanced events happen in the future for sure,

but for right now, the main priority is making sure people feel safe. If people feel safe coming to an event like that, then I'd totally do what I can to make something happen. That being said, I don't ever want to put people in a position where they're even remotely uncomfortable. I think we're just gonna have to wait until a vaccine comes around. There's not gonna be any "normal" concerts for the foreseeable future.

JM: How can we support the local house venue scene during this time?

I think just talk to your friends at school, try to figure out who some local artists are, and stream their shit! Likes, streams and follows cost you nothing, but it means a lot to artists right now.

JM: Has the coronavirus made you reevaluate the importance of live music in general?

Absolutely. I didn't realize how much I took live music and social gatherings for granted. I think it's been a reset button for everybody, and I hope that when the day comes and we can have big shows again, people will remember how much this year fucking sucked and feel truly grateful for what's in front of them. I know I certainly will.

Neither The Westcott nor house venues want to be responsible for an uptick in cases, so live music in Syracuse won't return to "normal" for a while. If you want to directly support The Westcott financially, you can donate to their GoFundMe or buy merchandise from their website. Ultimately, though, the fate of the Westcott — and independent venues everywhere — is in the hands of the federal government. The National Independent Venue Association is pushing hard to pass the Save Our Stages and Restart acts, which will bail out local music venues that have been devastated by the pandemic. Independent venues like The Westcott aren't backed by wealthy entertainment corporations like larger festivals are, so their owners largely depend on in-person music for their livelihoods. If you want to make sure that independent music venues can survive the pandemic, you can contact your local representative and tell them to take action via saveourstages.com. **JM**



WAP:

Women Against Patriarchy

Black women's music dominates our playlists, so why do they have the short end of the stick in their own industry?

words by Pearl Cadigan | art by Sloane Sexton

Wet ass pussy: the simple, yet effective siren call to women everywhere that shook the world this August has since become a symbol of sexual empowerment among Gen Z, millennials, and even those scattered across older generations. Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion's anthem inspired a viral TikTok dance, a number of tapestry designs, and a music video featuring Kylie Jenner, a cheetah, and snakes of all colors and sizes. Among all of the praise it has received though, "WAP" has faced some serious backlash. We've all heard Ben Shapiro's absurd take on the song; even though hearing him say "wet ass p-word" over and over again and accidentally letting the world know he doesn't make his wife wet was funny at first, a white man criticizing two Black women for their art is not only uncalled for, but it is also just one more microaggression in a long pattern of hate. Black women exist at the intersection of race and gender, which constantly exposes them to simultaneous racial discrimination and gender discrimination, even in the music

industry. The criticism that Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion received this year is unfortunately not a new phenomenon; we've seen the same in the careers of artists like Lil' Kim, Trina, and Nicki Minaj.

Jerk talked to Professor Casarae Lavada Abdul-Ghani of Syracuse University's African American Studies department to learn more about the obstacles that Black women artists face. "For decades, Black women have been the mules of the music industry," Abdul-Ghani said. "Specifically, when referring to hip-hop, Black women have had to conform to the norms of hip-hop music and culture in order to break into the industry." According to Abdul-Ghani, the reason for the extreme difficulty Black women face when trying to enter any arts industry is "racial and gendered biases." These biases, which affect Black women in all aspects of everyday life, impact the number of opportunities Black women artists have, their public reputations, and the amount of money that they make — which is disproportionately less than most men and non-Black women.

When expressing sexuality in their art, Black women face a unique set of criticisms. "The gendered and racialized dimensions that are at play when Black women express themselves come from the expectation that Black women are supposed to enact a type of poise that connotes modesty or grace," said Abdul-Ghani. Society tells Black women that instead of proudly expressing their sexual desires, as artists like Cardi B, Megan Thee Stallion, CupcakKe, Khia, and many others have done, they are supposed to keep them hidden. Abdul-Ghani stated that this "overt sexuality" is only so noticeable now because it's in the mainstream, even though artists like Lil' Kim, Foxy Brown, and Trina have been openly expressing their sexualities "on the main stage" since the 1990s.

The challenges that Black women in the music industry face, especially when they prove that they are indeed sexual beings through their art, are incomparable. Even as songs like "WAP," "Big Ole Freak," and "Juicy" consistently top the charts, the Black women behind these hits still deal with criticism and obstacles in their own industry. Want to find out more about the experience of Black women in music? Keep reading, and remember to always prioritize the voices of Black women in these conversations.

Bitch I'm Running Out of Patience

One rapper's perspective on prejudice in the industry.

words by Pearl Cadigan | photo provided

Kae Draco, a rapper from the Washington metropolitan area, has been making music for five years. Inspired by artists like Missy Elliot, Lauryn Hill, and Lil Wayne, she's known for high-energy beats and electric flows. Jerk talked to Kae Draco about her experience as a Black woman in the music industry, the double standard of artists of different genders being sexual in art, and her advice to upcoming Black women artists.

Jerk Magazine: Do you think you're treated differently in the industry because of your gender?

KD: Definitely. In the beginning, it was being overlooked as far as being not placed on a song with a male rapper, or I've had male rappers with less talent placed before me only because I am a female. But I've put in the work to make sure that doesn't happen.

JM: Why do you think that women, especially Black women, face so many obstacles in the industry?

KD: Misogyny and racial prejudice. Women, especially Black women, face so many obstacles in the world period, from being placed into gender roles and unable to break free from them, to being undervalued in talents that we bring to the table, to even racial and gender biases that are placed on us. These same obstacles in society are reflected in the industry.

JM: What are your thoughts on the double standard of men being applauded when they include sexual lyrics in their music and women — especially women of color — being criticized and for doing the same thing?

KD: Unfortunately, the double standard is something that is built into society that I think won't ever change. A lot of times, not only the men but females also heavily criticize and look down on sexualized female lyrics instead of supporting. I think it's up to us females to speak up and keep supporting other females who want to voice themselves in sexualized ways regardless of your personal views on the subject. If music is art, people are free to create whatever they like.

JM: How do you get past the obstacles that come with being a Black woman in the industry?

KD: Just understanding that there are going to be way more obstacles in my way than everyone else in the industry and not letting them frustrate me. I don't believe it's ever getting past but just adjusting and coping with the obstacles thrown at you. Understanding that if I want the same recognition as a man or even a woman of a different race, I have to work twice as hard to even the playing field.

JM: What is your advice to Black women artists new to the industry?

KD: Work hard, and don't let society define your voice.

JM: What can we as listeners do to support Black women artists, besides just streaming music?

KD: Grasp an understanding of the difficulties Black women go through in society. Being supportive online, commenting on posts, et cetera, and promoting them to your friends and family.



from “Do it to Me Baby”



1935

*“I want you to do it to me baby, Honey,
till the cows come home.”*

Blues singer and songwriter Lucille Bogan puts out a song about “suckin’ cock” and “fuckin’ cock” until the cows come home, breaking ground for Black women expressing their sexualities in the music industry.



1987 - early 1990s

*“Then I flipped for a tip, make me wanna do tricks for
him, Lick him like a lollipop should be licked.”*

We’ve all heard “Push It,” but what about the rest of Salt-N-Pepa’s iconically sexual lyrics, like those in “Shoop” and “Let’s Talk About Sex”? Although the group denies “Push It” being a lustful anthem, its catchy lyrics and beat are what threw the trio into the spotlight and gave them the platform to speak their minds and empower other women.



1996

“I don’t want dick tonight, Eat my pussy right.”

Lil’ Kim took no time making a name for herself as a sexually-empowered woman in the music industry, with the lyrics on her debut album *Hard Core* putting her on a high pedestal where she’d stand tall throughout her entire career.



1998

*“Who quick to deep throat the dick, And let
another bitch straight lick the clit.”*

From her very first feature on Trick Daddy’s “Nann” to her most recent album, *The One*, rapper Trina has always been a powerfully sex-positive presence in the music industry.



2014

"Come through and fuck him in my automobile, Let him eat it with his grills."

In what can be seen as a radical self-love anthem, Nicki Minaj raps about loving her curves and fully owning her sexuality, something deemed fairly revolutionary for Black women in the music industry.



2002

"My neck, my back, Lick my pussy and my crack."

The lyrics we've all known, long before the adults in our lives would have liked, were released by artist Khia almost two decades ago on her debut album *Thug Misses*. After all this time, these lyrics are still sung loudly in clubs, frat parties, and kitchen pre-games alike.



2020

"Gobble me, swallow me, drip down the side of me, Quick, jump out 'fore you let it get inside of me."

On Megan Thee Stallion and Cardi B's collab "WAP," the two rap about sex in a way that wouldn't be possible without all of the sex-positive women that came before them. While we can only imagine how hard floors would shake and walls would pound to this anthem at a party in a world without COVID, it's still managing to make huge waves in the world of sex-positive, empowering rap.



2016

"Wanna hit it from the back, Let me arch my back."

Since the release of her debut album *Cum Cake*, featuring songs like "Deepthroat," "Juicy Coochie," and "Vagina," CupcakKe has been a consistent source of sex-positive, LGBTQ+ friendly hits.

to "Gobble Me"

The history of the musical empowerment that made "WAP" possible.

words by Pearl Cadigan | art by Esther Kim

No Matter Who You Are or Where You Are, Embrace Your Inner Divine feminine With This No-Skips Playlist

"WAP," "WTP," "Wet Wet," and more! Not all of the songs start with the letter 'W,' we promise.

words by Pearl Cadigan and Liv Herz | art by Jordan Schechter

Even if you may be a certified freak, seven days a week, you may not always have the confidence to show that side of yourself to the world. With this eclectic mix of songs by Black women artists, you can fuel your sexual self throughout the day, no matter where you are or what you're doing.

Whether you're walking across campus flexing your baddest bitch outfit, doing the deed, or brushing your teeth before bed, this playlist has everything you need to feel empowered, inspired, and downright sexy from the moment you wake up until you fall asleep.



PLAYLIST

WET ASS PLAYLIST

Created by JERK | 18 SONGS

PLAY



- "212" Azealia Banks
- "Wet Wet" Asian Doll
- "Big Ole Freak" Megan Thee Stallion
- "WTP" Teyana Taylor ft. Mykki Blanco
- "Sex With Me" Rihanna
- "The Jump Off" Lil' Kim
- "Shoop" Salt-N-Pepa
- "One Minute Man" Missy Elliott ft. Trina and Luda
- "Barbie Dreams" Nicki Minaj
- "Pynk" Janelle Monáe
- "Doves in the Wind" SZA ft. Kendrick Lamar
- "WAP" Cardi B ft. Megan Thee Stallion
- "Tap In" Saweetie
- "Werkin' Girls" Angel Haze
- "CLONES" Tierra Whack
- "Throw It Back" Missy Elliott
- "Act Up" City Girls
- "Feeling Myself" Nicki Minaj and Beyoncé

Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is

How we as fans can support Black women in the music industry

words by Pearl Cadigan

Whether they're being criticized for expressing themselves sexually, being assigned racist and sexist stereotypes, or being disproportionately underrepresented in their own industry, Black women in music face a unique set of challenges. And even though songs like "WAP" and "Sex With Me" are daily Spotify or Apple Music streams for many of us, smaller, independent artists need more support than streams alone can provide. By all means, keep streaming "WAP" on repeat, but go further to sufficiently support Black women artists beyond what your \$5 a month Spotify student premium subscription can offer them.

BUY MERCHANDISE

Streams often aren't enough to sustain lesser-known Black creatives in the music industry, especially those who rely on music for their livelihoods. One way to further support these artists is by purchasing their merchandise — if possible, directly from them. By buying an artist's merchandise, you're providing not only financial support but also symbolic support of the artists' creative vision.

FOLLOW, INTERACT WITH, AND SHARE THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES

Just like the symbolic support that comes with putting money toward an artist's creative vision through their merchandise, interacting with and promoting social media accounts can have a true impact on an artist's wellbeing. Social media allows us as fans to directly express our support and loyalty to the artists we love and gives us the opportunity to promote the art of Black women to our own followers. Hit that follow button! Like and comment on posts! Repost to your story! Hell, even turn on notifications! Social media is an easy, free way to support smaller artists that we should all be taking full advantage of.

DONATE TO THEM DIRECTLY

Some may have their CashApp, Venmo, or Paypal information in their social media bios, or a GoFundMe set up. Others may not. If this is the case, you can directly ask artists if you can send them funds to support them without any middleman. Since a lot of artists aren't fully compensated for their work, paying them directly is an effective way to express support.


DONATE TO ORGANIZATIONS DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING BLACK ARTISTS

If you don't feel comfortable directly sending money to an artist, there are a number of organizations supporting Black creatives in the music industry. These specific organizations are national-level ones, but you can try to find a local one to donate to or volunteer with as well.

The Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts: helps promote opportunities for Black people in the performing arts (with an emphasis on classical musicians) through art performances, education, and outreach.

The National Association of Negro Musicians: preserves and promotes the music and genres created and performed by Black musicians. NANM is especially involved with young Black musicians.

Music by Black Composers: promotes diversity in the music industry and encourages opportunities to study and perform music written by Black composers.

The Sphinx Organization: dedicated to the development of Black and Latino classical musicians, The Sphinx Organization encourages diversity and inclusion in this genre of music through its various initiatives. 



AMPLIFIED:

ANISH GHOSH

Stars,” Afem made that phrase. He said it in the studio one day and I wrote it down, and to me, the whole concept of “Die With The Stars” is when we die, when we pass on, where we go — it doesn’t fucking matter, and I feel like the entire fucking planet is in a war about that. Maybe one day I can die with the stars, maybe one day I could be eternal and I could be a light in someone’s world, be a spotlight of brightness from anywhere for thousands and thousands of years. [It’s about] not being tied down, about setting yourself free, about knowing what you want. These things are so important to me and helped me find out what I want in life.

Sounds like: \$uicideBoy\$, Lil Peep, YUNGBLUD |

Jerks to: Rage Against The Machine, 070 Shake, Dua Saleh

words and photos by Kenneth Barrist

Jerk Magazine: How did you get started in music?

Anish Ghosh: I kinda grew up making music, being in rock bands and shit like that, and then I started making my own music in high school. I started making music about the emotions I feel and mixing the genres that I love, even though I know a lot of the music I like, a lot of people won’t like.

JM: What inspired you to get into music?

AG: I really like the concepts of collectives. Groups of musicians who all do their own thing but come together to do something greater. I think that’s why I got into music. I feel like I can never connect to people because I didn’t know how to talk to people, and I thought [music] would be such a great way to connect to people and also learn how to speak what’s on my mind.

JM: Where did “Die With The Stars” come from?

AG: Afemefuna is the guy I worked on this project with. He’s a Kenyan producer. He’s super dope. We met last year when he came for the audio arts program. We were just two brown boys that are really quiet and just got in the studio and started liking what each other did. “Die With The

JM: How would you describe your sound? And is it evolving still?

AG: In terms of sound for the album, it’s psychedelic hip-hop with an influence of metalcore. For this album, I’ve been really trying to influence my metal side. I grew up as a kid learning every hard-ass guitar riff possible. I taught myself how to scream, and I taught myself pig squeals and growls, but I wouldn’t tell anyone about it because I was afraid of what people would think or say about me. I’m just trying to be as true to myself as possible, and I’m just slowly accepting the metal and hard rock parts of myself.

JM: What’s next for you?

AG: My next move is I wanna build a really good network of artists, both musical and visual, who have things they wanna say and have similar interests as me. I just want to find more friends because I guess I just forgot about the original concept of music... I got into the game so I could meet people. It’s not about the streams. It’s not about the money. If I have a conversation and make a new friend, that’s what it’s really all about for me.

“Die With The Stars” releases October 23rd on all streaming platforms.

REWIND:

DEAR TAYLOR, I SEE IT ALL NOW

Has it really been ten years since the release of *Speak Now*?

words by Shantel Guzman | illustration by Sam Currier

For Taylor Swift fans, 2020 was a highly anticipated year. Even before the release of her surprise eighth studio album *Folklore* on July 24, Swifties had a lot to look forward to, the most notable being the ten year anniversary of one of her earliest and most influential studio albums, *Speak Now*.

Swift released *Speak Now* — the only studio album that she wrote completely independently — on October 25, 2010. Her solo writing process was a reaction to critics who minimized her early career's success by claiming that the only reason *Taylor Swift* and *Fearless* were so successful was that she relied heavily on co-writers.

Instead of taking the haters to heart, Swift used this opportunity to redefine herself as a true singer-songwriter. Although she does have co-writers on all of her later studio albums, the true hits that we all know and love were written by only Swift herself. From “Red” to “Lover,” the power that Swift has as a songwriter is incomparable, and her roller coaster of a music career really began with *Speak Now*'s release.

Each song on *Speak Now* acts as a specific confession to a different person in Swift's life. Swift's direct call-out to John Mayer — with whom she shared a short-term relationship — is a clear example of this. She wasn't afraid to expose the toxic way her ex-boyfriend (who's 12 years her senior, by the way) treated her.

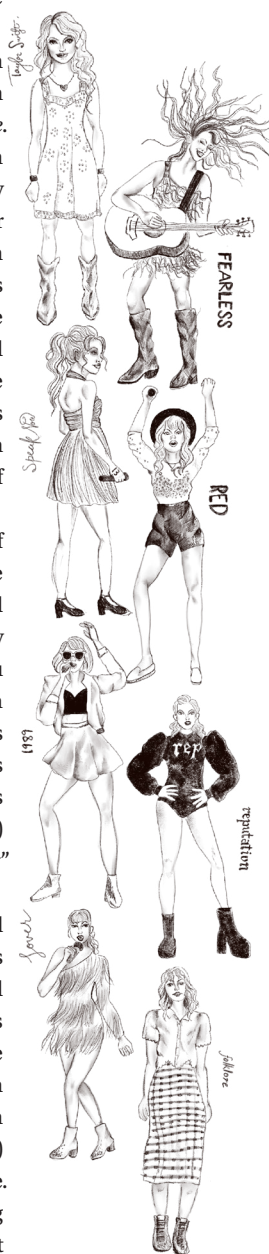
In “Dear John” she writes to Mayer, “Dear John, I see it all now. It was wrong. Don't you think nineteen's too young to be played by your dark twisted games? When I loved you so? I should have known.” In another *Speak Now* hit, “Back To December,” Swift apologizes to ex-beau Taylor Lautner and recognizes her

flaws, writing, “You gave me all your love and all I gave you was ‘Goodbye.’”

Swift perfected the subtle call-out in *Speak Now* but has strayed away from it in her most recent album, *Folklore*. Rather than basing songs on her own past experiences, Swift has evolved by creating fictional storylines within her newer music, such as those heard in “Betty,” “August,” and “Cardigan.” With this trio, she created a fictional love triangle involving three teens: James, Betty, and Inez — which also happen to be the names of Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds children. The couple is close friends with Swift. Each song is from the perspective of a different member of the triangle.

“Cardigan” is from the perspective of Betty, the girlfriend. She discusses the pain that James the boyfriend caused her by always lifting her up but eventually causing her downfall. Swift says, “You drew stars around my scars, now I'm bleeding.” In “August,” Swift introduces Inez, the other woman with whom James cheats on Betty. Inez believes James is hers (“I remember thinking I had you,”) James makes it clear in the song “Betty” that this was never the case.

Swift built an album around a fictional love triangle that captivated millions. It's worth saying, though, that Swifties would be captivated by almost anything Swift puts out. Although many of us fondly reminisce about the Swift that we all grew up with in the *Speak Now* era, it's clear she's moving on and experimenting (and quite successfully) with a new yet ever-Swift songwriting style. While we learned to love her songwriting with *Speak Now*, we'll continue to love it with *Folklore* and beyond. Plus, who says a co-writer is a bad thing?



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JERK

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THIS YEAR ESPECIALLY.**

THERE'S PEOPLE HERE TO HELP.

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Hendricks Chapel

315-443-2901

hendricks.syr.edu

More Resources

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Four horizontal stripes in red, yellow, blue, and white.

**WE RENT HOUSES AND APARTMENTS TO THE
'CUSE AND STUMPY NATION.**



**BUT IN OUR SPARE TIME, WE FIGHT
RACISTS/FASCISTS/HOMOPHOBES/SEXISTS/ XENOPHOBES/
AND PRESIDENTS WITH BAD COMBOVERS.**

**THIS ELECTION, PLEASE VOTE LIKE YOUR
DEMOCRACY DEPENDS ON IT!**