

MARCH - APRIL 2025

ISSUE 09

ESCAPE MAG

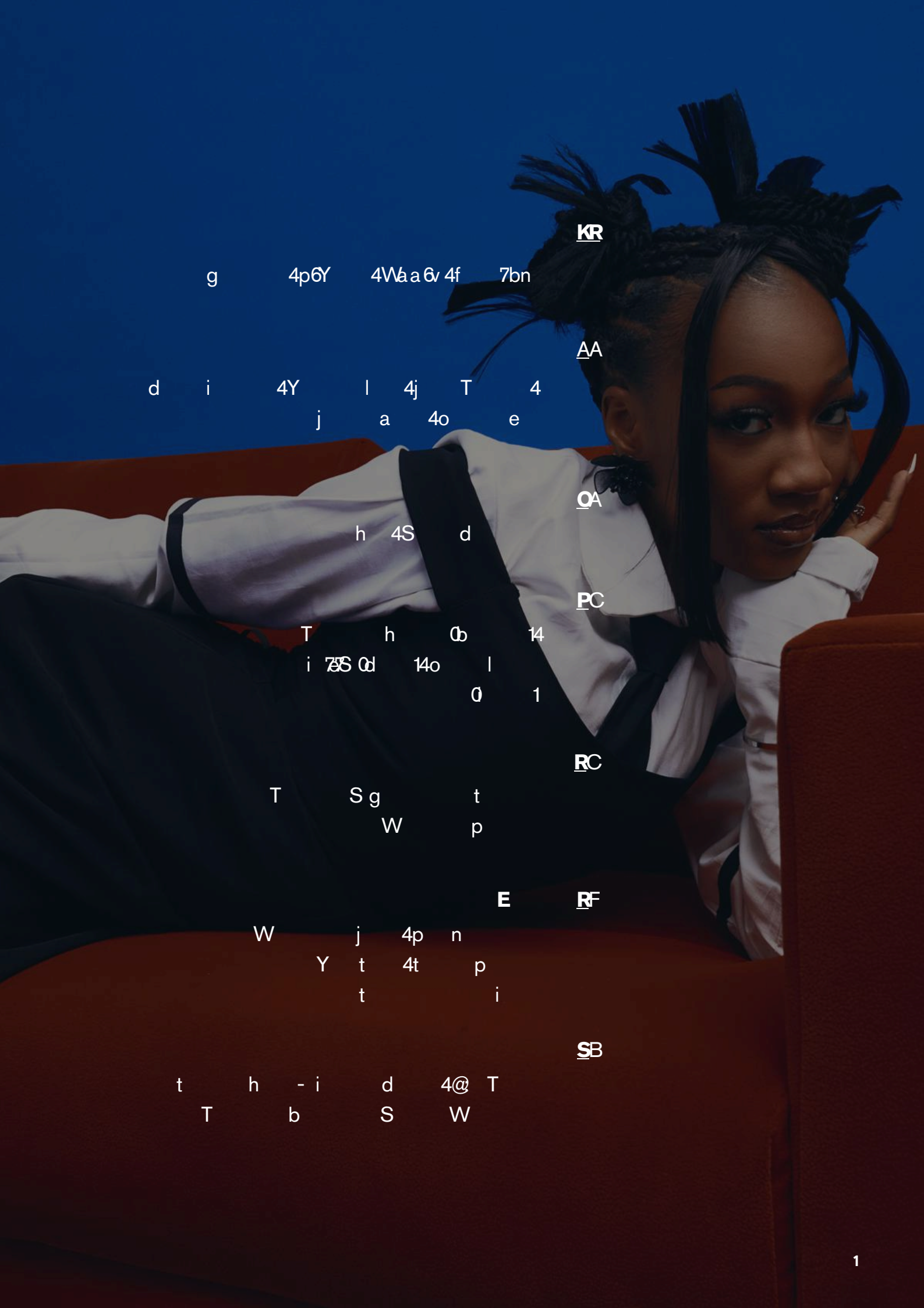


LIYA X AJEBO HUSTLERS

Unappologetic &
Unstoppable



Hawa Magaji | Krizbeatz | TDollar | Cee Y | MIA | Jamz | Brothers Lawee | Spice Priezt | Sharon
Ike | Kommunity Flex | Nina Brianna | Nancy Egbo and Many More.



KR

g 4p6Y 4Waa6v 4f 7bn

AA

d i 4Y l 4j T 4
j a 4o e

QA

h 4S d

PC

T h 0 14
i 7S 0 14o l
0 1

RC

T Sg t
W p

E

RF

W j 4p n
Y t 4t p
t i

SB

t h - i d 4@ T
T b S W

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Okiki Laoye

MANAGING EDITOR

Adeshina Salau

GUEST WRITERS

Dr Nkem Andrea Obi, Temitope Akapo, Adesewa Olofinko, Lucy Ndubisi, Oluwatoni Ottun

CREATIVE DIRECTORS

Black Albino, Gloria Onwuemeli (BlvckSun), Salami Omogbolahan

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Salami Omogbolahan
Josh Oyebanji & Phalorey.

VIDEO PRODUCTION

Kommunity Flex

TECH SUPPORT

Dotun Buluro

DESIGN

Digital Escape Africa

ESCAPE MAG Contains Clickable Content.
Click on Images and Underlined Texts to
Access Links.



From the Editor

Dear Readers,

Welcome to our first regular issue of the year—Issue 009—marking the second drop of 2025 and the ninth publication since our launch in 2024. We're thrilled to share that our very first printed copy, released as a special edition Jan - Feb 2025, came to life thanks to the incredible support of Apollo Foundation and the African Creators Summit

This time, we're delighted to have Liya grace our cover once more, this time as a cover star, joined by Ajebo Hustlers in an exclusive collaborative shoot. Inside, you'll discover interviews and features with an electrifying lineup of creatives: Media personality, Hawa Magaji, the ever-innovative Krizbeatz, rising star TDollar, visionary Director Pink, Gen Z powerhouse Nancy Egbo, fashion disruptor Brothers Lawee, and many more dope creatives we've handpicked for this edition.

We're also thrilled to introduce a brand-new column alongside our Community Wellbeing series: CTRL + H, your go-to for everything Current, Trending, Real, Live, and Hot. Dive in and stay ahead of the curve!

Special thanks go to our partners at Kommunity Flex for unlocking invaluable community access and producing the video content you'll see throughout our social media, and to OneRPM for their studio support and unwavering encouragement.

To our ever-growing community of readers: thank you for your passion and support. We look forward to pushing boundaries, celebrating creativity, and delivering top-notch production with every issue. Enjoy the journey,



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Escape Mag Special Edition Jan -Feb 2025 Hardcopy

[Advert]

Reach our Growing 50k+ Monthly Readers

BOOK NOW



a

J

R

7

3 ABCF: HEAF @ EA



PUMA X DAVIDO

FOR THOSE I LOVE, I WILL SACRIFICE

SHOP NOW



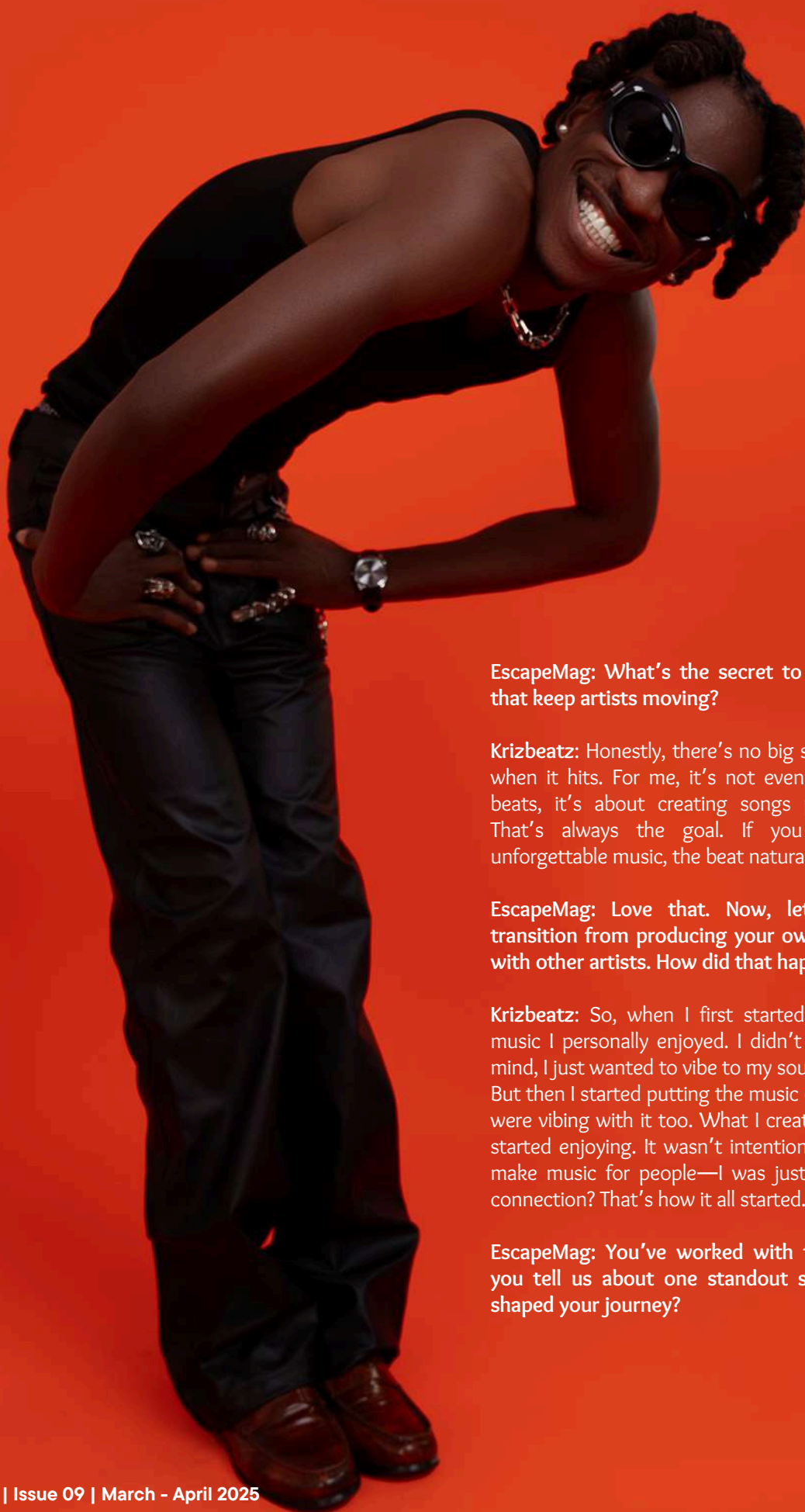
Krizbeatz

BY OKIKI LAOYE
INTERVIEW BY ALAMU AKINKUNMI
PRODUCTION MANAGER: SAM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHALOREY
STYLING & CREATIVE DIRECTION BY
BLACK ALBINO

VIDEO BY KOMMUNITY FLEX
STUDIO - ONERPM

What's good, people? It's your boy Krizbeatz, the Drummer Boy. I'm a music producer, DJ, and musician from Lagos, Nigeria. What else? What else do you want to know? Let's go!



EscapeMag: What's the secret to making dope beats that keep artists moving?

Krizbeatz: Honestly, there's no big secret. You just know when it hits. For me, it's not even about making dope beats, it's about creating songs people can't forget. That's always the goal. If you focus on making unforgettable music, the beat naturally follows.

EscapeMag: Love that. Now, let's talk about the transition from producing your own music to working with other artists. How did that happen?

Krizbeatz: So, when I first started, I was only making music I personally enjoyed. I didn't even have people in mind, I just wanted to vibe to my sound. But then I started putting the music out there, and people were vibing with it too. What I created for myself, others started enjoying. It wasn't intentional. I wasn't trying to make music for people—I was just doing me. But that connection? That's how it all started.

EscapeMag: You've worked with tons of artists. Can you tell us about one standout studio moment that shaped your journey?

Krizbeatz: I'll give you two. First—For Life by Runtown. That was a turning point. Second—Touch Me with Fave and Joshua Baraka, from my album. That session was insane. We had over 30 versions of the song.

Fave and I had recorded it a while back, and we were reworking it because it had to make the album. The song was supposed to drop on a Friday, and on Thursday, we were still making corrections. She wasn't around, I wasn't around—so we were sending files back and forth, over the phone. 30 versions until we found the one.

Looking back, my experience with Runtown prepared me for that. He's super meticulous, too. Back then, I'd be like, "Bro, if it's gonna hit, it'll hit—why all this stress?" But guess what? For Life is now one of my favorite songs of all time.

EscapeMag: That's wild! So, with all the trends and tech shifts in music, how do you stay innovative while staying true to your sound?

Krizbeatz: It's all about having a solid sound foundation. Once you've got that, you're just borrowing flavors from everywhere else. My core sound is Afro Dance Music—a fusion of EDM and Afrobeats. That electronic influence is always there, even in my Afrobeat productions.

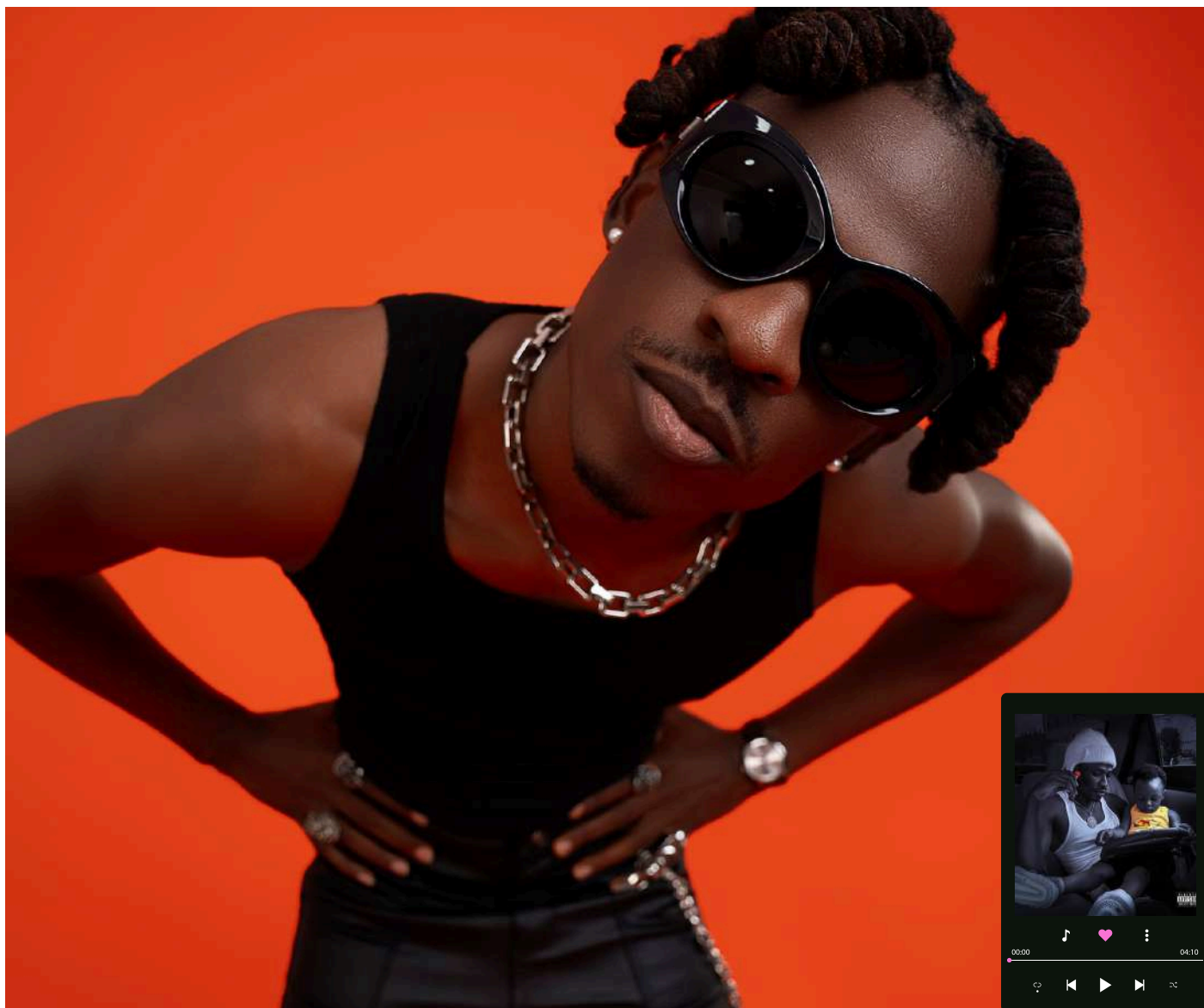
I studied audio tech and majored in EDM, so you'll always hear elements that remind you of Major Lazer, David Guetta, that kind of energy. That's how I keep evolving but still sound like me.

EscapeMag: Let's talk impact. What are your plans for the future of music production in Africa?

Krizbeatz: First off, I run an online university—Krizbeatz Music Academy. It's completely virtual, and we've got over a thousand students across Africa and the diaspora.







Our goal is to empower the next generation of producers and creators—not just in music-making but in the business side too. Everything I wish someone had told me when I was starting out—we’re teaching it.

I’m also one of the first producers to drop a hit record and then go on YouTube to teach how I made it. I believe in sharing knowledge, and that’s what I’m doing with the community.

EscapeMag: We love it. Now, we know it’s hard to pick just one, but tell us about an artist you’ve loved working with and why.

Krizbeatz: Just one? That’s like asking me to eat only one meal for the rest of my life! But okay, I’ll give you three: Bella Shmurda—shoutout to Bella! Always brings fire. Diamond Platnumz has an incredible work ethic and energy.

And Taves—super talented.

Those sessions are always mad fun.

EscapeMag: If music wasn’t your path, what would you be doing?

Krizbeatz: I’d be a professor. For real. A professor of music—teaching sound engineering, composition, maybe even music business. I’d still be creating, just from the other side of the room.

EscapeMag: Final words?

Krizbeatz: I just dropped my album, Daddy Dig Here. It features everyone I mentioned—Bella, Taves, Fave, Yemi Alade, Ajebutter22, Adewale Ayuba- so many amazing voices.

If you haven’t listened, go check it out. You’ll love it. Trust me.

T-DOLLAR

BY OKIKI LAOYE
INTERVIEW BY ALAMU AKINKUNMI
PRODUCTION MANAGER: SAM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHALOREY
STYLING & CREATIVE DIRECTION BY
FRAM'D

VIDEO BY KOMMUNITY FLEX
STUDIO - ONERPM

Yo, what's up happy people, it's your favourite boy, T-Dollar. I'm a singer, a rapper, and a songwriter.

EscapeMag: Let's talk about your project, No Stress. It's out now, but can you tell us what was your most exciting or challenging part of bringing the project to life?

T-Dollar: Along the line, we ended up adding Diss and Dart to the project. It wasn't originally supposed to be on the EP, but luckily, through prayer, it made it on there.

EscapeMag: Your journey so far, from freestyling to dropping four projects, how has that been for you?

T-Dollar: I'd say it's just by the grace of God. I actually started as a footballer because my dad was a coach. I'd go to the field with him to play and train.

Then, in junior secondary school at Ogijo, I started rapping with my friends in class; that's really how my music journey began. I was also in the choir at my church, the Celestial Church of Christ. So, everything kind of came together from different places.



EscapeMag: When did you start taking music seriously?

T-Dollar: Okay, so while I was still in Ogijo, I went for a birthday party, kind of like a club show, and performed there. After my performance, the hype man asked me to hype someone. I didn't know who he was, but I did it anyway.

Later, the guy introduced me to a friend who was trying to start a record label. A few days later, I met them at a Hotel in Ogijo, I went with my dad, and the label told him they needed to screen me and see if I had what it takes. I had to record enough songs to prove myself.

After about three months, I got signed. I dropped my first single titled **Me**. Then came my EP **Born2Shine**, where I featured Ola Dips Seyi Vibez and Saucee.

While promoting Born to Shine, I posted a freestyle on TikTok and not even two months later. It was the Rice freestyle. People loved it. They started reposting it like crazy, sending me videos, even sending my boss videos. That's what led us to officially drop the song Rice.

EscapeMag: What's next for you? Are you working on new music or exploring other things?

T-Dollar: Yeah, I'm working on new music. I don't want to say yet if it's a single, another EP, or an album, but a new project is coming soon.

For now, keep streaming the current EP. And guys, if you want me to drop a new one, give me 50 million streams, and I'll drop it immediately.

EscapeMag: Love it. One fun question: if No Stress were a food, what dish would it be?

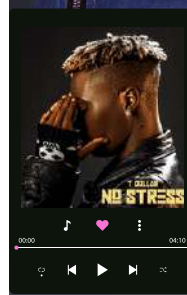
T-Dollar: A food? Hmm... okay, okay. I'd say beans. Actually, beans and bread.

EscapeMag: Why beans and bread?

T-Dollar: Because it took time—like, putting it all together took effort and patience.

EscapeMag: Last question. What's something about you that your fans don't know?

T-Dollar: I'd say I'm stubborn—but they don't know that. Actually, they really don't.
Big shoutout to EscapeMag!



Download Wallpapers



Download original wallpapers of Images created
by the EscapeMag Production Team

[FREE Download Now](#)

CEE-Y

Rooted in Legacy, Driven by Evolution



BY SAM

PHOTO SOURCE - CEE- Y BORNSTAR

EscapeMag: You grew up inspired by legends like Michael Jackson, Oliver De Coque, Lucky Dube, and Bob Marley. In what ways do you feel their musical legacy continues to influence your creative vision today?

Cee-Y: Michael Jackson's voice and dance moves had a huge impact on me early on. That's what pushed me to join Lord's Sword, where I started blending music with choreography, especially drawing inspiration from "Thriller."



Bob Marley and Lucky Dube influenced me with their revolutionary sound and powerful messages. Bob's fusion of Jamaican reggae, highlife, patwa percussion, and dreadlocks shaped both my sound and my style.

Oliver De Coque, though, really sparked my love for guitar. His guitar work added a layer of creativity that I still carry into my music today.

EscapeMag: From dancing with The Lord's Sword to founding Young Empire, your journey has evolved beautifully. What's one lesson from those early days that still drives you?

Cee-Y: I learnt to embrace both the wins and the losses. Living in my truth, acknowledging my purpose, and staying focused—that's the core of everything I do.

EscapeMag: The loss of your best friend Malyz was clearly a turning point in your story. How has that experience shaped your creativity and your dedication to music?

Cee-Y: Malyz wasn't just my friend—he was a mentor and motivator.

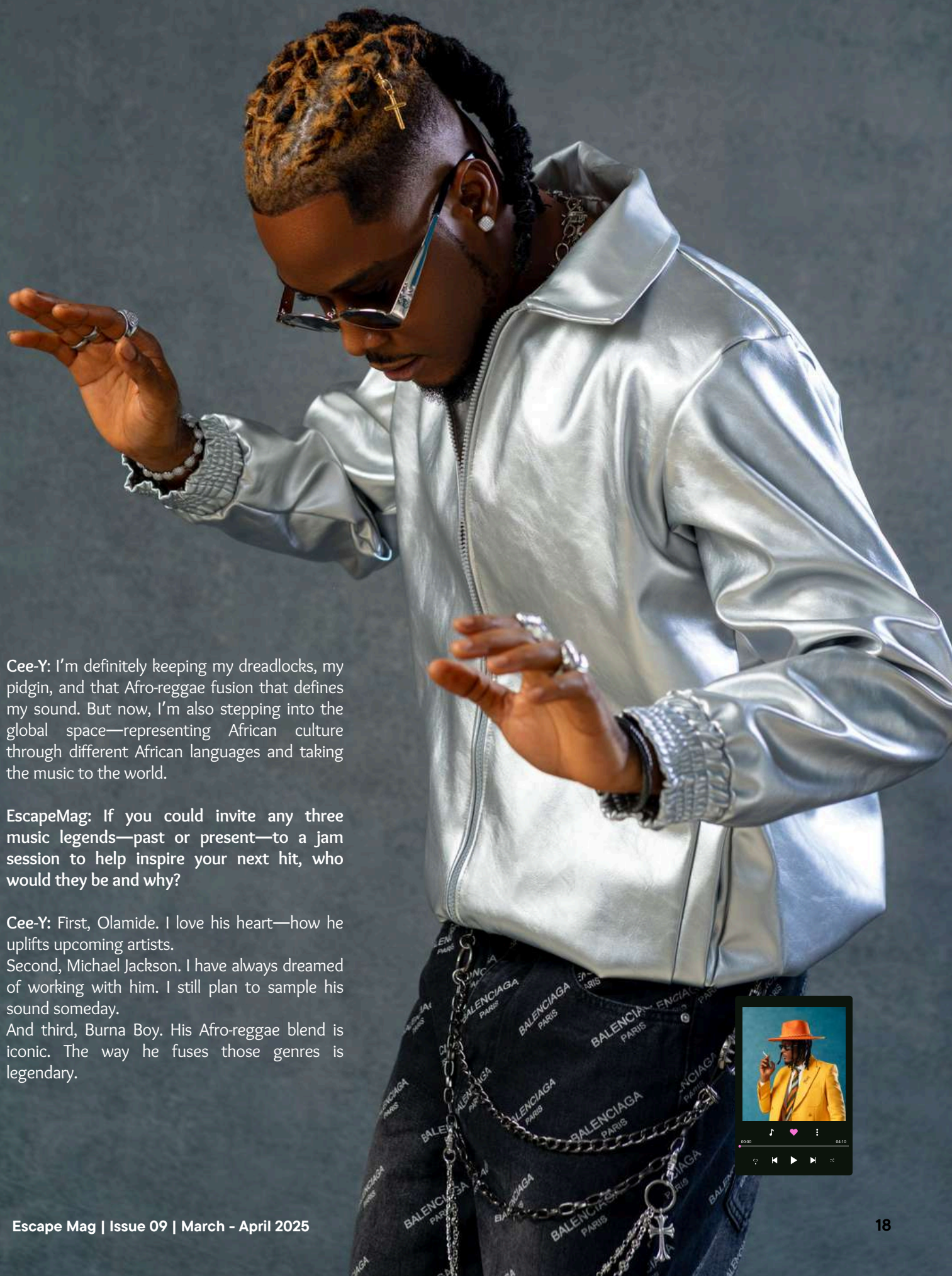
He pushed me to record my first ever song and truly believed in me. Losing him made me realize something powerful: "Death kills dreams." That mindset fuels me every day to stay sharp, improve my craft, and never take this journey for granted.

EscapeMag: You've worked with top producers like Phantom on the Beat and Slim Keyz. What's one unexpected insight or moment from those collaborations that really pushed you to grow?

Cee-Y: Working with Phantom was a major turning point. It didn't just help build me—it also gave me access to new circles. In fact, I almost secured a feature with Ceeza Milli back in 2018, but I couldn't afford the deal at the time. Still, that experience showed me the importance of being ready when opportunity comes.

EscapeMag: As you gear up to unveil a new look and sound, which elements of your past are you carrying forward—and what new things are you excited to explore?

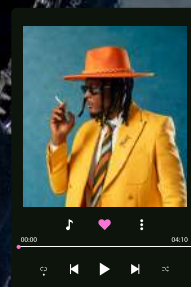




Cee-Y: I'm definitely keeping my dreadlocks, my pidgin, and that Afro-reggae fusion that defines my sound. But now, I'm also stepping into the global space—representing African culture through different African languages and taking the music to the world.

EscapeMag: If you could invite any three music legends—past or present—to a jam session to help inspire your next hit, who would they be and why?

Cee-Y: First, Olamide. I love his heart—how he uplifts upcoming artists. Second, Michael Jackson. I have always dreamed of working with him. I still plan to sample his sound someday. And third, Burna Boy. His Afro-reggae blend is iconic. The way he fuses those genres is legendary.



Jamz FR

Soft Voice, Loud Impact

BY SAM

PHOTO SOURCE - MNGT



Escape Mag: You grew up singing in your church choir and later found inspiration in icons like Fela and Asa. How have these early experiences shaped your unique blend of Afrobeats and RnB?

Jamz: They've been the foundation for everything I am today. The choir helped me find my voice and nurture it. Fela was very expressive with his art and that inspires me to do the same. Asa was pretty much my first experience of a woman successfully making music that was inherently true to her nature and winning. She inspired me to at least try. Growing up on that diet opened my eyes to the beauty of Afrobeats and storytelling. Of course, RnB is something I've always enjoyed, so it makes sense that it just stuck with me.

Escape Mag: Your music tackles themes of empowerment, heartbreak, and self-belief. What drives you to explore these subjects, and how do they connect with your personal journey?

Jamz: For me, making music is about two things: documentation and connection. I take inspiration from my personal experiences, observations, and stories I've heard. Living is learning, and living fully means embracing emotions, learning from them, and emerging wiser.

Music is my way of documenting my view of the human experience—the good and the bad. The privilege is that I get to translate these experiences into art and still connect with others who've felt these emotions in the process. As they say, art imitates life—I want to capture the essence of the human experience in the most honest way I can.



Escape Mag: You often describe your music as a safe space, a haven for genuine expression. Can you walk us through your creative process and how you craft that environment for your listeners?

Jamz: Creating looks a little different every time, but some things have to be there for it to work. When I'm working on a song, I like to make sure it all starts with a feeling. It's not about grand concepts or elaborate planning—it's about capturing a moment.

If I'm working with a beat that's ready to go, I typically go by how the instrumental makes me feel and I try to weave that feeling into every aspect of the song. Then when it's time to work on the melodies and lyrics, I try not to be too selfish when I write because I want the listener to feel with me—not just listen to my feelings. It's a delicate process.

Escape Mag: Balancing vivid imagination with real-life observations is a hallmark of your songwriting. How do you strike that balance and decide which stories to tell?

Jamz: That's a great question because it can get tricky. I just try not to be too stuck in my head. From my own experiences and from looking around me, there's always something to say—talk less of when you add in the imagination factor.

I like to listen to my intuition and really ask myself what the whole point of a song is before I go into writing it. Some stories are silly and really easy and fun to tell, while others are quite serious and require more nuance—but they all need to be told regardless.

Escape Mag: Your voice carries a raw emotion that resonates deeply with your audience. What do you do to tap into that vulnerability every time you record?

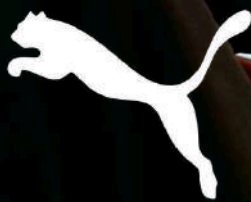
Jamz: I don't really think I can take credit for that. I mean, I do my best, but I honestly believe it is my own little gift. On my end though, I just really try to connect to the story in the song. It's a lot easier if the story is true because I can put myself back (as much as possible) in the headspace of when it actually played out.

If it's something I haven't experienced directly, then I try to find ways to relate and live vicariously through the story.

Escape Mag: Looking ahead, how do you envision your evolution as an artist, and what new experiences or projects can fans look forward to in your journey?

Jamz: I'm looking forward to exploring all the facets of my artistry through making more music, collaborating with other artists, and pushing the bounds of my writing. I've been working really hard on these things and I can't wait to share new music and even my very debut project with the fans.

I'm also refining my stagecraft because I just want to tie it all together by delivering stellar performances. So yeah, I'm excited—you guys should be too!



PUMA X DAVIDO

FOR THOSE I LOVE, I WILL SACRIFICE

SHOP NOW





Hawa Magaji

BY OKIKI LAOYE
INTERVIEW BY ALAMU AKINKUNMI
PRODUCTION MANAGER: SAM
STUDIO - ONERPM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SALAMI
OMOGBOLAHAN
STYLING & CREATIVE DIRECTION BY
BLACKSUN

STYLING ASSISTANTS: SOMA & BERRY
FIT TAILORING BY ANNASTRENDNG
MAKEUP BY BEATSBYCOCO
VIDEO BY KOMMUNITY FLEX

EscapeMag: Let's talk about What Will People Say?. You hosted that show, and it's such an interesting concept.

Hawa: Yes! I always say, "Don't listen to what people say," but ironically, I also hosted a show called What Will People Say? I've also hosted Change of Perspective and more.

But for What Will People Say?, the title says it all. It's such a universal idea—it's not just a Nigerian or African thing. The concept is this: No two people are ever really in a relationship completely on their own. There's always some level of societal influence—whether from parents, friends, or just public perception.

So in the show, there's me, the "seeker" (the person looking for love), and the audience. We come together, explore the qualities they're looking for, and try to matchmake them. Then we find out what people will say—and most importantly, if the couple actually like each other.





For me, it's always about the experience. Every event, every red carpet, every cultural moment brings something new. I've gotten to speak to celebrities and people I grew up watching—and that never gets old.

Escape Mag: Tell us about Hawa Magaji's strongest qualities.

Hawa: Thank you! There's quite a lot, but I'll start with this: I talk too much. God, I talk so much.

But honestly, I think that's one of the qualities that makes it easier for me to be a host and presenter. Talking is really my forte. Another thing I'd say is confidence. You can't stand in front of thousands of people and not be confident.

Confidence makes the job easier because even when you're not saying something that makes perfect sense, if you say it with confidence... You get away with it! (Laughs) I'm joking—but seriously, confidence is one of my strong suits. I'm a very confident person.

Sometimes I say I'm shy, but I'm really not. So yeah, I'd say I talk a lot—and I'm confident. Those are my two strongest qualities.

I'm a talkative. Yeah. Okay.





For me personally, it was the first TV show I ever hosted, so the pressure was real. But I learned that societal pressure will always be there. At the end of the day, if two people truly want to be together, they'll make it work.

We had couples that, on paper, didn't seem like a match—but they still ended up together because they chose each other. That's what the show taught me: love is about two people waking up and deciding to try. That's all that matters.

EscapeMag: Can you share something from behind the scenes?

Hawa: Okay—one thing from behind the scenes of *What Will People Say...* Like I mentioned, it was my first ever hosting gig, so there was a lot of pressure. You know that feeling when you've wanted something your whole life, and then suddenly it's handed to you—and now you're unsure what to do with it or how people will perceive you?

Yeah, that was me. But I pulled through.

EscapeMag: Love it. Let's get into your personal life now. What would you say is your most memorable moment?

Hawa: Honestly, I don't think I can pick just one moment.

For me, it's always about the experience. Every event, every red carpet, and every cultural moment brings something new. I've gotten to speak to celebrities and people I grew up watching—and that never gets old. So yeah, the experiences are always memorable for me.

EscapeMag: What's your self-care ritual?

Hawa: First of all, you are your biggest fan. One thing I do every single morning is look in the mirror and say affirmations to myself.

"I am beautiful. I am kind. I am the most confident. Everything is working out in my favor."

I'm someone you can't easily sell anything to because I know exactly who I am, and I'm confident in that. Affirmations are part of my self-care, and I think everyone should try it—it's really working for me.

Another thing that keeps me grounded is remembering where I'm from. I'm a Northern girl from a conservative and grounded background. No matter how loud Lagos gets or how wild the industry is, I remind myself of who I am and where I come from. That helps me stay focused.



EscapeMag: If you could ask anyone a question, dead or alive, who would it be?

Hawa: Michael Jackson! I'd ask him: "How did it feel to come out during that Super Bowl performance, stand for that long without saying a word, and have people fainting and crying just from your presence? How did it feel to have that much power?" That's what I'd want to know.

EscapeMag: If your life were a movie, what would it be called? And who would play the lead?

Hawa: My life? Oh, it's definitely Super Story.

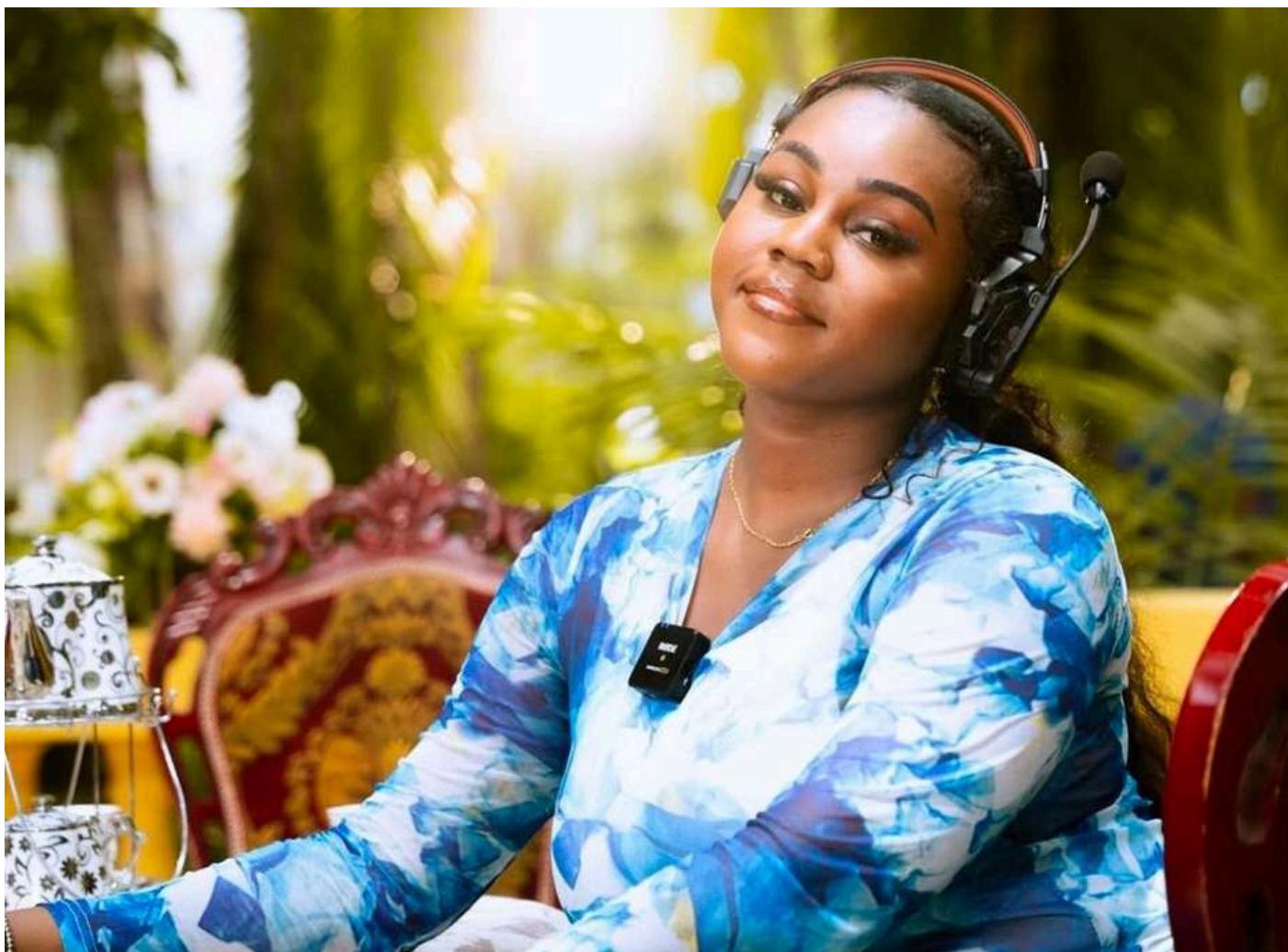
My life is literally a movie—it's dramatic, full of twists, and full of growth. So yeah, it would be a new season of Super Story just for me. And I'd give the lead role to my friend Rhea. She's in the media too, and she's been front and center for every major moment in my life. She knows all the Super Stories, so she'd be perfect for the role.

Director Pink

Building a New Generation of Women Filmmakers

BY SAM





So many young creatives are passionate but don't know how to break into the industry. Pinkline Academy is creating that bridge—giving them the tools, mentorship, and platform to rise.

EscapeMag: Your work isn't just about filmmaking; it's about shaping culture. What drives your vision, and what stories are you most passionate about telling?

Director Pink: What drives my vision is truth—raw, unfiltered truth that reflects the beauty, chaos, and complexity of being African, being a woman, being human. I'm passionate about stories that challenge norms, celebrate identity, and push the culture forward—especially stories that center on women, youth, and underrepresented voices. I want to leave behind a legacy that not only entertains but also empowers.

EscapeMag: The film industry has historically sidelined women, yet you've built a thriving brand. What challenges have you faced as a female director, and how have you turned them into strengths?

Director Pink: Oh, I've heard it all—"You don't look like a director," "Can you handle this scale?" But I turned those doubts into fuel.

Every 'no' became a reason to prove myself, and every challenge sharpened my voice. Being a woman in this space means I bring a perspective that's been missing for too long. It's not a limitation—it's my superpower.

EscapeMag: Pinkline Films is becoming a powerhouse. What's the core philosophy behind your work, and how do you see it evolving over the coming years?

Director Pink: Our philosophy is simple: Intentional storytelling with cultural impact. We're not just shooting videos; we're building worlds, influencing perception, and preserving history. In the coming years, I see Pinkline evolving into a global creative house—expanding into series, film, and international co-productions—while still keeping that bold African heartbeat in everything we do.

EscapeMag: Through Pinkline Academy, you're nurturing future filmmakers. What gaps in the industry are you hoping to fill, and what's one piece of advice you give to every aspiring director?

Director Pink: There's a huge gap in access and practical knowledge. So many young creatives are passionate but don't know how to break into the industry. Pinkline Academy is creating that bridge—giving them the tools, mentorship, and platform to rise. My advice? Master your craft, stay curious, and trust your gut. Your perspective is your power.

EscapeMag: You're known for bold, cinematic storytelling. What's one unconventional technique or approach you swear by when bringing a vision to life?

Director Pink: I always design from emotion first. Before blocking a scene or picking a lens, I ask: What should the audience feel here? Then I reverse-engineer the technical around that. Also, I love mixing hyperreal moments with magical realism—creating that blur between dream and reality. It keeps the audience locked in.

EscapeMag: If your filmmaking style were a music genre, what would it be and why?

Director Pink: Afrobeat fused with cinematic soul. It's layered, rhythmic, rebellious—deeply rooted in culture but also forward-thinking and global. That's exactly how I tell stories—anchored in identity but unafraid to break the rules.



Director Pink

M.I.A

Heritage and Modernity

BY SAM



EscapeMag: Your journey from online TV to radio and live stage shows has been remarkable. How did your early experiences in Ibadan and Awka shape the vibrant “Action Queen” persona you’re known for today?

M.I.A: Growing up in Ibadan and Awka gave me a deep appreciation for storytelling and raw, unfiltered energy. Whether it was the lively streets of Ibadan or the rich cultural pulse of Awka, I was always surrounded by people who knew how to bring life to every moment. That shaped my ability to command a stage, read a crowd, and engage people effortlessly. I learned that presence isn’t just about being loud, it’s about feeling the moment and making everyone feel it with you.

EscapeMag: You have a unique ability to connect with your audience as if you’re catching up with an old friend. What do you think is the secret behind your magnetic presentation style?

M.I.A: Authenticity. I don’t put on a show, I am the show. When I step on stage or go live on air, I speak to my audience the way I’d speak to my people. There’s no forced energy, no script, just me, vibing, feeding off their energy, and giving it right back. I think people connect with that because they can tell I’m having fun, and that makes them have fun too.

EscapeMag: Working with world-class brands like Coke Studio, Spotify, and Guinness must bring exciting challenges. How have these collaborations influenced your creative direction?

M.I.A: It’s about more than just hype, it’s about creating experiences that stay with people. Every collaboration pushes me to evolve. Working with these brands has shown me how to balance raw energy with strategic storytelling. Whether it’s curating a moment on stage, hosting a show, or leading a campaign, I’ve learned how to merge spontaneity with precision, making sure every performance, every word, and every vibe hits just right.

EscapeMag: Community engagement is clearly a passion of yours. How does giving back shape both your personal life and your work in the media?

M.I.A: For me, the media isn’t just about being seen, it’s about impact. I know what it’s like to hustle and build from the ground up, so I’m always looking for ways to uplift others, whether it’s mentoring young creatives, supporting local talent, or using my platform to amplify important voices. Giving back fuels my passion because I see firsthand how the media can transform lives, and that keeps me going.



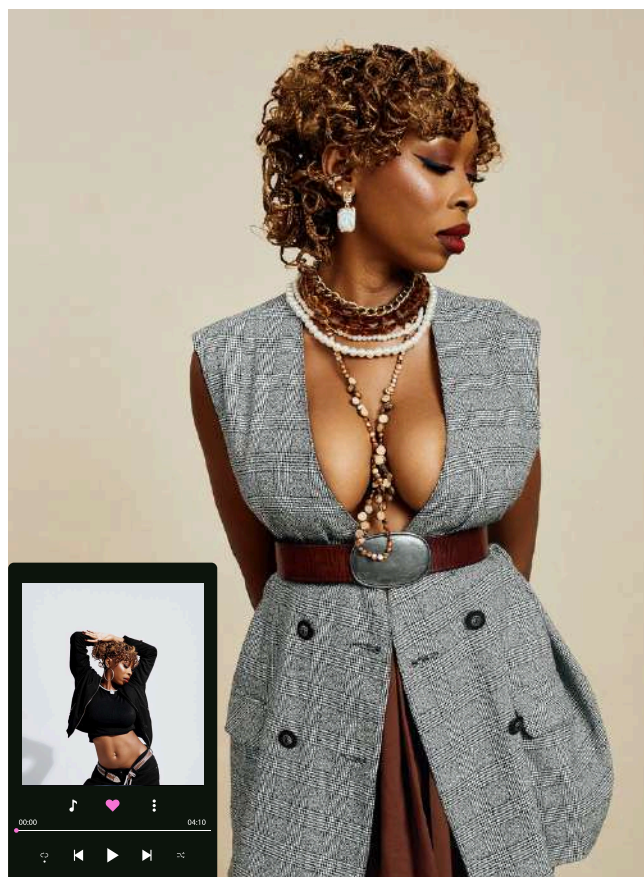


EscapeMag: With interests spanning new music, literature, calligraphy, and writing fantasies, how do these creative pursuits feed into the content you share with your audience?

M.I.A: Regardless of what we do or how we live our lives, we are what we consume, either in textual literature or in videos, even down to the people we let into our circle in everyday life. I am able to filter what I want to consume and find a balance between that, and what I feed to my audience. From the street lingua to the professional words, to the inside jokes in the Action Clan, everything I share is specially curated for every audience I 'minister' to have an experience they will never forget.

EscapeMag: If you had to create a soundtrack for your life titled "Never Missing in Action," what would the title of the opening track be, and why?

M.I.A: Hmm, Definitely "No Brakes." Because from day one, it's been full speed ahead! No slowing down, no hesitations, just pure momentum, taking on every stage, every mic, and every challenge like it was made for me.





Nina Brianna

Championing Creative Safety and Structure

BY LAOYE O

As one of the music industry's sharpest minds and fiercest advocates, Nina Brianna is redefining what it means to manage talent with both heart and precision. In this conversation, she opens up about her journey from law to music, her passion for protecting artists, and the quiet power of building safer creative spaces.

Escapemag: You've navigated law, entertainment, and corporate governance seamlessly. What drew you to music and business law, and how has your legal background shaped your approach to artist management?

Nina: I've never seen myself as a traditional artist manager—instead, I serve as an intermediary and advocate. My legal training taught me to analyze, listen, and consider every angle, which helps me build frameworks and policies that protect artists and create safe, empowering workspaces. In essence, I view an artist's career as both a creative expression and a business that needs strategy.

Escapemag: As Head of Operations at Stargaze Management, what's one key principle every artist should understand about the business side of their career?

Nina: It's not just about the music—money rarely comes solely from your songs, especially early on. Artists need to build a brand and a business beyond their art. Think of it like a restaurant: great food is essential, but the ambiance, side dishes, and overall experience are what really make it a success.

Escapemag: Your work at BXTRA Global focuses on strategic partnerships and cross-border collaborations. What is the biggest challenge African artists face in expanding internationally, and how can they overcome it?

Nina: One major challenge is the lack of robust systems and education on our home turf. Many artists don't understand the full scope of global opportunities or the risks involved because there aren't enough policies or training programs in place. Empowering ourselves with better education, frameworks, and accountability is key to protecting and advancing our careers on the international stage.

Escapemag: You've been a strong advocate for mental health and gender equality through your work with UNITE 2030. How do you think the entertainment industry can better support artists' mental well-being in high-pressure environments?

Nina: The industry has long been under a patriarchal model, and while there are conversations online, we need structured support systems—formal forums, training, and access to professionals like counselors and psychologists. Mental health shouldn't be treated as a side note; it deserves clear policies and safe spaces so that artists and executives alike can thrive without burnout or isolation.

Escapemag: AI and technology are rapidly changing the entertainment landscape. What's the most exciting—or concerning—development at the intersection of tech and the music business today?





Nina: AI is a double-edged sword. On one hand, it's revolutionized how I organize my work and strategize for the future by breaking down complex tasks efficiently. On the other hand, relying on AI for things like drafting legal contracts is risky—our legal frameworks change too quickly for generic templates to stay valid. It's a powerful tool that must be used wisely and never as a substitute for professional expertise.

Escapemag: If you had to explain the complexities of the music business using only emojis, which ones would you choose and why?

Nina: I'd pick the storm emoji to capture the rapid, unpredictable changes, the mind-blown emoji for the sheer surprise of the industry, and the sick emoji because the pressures can really take a toll on you. Finally, the praising hands emoji—because amidst all the challenges, there's an incredible community of creative, supportive people pushing the industry forward.

Nancy Egbo

BY SAM



From crafting digital moments to shaping Gen-Z narratives, Nancy Egbo is one of the sharpest voices behind Nigeria's creative scene. In this refreshingly real convo, she opens up about balancing creativity with chaos, the beauty of unserious storytelling, and why "Sapa and Struggles" might just be the title of her life's next big chapter.

Escape Mag: You wear many hats—content producer, writer, social media strategist. How do you stay grounded while juggling all these creative roles?

Nancy Egbo: TBH, I just try to stay rooted in the why behind everything I do. I like telling great stories and building cool things with cool people. So whether I'm editing or making videos/content, curating a playlist, or handling a social media campaign, I treat it all as different ways of expressing creativity. Having a solid circle in form of friends around me (I keep a number of creatives as friends lmao) also helps, it reminds me that I'm not alone in the chaos

Escape Mag: You've worked on a Gen-Z centric show with WTS and TRACE. What do you think defines Gen-Z storytelling, and how do you tap into that energy authentically?

Nancy Egbo: Gen Z storytelling is loud, real, a little unserious but very intentional (just like me lmao). We love aesthetics, but we also care about meaning. To tap into that, I stay online (maybe too much), pay attention to how we talk, what makes us laugh, what gets us hooked and what we actually care about. Then I just try to reflect that energy back without forcing it or sounding too "salesy".

Escape Mag: From event coverage to music reviews and now working on a documentary—what kind of stories are you most excited to tell on screen?

Nancy Egbo: I get super excited about anything music, fashion or lifestyle related, especially sharing sounds I've discovered or artists I feel more people should know. I love putting people on, whether it's through a playlist, a quick review, or vlogs that capture the vibe of a scene. I'm also really into pop culture moments and how they reflect where we are as a generation. So the kind of stories I love telling are the ones that make people say, "Oh wow, I didn't even realize this was happening," or "Yeahhh, this feels like us."

Escape Mag: WeTalkSound has grown into a solid creative community. How has being part of that ecosystem shaped your career and personal creativity?

Nancy Egbo: WTS has been the perfect playground. It's where I got to try a whole bunch of new things without overthinking—producing music content, running with random ideas, working with people who get it and are always down to help you figure stuff out. It helped me grow into my own style and figure out what I actually enjoy doing. Plus, being around other good creatives constantly pushes me to do more and do better.



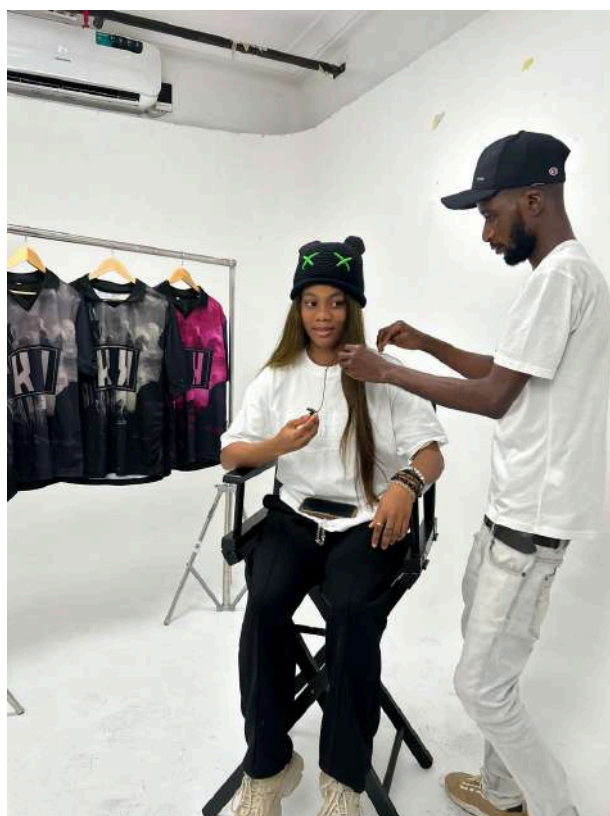


Escape Mag: You're constantly online creating and sharing. How do you stay inspired without burning out in the fast-paced world of digital content?

Nancy Egbo: Omoooo! I take breaks oh. And I try to stay inspired by just, living. Watching stuff I like, listening to random playlists, daydreaming, scrolling through Twitter, hanging out with my friends, people-watching, anything that feels refreshing walahi. I don't force creativity; if it's not flowing, I just rest or go out to touch grass. Burnout doesn't make good content anyway.

Escape Mag: If you could turn your life right now into a 3-episode mini-series, what would each episode be titled?

Nancy Egbo: Hmmmm, haven't thought about names although I've actually decided to start documenting my life on YouTube for posterity sake. I'm sha sure one of the episodes would be titled Sapa and Struggles, dk what the other phases would be named lmao.





Sandra Ike

Art in Motion: Blending Creativity, Culture and Connection

BY LAOYE O

Meet a young creator who mixes art, storytelling, and strategy to touch hearts around the world. With a background in fine art from Yaba College of Technology and mass communication from the National Open University, she brings a fresh take to her work. "My background in fine art gave me a deep understanding of artistic techniques, while mass communication sharpened my ability to tell compelling stories through exhibitions," she says. This mix helps her connect artists and people in a way that's real and powerful.



Early on, she worked as a studio assistant for the famous artist Arinze Stanley. There, she picked up key lessons that still guide her today. “Arinze’s commitment to precision, storytelling, and consistency showed me that excellence is a deliberate practice,” she recalls. That focus on discipline and detail shines through in everything she does, from curating shows to designing sets.

At Alexis Galleries, she put together exhibitions like *Waiting for Tomorrow* and *Body of Christ*. These weren’t just displays, they were stories that hit home for all kinds of people. “People connect with exhibitions when they see reflections of their experiences, emotions, or aspirations,” she explains. By keeping things authentic and relatable, she makes art feel close and personal.

Her talents don’t stop at galleries. She’s also a pro at set design, blending beauty and meaning. One standout project was working with Ken Nwadiogbu on a collaboration with GANT and Netflix’s *Top Boy*. “My expertise in project management allowed me to translate his artistic vision into a compelling narrative,” she shares. She made sure every piece fit the story, turning ideas into something you could see and feel.

Now, as Gallery Manager at AMG Projects, she’s all about lifting up African art. “I create opportunities for artists to engage with international audiences by positioning their work in the right contexts—whether through curated exhibitions, art fairs, or strategic partnerships,” she says. She’s building bridges so emerging artists can shine on a global stage.

If she could dream up one big exhibition, it’d be about time. “Time is universal yet deeply personal, and it would be fascinating to see how different artists explore it through their mediums,” she muses. It’s a perfect example of how she loves digging into ideas that matter to everyone.

Through her amazing career, she keeps telling stories, breaking barriers, and making art something we can all enjoy and understand.



It's Admission Season!



**Lead City
University
Ibadan**



Admission is open for the **2024/2025 Academic Session**

Who Are We?

Lead City University, founded in 2005, is the first private university in the city of Ibadan, Oyo State. Our vision is to be a centre of excellence, where academic rigour, entrepreneurial skills, and vibrant student life converge to provide an all-around, high-quality education.

Why Choose Us?

- ✓ World-class facilities
- ✓ Over 15,000 graduates
- ✓ Vibrant student life
- ✓ Holistic student support
- ✓ 200+ courses available at Undergraduate and Postgraduate levels

CONTACT US

Call: 0815 331 8708

WhatsApp Only: 0815 331 8702

Email: admissions@lcu.edu.ng

REQUIREMENTS

UTME score of at least 140
5 relevant O'Level credits

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

[@leadcityib](#) [@leadcityib](#) [Lead City University Ibadan](#) [Lead City University](#)

Visit Our Website
www.lcu.edu.ng





Liya

Fiercely Unapologetic

BY OKIKI LAOYE
INTERVIEW BY ALAMU AKINKUNMI
PRODUCTION MANAGER: SAM
STUDIO- ONERPM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHALOREY & JOSH
OYEBANJI
MAKE UP BY BEATSBYCOCO
LOOK 1 STYLING BY BLACKSUN

STYLING ASSISTANTS: SOMA & BERRY
FIT TAILORING BY ANNASTRENDNG
LOOK 2 STYLING BY FRAIM'D
VIDEO BY KOMMUNITY FLEX

Normally I'd overthink, "Should I stick to what people know me for?" But this time, I said, "F*** it. I'm doing this."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHALOREY | STYLED BY BLACKSUN

EscapeMag: Let's take it back a bit. What's the most unexpected lesson you've learned on your journey?

Liya: That it's okay to be stubborn. Seriously. It's okay to know what you want and stand firm on it—even if it doesn't make sense to other people. Eventually, they catch up.

EscapeMag: You've just dropped your new EP, *Don't Hold Me Back*—congrats! You started the project in Kenya. What was your favorite moment during the process?

Liya: Thank you! My favorite moment was being on set with Olamide Baddo for one of the songs. The shoot was wild—fun, crazy, hectic—but totally worth it. We had a blast.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOSH OYEBANJI
STYLED BY FRAIM'D



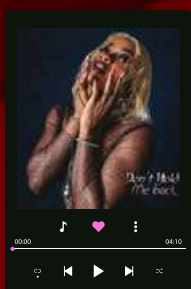
EscapeMag: How has the motto of the EP influenced your everyday life and creative process?

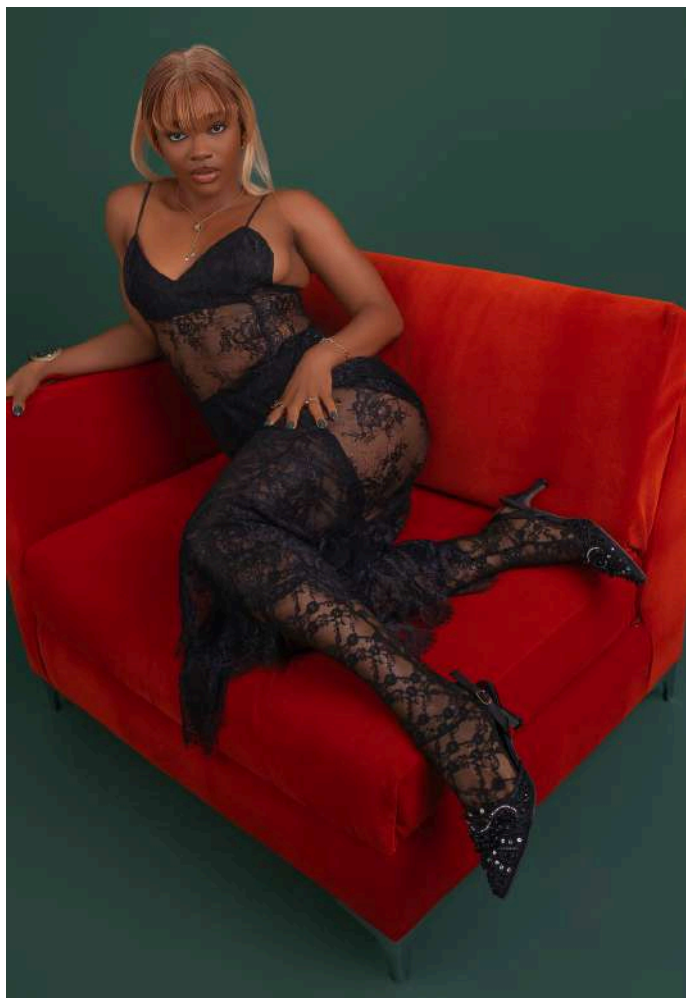
Liya: It's all in the title—Don't Hold Me Back. I let myself play with sound on this project. I pushed boundaries, tried things I'd usually be too scared to do. Normally, I'd overthink—"Should I stick to what people know me for?" But this time, I said, "F*** it. I'm doing this."

It's okay to know what you want and stand firm on it, even if it doesn't make sense to other people. Eventually, they catch up.



And guess what? People are catching on. The reception has been incredible.





EscapeMag: Love that energy. If we had to turn you into a sound and color, what would it be?

Liya: It would definitely be red. Or ginger red, if that's a thing. If you've been listening to my recent stuff, you'd hear the fierceness. It's sexy, bold, a little dangerous. Red is powerful. It can burn, it can seduce, and it always pops. Plus, I look amazing in red.

EscapeMag: You've got the vibe. Now, when you're not making music, how do you unwind?

Liya: Gym time or badminton. Especially badminton—it's my escape. When I'm playing, I'm not thinking too much. I'm just focused, in the moment, swinging left and right. It's fun, it's light, and it clears my head.

EscapeMag: Is that part of your pre-recording ritual too?

Liya: Yep, pretty much the same. It gets me in the zone.

EscapeMag: What are you most excited about as your career keeps rising?

Liya: I'm excited to see myself on huge platforms—home and abroad. Headlining shows. That's always been a dream. I want to perform like my life depends on it, connect with people, spread the gospel of my music.

EscapeMag: And finally, what's one fun fact about you your fans might not know?

Liya: I'm really good at spelling words backward. Don't ask why—I just do it for fun. Like my EP title: Don't Hold Me Back is K-C-A-B-E-M-D-L-O-H-T-N-O-D. Yeah, it's a thing!



AJEBO HUSTLERS

Port Harcourt's Dynamic Duo Redefining Afrobeats



BY OKIKI LAOYE
INTERVIEW BY ALAMU AKINKUNMI
PRODUCTION MANAGER: SAM
STUDIO - ONERPM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOSH OYEBANJI
STYLING & CREATIVE DIRECTION BY
BLACKSUN

STYLING ASSISTANTS: SOMA & BERRY
FIT TAILORING BY HOUSE OF BAZZA
VIDEO BY KOMMUNITY FLEX

EscapeMag: The early stages of your music—how have those beginnings shaped the way you create music today?

Ajebo Hustlers: When we started out, we recorded a lot. Like, every single day. That work ethic never left. It built our foundation, and now it's just part of who we are. Recording all the time—that consistency still drives our sound and growth.

EscapeMag: How has Port Harcourt influenced your storytelling and the sound you're known for today?

Ajebo Hustlers: Port Harcourt is like a goldmine of talent that hasn't been fully heard. Coming from there keeps you grounded. It's a city full of untold stories, and we felt it was our duty to bring those narratives to life through music. Nobody can tell our story better than we can.

EscapeMag: Let's talk about your recent EP. You featured Victory and Timaya on the project, which has been making waves. What was the creative process like, especially on those collaborations?

Ajebo Hustlers: With Victory, we had been going back and forth on different ideas. Eventually, he sent over the idea for Ave Maria. We recorded it, sent it back to him, did some post-production tweaks—it was a solid, collaborative process.

As for Timaya, that was a big one for us. We'd been wanting to work with him for a while. We actually recorded the track in his house, so having him on that record made the whole experience even more exciting.

EscapeMag: If Ajebo Hustlers were a superhero duo, what would your powers be?

Ajebo Hustlers: I'm Superman—because my verses are saving the world! And I'd probably go with teleportation. Being able to appear and disappear would be clutch.

EscapeMag: Thinking about the next generation of Port Harcourt artists—those still underground—what legacy do you hope to leave? What message do you want to send to them?

Ajebo Hustlers: It's very possible. We came from PH, and they can see that. If we got this far through focus and hard work, they can too. Yeah, for real. It's all about consistency and believing in yourself. That's the truth.



...during the EndSARS movement. Seeing our song out there, at the forefront—people using it as a voice, letting it speak for them—it was a powerful moment. One we'll always hold close.



EscapeMag: Give us a little sneak peek—any upcoming projects we should be looking out for?

Ajebo Hustlers: Yeah, we're working on our album.

EscapeMag: Can you share anything more about it?

Ajebo Hustlers: Not yet. But just know—it's dropping later this year. Stay ready.

EscapeMag: Beyond the studio and stage, what's an unexpected habit that helps fuel your creativity?

Ajebo Hustlers: Playing ball, for sure. It clears my head, and that's when inspiration hits.

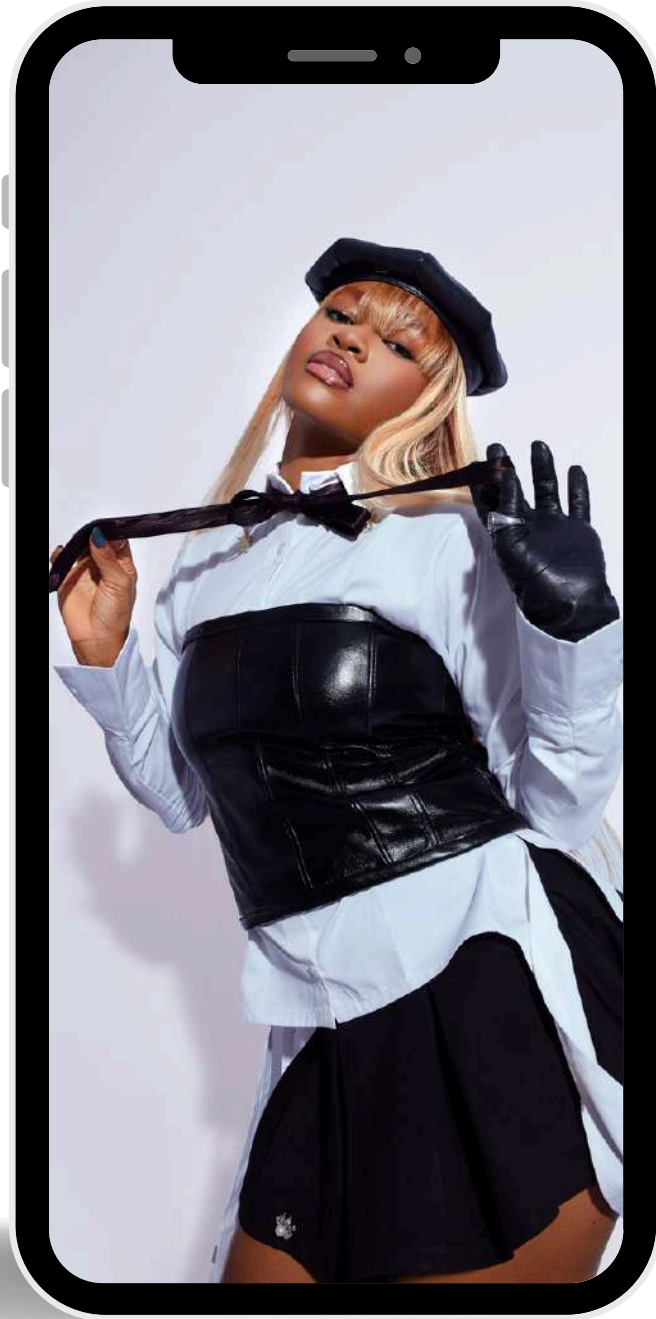
And for me, I watch a lot of movies. It sharpens my thought process, expands my vocabulary—it helps creatively in ways people don't expect.

EscapeMag: You're known for your socially conscious lyrics. Can you share a moment where you really felt the power of music to drive change?

Ajebo Hustlers: Definitely during the EndSARS movement. Seeing our song out there, at the forefront—people using it as a voice, letting it speak for them—it was a powerful moment. One we'll always hold close.



Download Wallpapers



Download original wallpapers of Images created
by the EscapeMag Production Team

[FREE Download Now](#)

BROTHERSLAWEE

The New Language of African Fashion

BY SAM





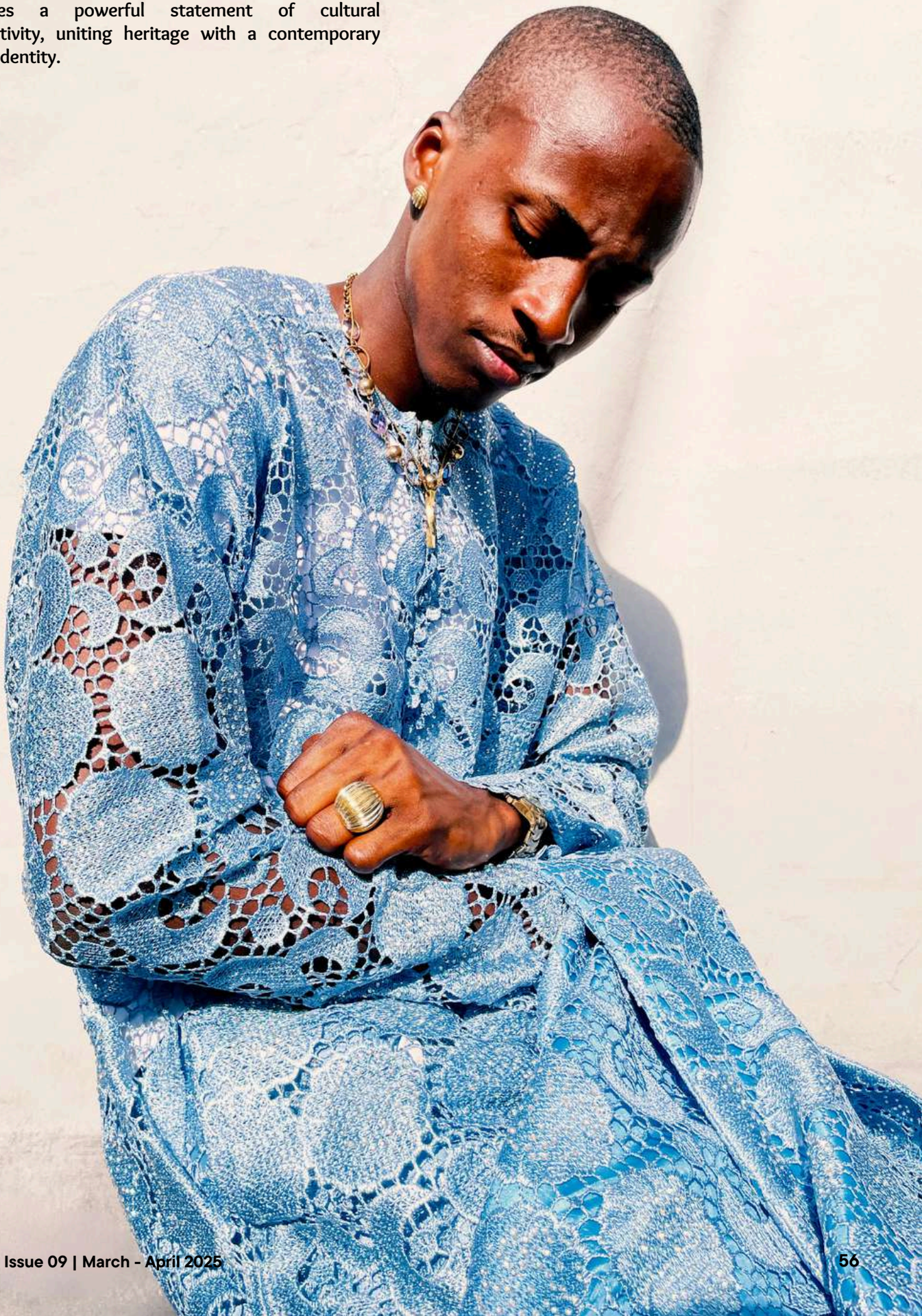
EscapeMag: What inspired you to create **BROTHERSLAWEE**, and how does the brand aim to redefine African heritage through contemporary design?

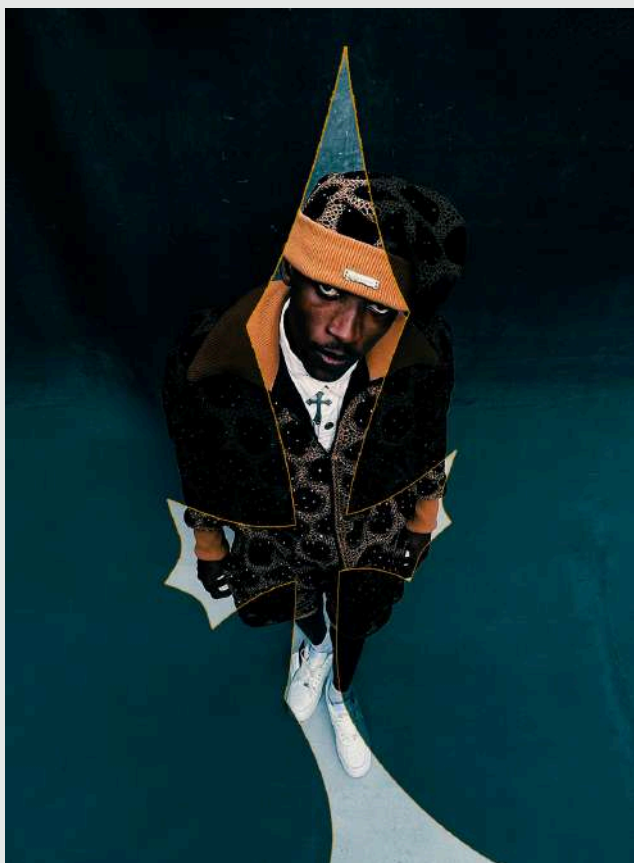
BROTHERSLAWEE: **BROTHERSLAWEE** was crafted from a deep-rooted fascination with Nigerian culture, particularly through an authentic and vibrant textile popularly known as lace, which I grew up around in Lagos.

Our aim is to redefine African heritage by reimagining lace and giving it new life, making it relevant for today's generation through contemporary designs. It's heritage evolving—fashionable and authentic.

EscapeMag: How does your reinterpretation of lace transform its traditional connotations into a symbol of modern cultural connectivity?

Lace in Nigeria has always symbolized exclusivity and tradition—think weddings, special events, and cultural milestones. At BROTHERSLAWEE, we flip that script by reimagining lace as everyday wearable art, merging the traditional symbolism with modern aesthetics. It becomes a powerful statement of cultural connectivity, uniting heritage with a contemporary global identity.





EscapeMag: What does the principle of brotherhood mean for BROTHERSLAWEE, and how does it influence your creative process?

BROTHERSLAWEE: Brotherhood isn't just a concept, it's at the heart of everything we do. It represents community, collaboration, and shared creativity. Our designs aren't made in isolation; they're the result of collective inspiration, diverse voices, and genuine human connection. Brotherhood shapes our process by encouraging openness, inclusivity, and constant evolution.

EscapeMag: Off the wall: If BROTHERSLAWEE were a person, what personality traits would they have and how would they express themselves in daily life?

BROTHERSLAWEE: If BROTHERSLAWEE were a person, it'd be vibrant, confident, curious, unusual, and deeply connected to its roots—but constantly exploring the world. They'd express themselves through unique style choices and value individuality and self-expression. A real-life example would be Mayowa or Sanjo Lawal—incredible arts people in their world, steadily and consistently making groundbreaking moves!

EscapeMag: With your recent international collaboration at AfroTech, what exciting plans do you have for expanding the brand globally?

AfroTech was just the beginning. Moving forward, we're planning more international collaborations and cultural exchanges. We're actively building partnerships that showcase our unique perspective globally—creating interactive in-person spaces where people around the world can deeply engage with our creativity.





EscapeMag: Looking ahead, what long-term impact do you hope BROTHERSLAWEE will have on African fashion and cultural storytelling?

BROTHERSLAWEE: Long-term, we want BROTHERSLAWEE to be a leading voice that reshapes perceptions of African fashion, moving it beyond trends and into powerful storytelling. Our vision is to inspire generations to proudly embrace and reinvent their heritage, encouraging authentic self-expression that's globally resonant yet deeply rooted. We aim to set the standard for how fashion can sustainably honor culture while pushing boundaries.





From the streets of Lagos to the heart of Benin City, Spice Prietzt is turning personal pain into poetic power. In this raw and revealing conversation, the genre-blending artist talks about his emotional truth, his upcoming EP WAN BI, and why he's one of the good guys hurting, but never giving up.

Spice Prietzt

No Panic, Just Purpose

BY SAM



EscapeMag: Your music carries a lot of emotional weight. What's the first feeling you want people to experience when they hear a Spice Prietzt track?

Spice Prietzt: My music is my safe space — I'm very expressive with my lyrics and my sound. I want my listeners to feel a sense of relatability. I want these records to make them feel seen. All my songs are different, but I'm telling a story, I'm painting a picture. I want them to tap in, put themselves in the driver's seat, and feel the emotions — but in a good way.

EscapeMag: From Lagos to Benin City, how has your environment shaped the stories you tell in your music?

Spice Prietzt: Yeah, moving from one busy city to another has shaped my stories in a big way. Growing up in Lagos and schooling in Benin showed me a different side of the world. I live in the advantages and disadvantages I experience, and it's helped me craft my melodies in a more indigenous way.

EscapeMag: You've called yourself "one of the good guys hurting." What does that mean to you on your journey as an artist and as a person?

Spice Prietzt: Yes, I'm "one of the good guys hurting." As a music artist on the rise living in Nigeria, let's just say music isn't for the faint-hearted. And as a person, I've had to make sacrifices to achieve my dreams. Sometimes you have to lose a part of yourself to grow and reach new heights.

EscapeMag: Afro-fusion, soul, hip-hop — you blend genres effortlessly. What inspires this soundscape, and who are some artists that shaped your sound DNA?

Spice Prietzt: Honestly, I wasn't about genres in the beginning, I just wanted to make music. But after releasing my first EP in 2021, I got to learn a lot about myself and my sound. Now I understand there has to be a framework for whatever you're creating. Regardless of the genre, I make sure there's a message I'm preaching, that's the real substance of my music.

I get inspired by the Afrobeat big 3 — Wizkid, Burna Boy, and Davido. It's a big motivation for me, following their music and growth. I also listen to a lot of Post Malone — I just love how he expresses his emotions through his voice.

EscapeMag: You often draw from real-life experiences. Has telling your truth through music ever felt too vulnerable — or is that your superpower?

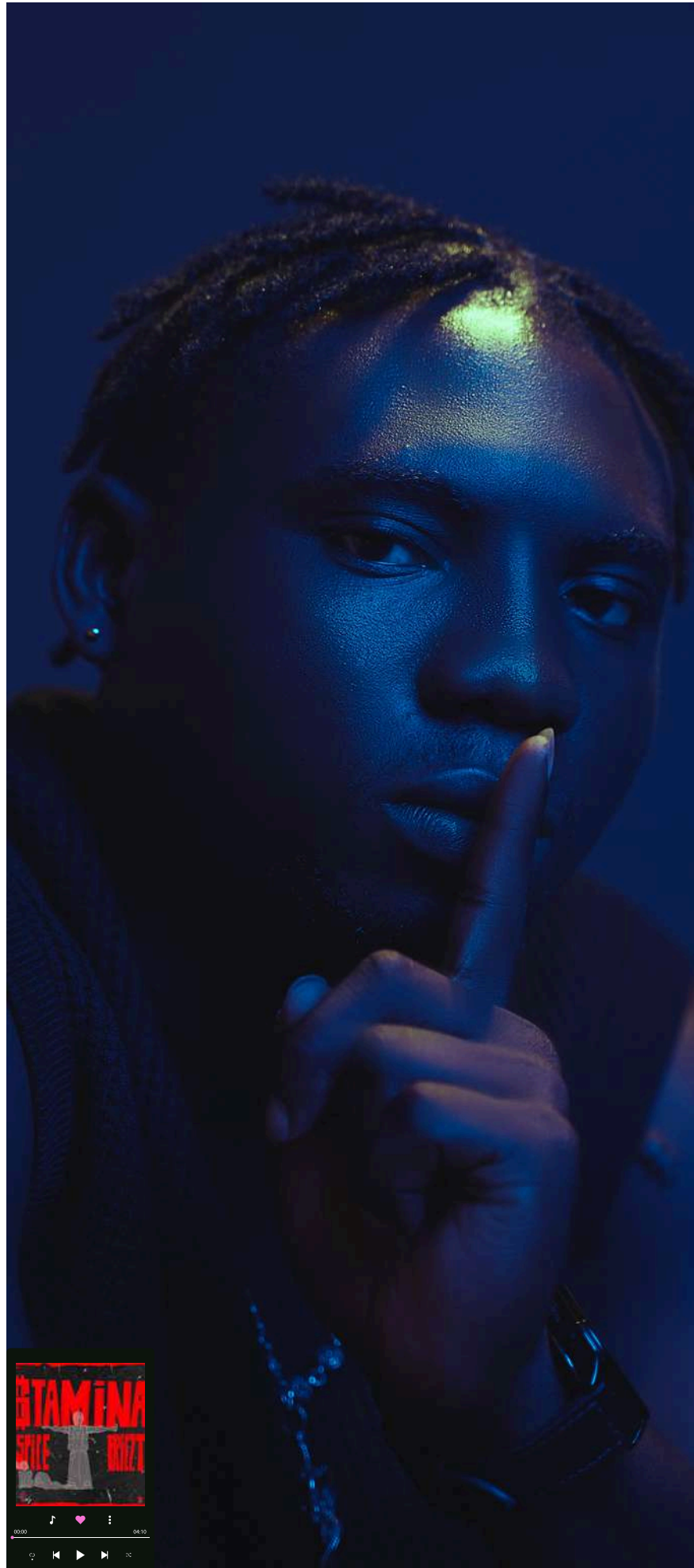
Spice Prietz: Half of the time, I can't really tell if my listeners are paying attention to these stories, but I know someone, somewhere, is listening. Telling my truth in these records is definitely my superpower. It makes me different. It makes my music stand out because these are real, raw experiences — a perspective only I get to see from. That's why I always tell my truth. I'm creating a safe space for myself and anyone out there that connects with me through my music.

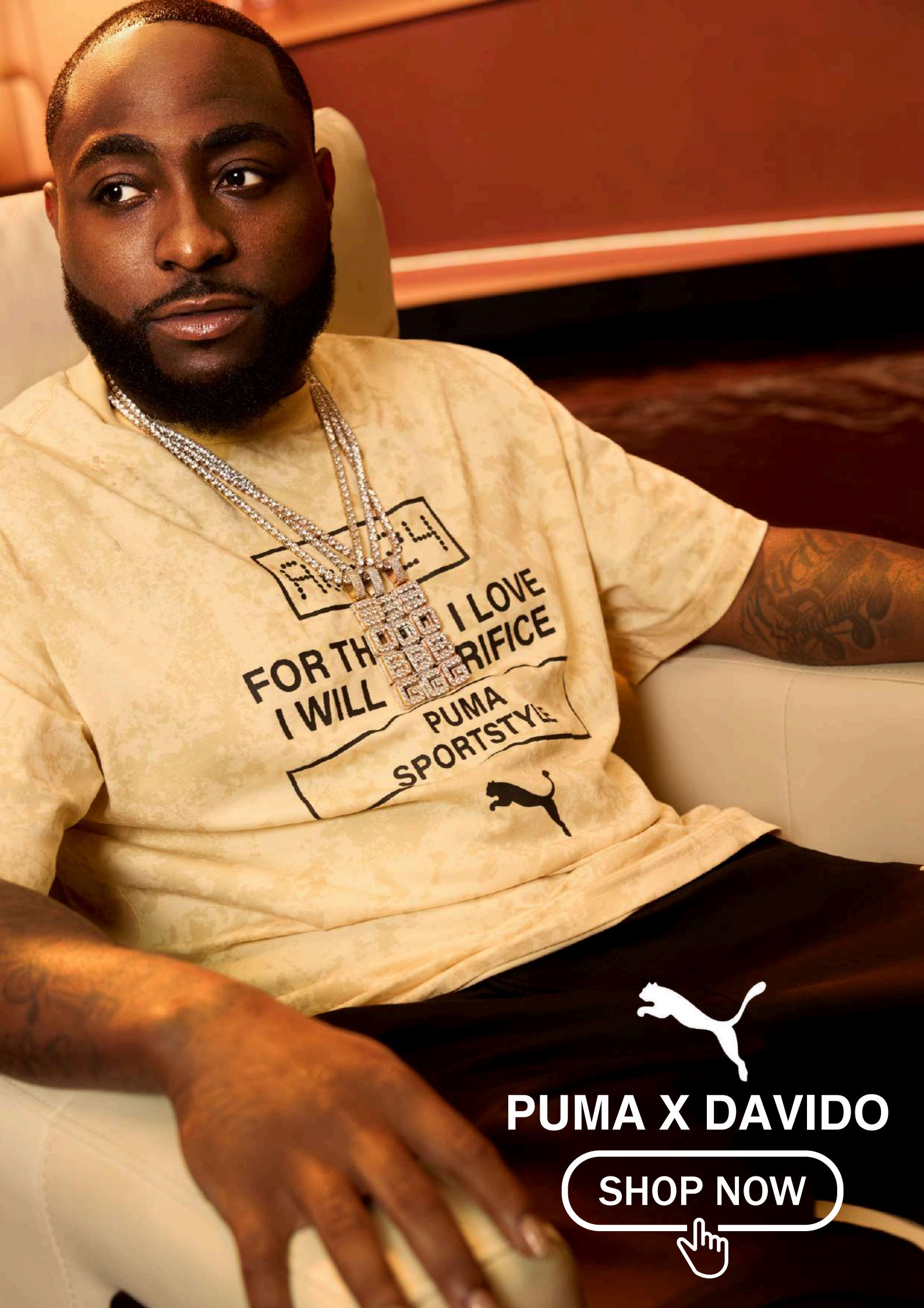
EscapeMag: What should fans expect next from Spice Prietz? More music, more stories, more truth?

Spice Prietz: Yeah, more of my truth and more creative ways to express my emotions through my music. I'm currently working on a new project dropping later this year — an EP I titled WAN BI, which means "I'm still here." For now, I want the world to enjoy my next single No Panic featuring Tar1Q of Chocolate City. That's dropping on the 25th of April. This record is very personal to me because I know I'm preaching the pain of every young Nigerian on the road chasing their dreams.

EscapeMag: Your latest project feels deeply personal yet very relatable. What sparked its creation, and what story were you trying to tell with it?

Spice Prietz: Yeah, like I said, No Panic is a song for every hustling Nigerian. We all know the daily challenges we face just to thrive in this country — the rising cost of living, random police harassment, to mention a few. No Panic was inspired by these raw experiences that have shaped me, tested me, and pushed me to keep moving forward. It's not just another song — it's a reassurance to trust the process while on the grind. I made this record for myself and The Wan Bi Family, as I like to call my listeners and all my day ones.





FOR TH I LOVE
I WILL ILL RIFICE
PUMA
SPORTSTYLE



PUMA X DAVIDO

SHOP NOW





BY TEMITOPE AKAPO

Building A Kommunity Where Creativity Thrives

At Kommunity Flex, we've always believed creativity isn't meant to be a solitary struggle; The magic happens in the community.

When a Director's eye meets a stylist's vision, when a photographer's composition sparks a director's next shot. This is why we don't just talk about supporting creatives; we're building the infrastructure where creativity thrives in community.

Our entire ethos is to reflect the flex with everything we do. From the quality of content to the nature of the moves we make.



Content Week 2025 stood as our boldest experiment yet - what happens when you remove all barriers and simply let creators create? The answer unfolded in real time:

- Directors pulling together impromptu shoot squads
- Photographers trading lenses and lighting hacks
- Every corner of our space buzzing with "what if we tried..." energy

Watch out for the **results** here.

This wasn't just about producing content (though the mountains of incredible work speak for themselves).

It proved something more vital:

"Creativity compounds in the Community"

That "I don't have content" struggle evaporates when you're surrounded by collaborators who elevate your ideas beyond what you could execute alone.

But here's the truth we're holding close: This was just chapter one. The energy in that room ; the way creators instantly spoke each other's creative language confirmed what we've always known. The future isn't in isolated hustling. It's in spaces where your next level work finds its collaborators, its audience, and its next evolution



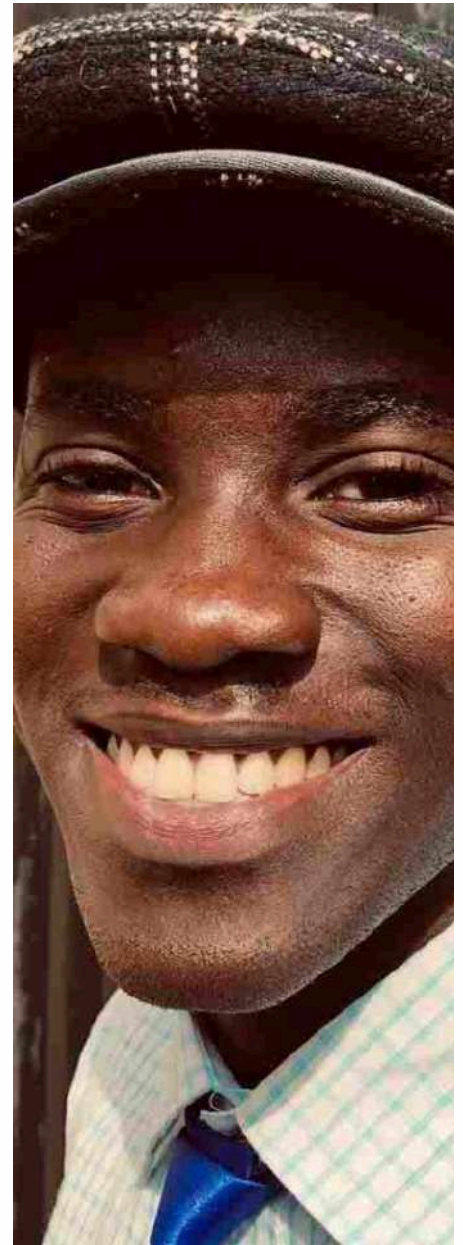
This June 2025, we are storming Lagos again to celebrate creativity; The Flex Lagos. Our event hosts other communities and creates timeless experiences to be associated with the Kommunity Flex. The Flex Lagos edition will feature Community building activities, Games and Live entertainment from your favorite creators and celebrities.

Want to be a part? Click here and turn on post notifications.

Comedy In Naija

Hustle, Hype, and the Hidden Gaps

BY OLUWATONI OTTUN



L-R: LAYI WASABI, SABINUS, GILMORE

In Nigeria, laughter is currency. It's how we cope, how we resist, and increasingly, how we hustle. Over the last decade, the comedy industry has exploded—from dimly lit stand-up stages in Surulere to global skits shot with ring lights and iPhones. And while the big names—Basketmouth, Bovi, AY—continue to dominate the old guard, a new wave of digital comedians is shifting the pulse of Naija humor. They're fresher, rawer, and deeply attuned to the chaotic energy of Gen Z Nigeria. But as the likes of Layi Wasabi and Gilmore gather clout with sharp skits and millions of views, one truth remains stubborn: virality doesn't always equal viability. The hustle is real, but so are the gaps.



L-R: TWYSE, MARAJI, CRAZE CLOWN

Let's start with the high. There's never been a better time to be funny online. Platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram have stripped away the gatekeeping of the stand-up circuit. You don't need a promoter, a stage, or a slot at Freedom Hall, you just need your phone, an idea, and a little chaos. Layi Wasabi, for instance, has turned his absurdist courtroom persona into a full-blown universe, combining theatrical deadpan delivery with satire that lands hard. Gilmore's content leans more into culturally-rooted skits, wielding humour as both mirror and magnifier of everyday Nigerian realities.

They're smart, self-produced, and savvy. They understand algorithms and punchlines. In many ways, they're proof that the future of Nigerian comedy is already here, and it's in 90-second reels. They're smart, self-produced, and savvy. They understand algorithms as well as they understand punchlines. In many ways, they're proof that the future of Nigerian comedy is already here, and it's in 90-second reels.

But for all the laughter, there's a murmur beneath: a frustration that this wave is floating without a proper surfboard. Because behind the hype, there's still no real structure. No union. No formal mentorship pipeline. No sustainable monetization model. Just vibes, and sometimes, vibes don't pay rent.

Consider this: an upcoming comedian can have 500,000 followers but still not get a single brand deal. They can trend on Twitter for a month and still struggle to book a paid gig outside Lagos. The monetization structure is either wildly inconsistent or heavily skewed toward influencers who toe the line of corporate branding. If your comedy is too smart, too political, or just not palatable to the algorithm, you risk invisibility.

Then there's the old-school problem of gatekeeping. The stand-up world in Nigeria is still largely controlled by a tight circle of veteran comedians and show organizers. If you're not in the clique, you're not on the lineup. And this isn't just about stage time, it's about visibility, access to bigger platforms, endorsements, and networking circles that can make or break a career. Many of the new digital stars have bypassed this by going solo online, but they often lack the business infrastructure and industry backing to turn popularity into long-term profit.

It's a shame, because the talent is undeniable. Comedians like Layi Wasabi are not just funny, they're thoughtful. His skits play like short films, weaving in critique about legal absurdities, class, and culture. Gilmore's humour, on the other hand, often reads like ethnography, capturing the slang, gestures, and peculiarities of Nigerian life with frightening precision. These aren't just content creators, they're artists. But artistry, especially in Nigeria, often comes last in the economy of entertainment. And that's part of the problem.

Nigerian comedy is everywhere, online, on stage, across the diaspora, but behind the laughter lies a system with no structure. No royalties. No syndication. No writers' rooms or grants. Just creators hustling, uploading content daily, and hoping to go viral. The "content house" model is emerging, where comedians team up to share audiences, but even that remains informal and often exploitative. Despite the global reach of Nigerian comedy, real investment is scarce, because many still see it as a hustle, not a craft. Some comedians are finding ways to monetize, through brand deals, live shows, and Nollywood roles, but these are exceptions. Many viral stars still struggle to earn a living wage.

What the scene needs isn't more talent—it needs structure. Grants. Workshops. Unions. Platforms that reward brilliance, not just buzz. Without that, this boom could burn out fast. And that's no joke.

BACK FROM THE DEAD: THE RETURN OF THE DIRE WOLF

BY LAOYE O.



They were extinct. Period.

Massive, prehistoric, and built for the kill, dire wolves once roamed North America over 10,000 years ago. They vanished with the Ice Age—until now.

In a move that sounds straight out of science fiction (or a twisted reboot of Jurassic Park), a team of biotech researchers based out of a private facility in Colorado, backed by a shadowy mix of Silicon Valley billionaires and defense contracts, has successfully brought the dire wolf *Canis dirus* back into existence. Yes, really.

WHO brought them back?

A synthetic biology firm named NovaGenetics is at the center of this. Fronted by Dr. Elias Hart, a former DARPA researcher turned rogue innovator, the team used ancient DNA

extracted from dire wolf fossils found in La Brea Tar Pits, paired with gene editing technologies like CRISPR to recreate viable embryos. Surrogacy was handled by a genetically modified grey wolf, engineered to withstand the pregnancy of the larger, prehistoric cousin.

WHAT exactly are we dealing with?

This isn't just a wolf. It's bigger, stronger, and more aggressive. According to reports, the reengineered dire wolves possess enhanced predatory instincts and denser bone structures. While they're technically alive, they're also experiments—products of tweaked genes, artificially constructed immune systems, and a lot of trial-and-error.



WHERE are they now?

The wolves are being kept in a secure biosphere outside Denver, code-named “Pleistocene One.” Supposedly, they’re being monitored for ecological rewilding experiments. There are rumors that one has already died from unknown causes. Others say a few might have been moved offshore—to private islands or military bases.

HOW did they do it?

Splicing, grafting, trialing. The full process is locked behind NDAs, but insiders speak of using wolf, dog, and extinct DNA hybrids. They weren’t cloning—they were rebuilding. Think designer species with a prehistoric blueprint.

Is this playing God?

Yes. Undeniably. The science is incredible—but what happens when the rush to “resurrect” overshadows the need to reflect? It’s one thing to restore balance to a damaged ecosystem, but it’s another to wield evolution like a toy. Dire wolves didn’t go extinct because of humans. Nature made that call. So why do we feel the right to undo it?

And here’s the kicker—today, it’s wolves. Tomorrow, it could be people.

We’ve already seen the line blur. In 2018, Chinese scientist He Jiankui made headlines (and global outrage) for editing the genes of twin girls to make them resistant to HIV. He was condemned and imprisoned, but the Pandora’s box is open. If we’re editing animals for survival, enhancement, or spectacle, how far are we from editing ourselves? Our children?

Resurrecting species may sound noble—save the rhino, bring back the mammoth. But at what cost? Who decides which life is worth restoring? And what happens when profit, not preservation, starts calling the shots?

So, is it a miracle or a mistake?

Maybe both.

Maybe we should’ve asked why before we figured out how.



WEIRD THINGS WOMEN DO FOR **MEN**



Love is blind, they say, and sometimes it can knock all the sense out of us. One moment you're grounded, focused, and unshakeable; the next, you're floating in a haze of endorphins, practically smitten by infatuation and making excuses for all kinds of foolishness.

My married friend has a popular phrase: "Men will stain your white."

Sometimes I'm tempted to tell her 'nah, it was all you, Sis! All you! You were staring at a man covered head-to-toe in red paint, waving a crimson flag, but then, you successfully convinced yourself that red flags were just carnival decorations.

If we're being honest, so many of our worst heartbreaks came by men we shouldn't even be entertaining in the first place. And you should've known the vibe was off when all his texts were "WYD?" at ungodly hours. But nooo, you were over there reminiscing about his tricks and talents in the other room and how you needed a five-hour nap afterwards because, for a moment, your soul almost left your body. So I'm told by a friend, of course.

Love has a way of clouding our logic for real, so no judgment. However, I'd like to list some of the "why, sis?!" things I've seen women from different age groups pull for men. They're probably things we can all laugh about (or cringe over) 'cause some of y'all are still doing this stuff.



1. Turning relationships into projects. Suddenly you are Bob the Builder, trying to fix a man who didn't ask for repairs. Sis, you can't even fix your lashes right, but you're fixing a man?! If a man wants to be better, he'll do it. People will only keep doing what they can get away with. One thing that's sure about that gender is that they know what they want. It's almost like they're wired to know. So if he is consistently being a douche, truth bomb, Sis, he doesn't like you that much.

2. Accepting bare minimum love. There you are, writing paragraphs about your feelings and the things you'd love to work out, and he replies with "K" or "Okay, cool." Or worse, he only calls at 11 PM like it's some "Happy Hour" hotline. So you sacrifice your needed sleep 'cause that's the only time in the day he can check in to ask "what are you wearing?" Okay, maybe I'm overthinking this, but Ma'am, you deserve more than dry toast energy. Find someone who doesn't leave you high and dry, who you don't have to beg to treat you right, who owes you an explanation and can't withstand seeing you in pain.

3. Trying to prove you're worthy of love. It's you going above and beyond, doing wifey things for a guy who won't even claim you publicly. Cooking three-course meals, doing his laundry, and playing his unpaid therapist? Sis, he can't even remember your favorite colour! Jesus didn't die for this!

4. Thinking a baby will fix things. "Maybe if we have a child, he'll step up or commit." This has to be the worst trap to fall into.

A baby is a blessing, don't get me wrong, but it's not a Band-Aid or glue to patch your shaky situationship. If he's already acting up, a child isn't going to magically make him mature. A lot of women have found out the hard way. The silver lining, however, is they've gained a precious little star to love and raise, even if it meant doing it all on their own. You deserve a partner who's all in. Don't gamble with your peace, sis.

5. Staying in a Relationship Out of Fear. The fear of being single, fear of "starting over," fear of what people will say or that classic "I've invested too much in this." Sis, really? Please find yourself again. Fear is the devil's favourite tool to keep you stuck where you don't belong.

Call me whatever, but I think any type of relationship should come in less dramatic packages. Don't stress me. Make my life better. I need to be able to count on you. Of course, we're human—we can have an off day. Life happens. But when the off day becomes an off two days or an off week, that's when we need to sit down and ask ourselves if we even need to be on the same team at all.

If you're carrying abandonment issues, why not go to therapy? Heal. Process your stuff. Take your breaks. That's cool. But when "I need time" turns into days or even weeks, sir, just stay where you are. If you can't communicate or show up, don't come back with flowers and excuses.

We all need to learn how to love people right—including us women. Stop playing mind games or being inconsistent, then expecting loyalty and endless forgiveness. People can only take so much before they break.

Yes, forgiveness matters in any relationship.

But if you're not ready to love with intention, respect, and care—leave them alone.

Real love isn't about how many times someone forgives you, but how few times you make them need to.



WRITTEN BY ADESEWA OLOFINKO
BLACKLADYWRITER.COM
BLACKLADYWRITER@GMAIL.COM

**DR NKEM ANDREA OBI**

MEDICAL DOCTOR, NUTRITIONIST CONSULTANT
FOUNDER OF M&D HEALTH

Weight Loss and Mental Health

Why Both Matter More Than Ever

These days, it feels like just existing in this country is enough to drive anyone to the edge. When my patients come into the clinic complaining of headaches or are found to have elevated blood pressure, the first question I usually ask is, “Have you been under stress lately?” Almost every time, their response is the same: “Who isn’t stressed in this country?”

Unfortunately, mental health is still one of the most overlooked aspects of healthcare, especially in a system that focuses primarily on infectious diseases like malaria. But we cannot continue to ignore the psychological toll daily life takes on people, and how that in turn, affects physical health.

In today’s article, I want to shed light on the link between weight loss and mental health, a conversation we aren’t having enough, particularly in the Black community.

Obesity is connected to several chronic diseases, including diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease. Yet, education around this is still lacking. Instead, we’ve found ourselves in what I like to call the “BBL pandemic”,—where weight gain is often glamorized under the guise of beauty and societal acceptance. This pressure to “look the part” or fit into curated standards of beauty can wreak havoc on a person’s self-esteem and mental well-being.

Here are a few things to consider:

1. **Get Clear on Your "Why":** Are you losing weight to feel better physically, mentally, or both? Let your health not pressure be your motivation.

2. **Seek Balanced Education:** Understand that fitness and health come in many shapes. Weight loss doesn’t automatically equal health, but reducing excess weight can lower your risk for many diseases.

3. **Create a Safe Space for Your Mind:** Whether it’s journaling, therapy (if accessible), praying, meditating, or even taking daily walks, find ways to protect your peace.

4. **Avoid Comparison:** Social media isn’t real life. Do what works for you, not what’s trending.

5. **Build a Sustainable Routine:** Crash diets and quick fixes may give fast results, but they rarely last. Instead, aim for a balanced lifestyle, real food, movement you enjoy, and rest.

In conclusion, mental health and physical health are deeply intertwined. You cannot effectively care for one and ignore the other. Whether you’re on a weight loss journey or simply trying to feel better in your body and mind, remember: your journey is valid, your health matters, and you don’t need to break to be beautiful.



Here's a Free Meal Plan Giveaway for My Amazing Readers! If you're looking to lose weight the healthy way, this estimated 1600-calorie-per-day meal plan is for you.

Please note: This is a general guideline with estimated time and calories. If you're diabetic or have any medical condition, a personalized plan is recommended for your unique needs.

	2 slices of wheat bread + 2 boiled eggs + a cup of green tea.	Greek yogurt + 1 slice apple + 1 slice banana	1 cup of wheat swallow + 1 serving of egusi soup + grilled chicken	4 medium size boiled unripe plantain with 2 servings of vegetable sauce.
	1 bowl of oat + ½ cup of skimmed milk + 2 boiled eggs + half banana	1 handful of groundnuts and 6 sticks of cucumber	1 cup of brown rice + 2 servings vegetable tomatoes sauce + grilled fish	1 serving of potatoes porridge + 2 grilled fish.
	2 slices of wheat bread + peanut butter spread + 1 apple	3 garden eggs and 1 tbsp of peanut butter	1 cup of wheat swallow + 1 ½ serving of egusi soup + grilled chicken	1 cup of brown rice + ½ cup of beans + 1 serving of chicken tomatoes sauce.
	1 Moi Moi + 1 bowl of pap + dried dates + ½ cup of skimmed milk	½ Greek yogurt + 1 tbsp shredded coconut chips + ½ cup grapes + 1 small sliced apple	1 serving of plantain porridge and grilled fish	1 serving of jollof spaghetti + ½ shredded chicken + ½ veggie sauce (carrot, green pepper, cabbage)
	Peanut butter banana smoothie – 1 banana + ½ tbsp peanut butter + 1/3 cup of oat + 3/4 skimmed milk	Air-fryer ½ plantain and handful groundnuts	1 cup of brown rice + 2 servings vegetable tomatoes sauce + grilled fish	1 serving of grilled potatoes wedges + grilled honey BBQ chicken (1 small chicken thigh)
	2 slices of wheat bread + 1 boiled eggs + a cup of green tea.	1 sliced apple	1 cup of wheat swallow + 1 serving of egusi soup + grilled chicken	Air-fryer chicken or grilled chicken) + 1 mashed potatoes + veggie sauce (carrot, green peas, green pepper, cabbage)
	1 Moi Moi + 1 bowl of pap + dried dates + ½ cup of skimmed milk	Greek yogurt + shredded coconut chips + grapes + 1 sliced apple	1 serving of jollof spaghetti + shredded chicken + veggie sauce (carrot, green pepper, cabbage)	1 serving of grilled potatoes wedges + grilled honey BBQ chicken

10 Brain-Boosting Fruits and Vegetables for African Creatives

Learn about the natural ways to boost your creativity and get rid of creative blocks without putting yourself in danger.

WRITTEN BY LUCY NDUBUISI, BIOCHEMIST AND A FRUIT THERAPIST.

Africans are richly blessed, and one of our greatest gifts is creativity. Our talents have placed many African nations on the global map. But behind the scenes, every creative faces silent struggles, self-doubt, burnout, missed deadlines, and mental blocks.

To cope, many turn to excessive caffeine, unaware of the health risks, like anxiety, insomnia, and even heart issues. Some believe they need substances to spark creativity, but this can be harmful in the long run.

As a fruit therapist, my mission is to show creatives how nature can fuel inspiration. Africa is home to nutrient-rich fruits and vegetables that boost brainpower, enhance focus, and support mental clarity.

In this article, I'll share 10 powerful African fruits and vegetables every creative should include in their diet—plus three simple juice and smoothie recipes to get you started. Keep reading!

r **v**



This fruit is also known as the "Tree of Life." Baobab fruit is rich in vitamin C, antioxidants, and fibre. It helps improve blood circulation to the brain, reducing brain fog and increasing mental clarity. It has a tangy flavour that makes it a perfect ingredient for juices and smoothies.



Moringa is a hub of nutrients; no wonder it is considered the brain's best friend. It's rich in nutrients that help cognitive functions, including iron, amino acids, and omega-3 fatty acids, all of which support brain health. It improves concentration and keeps your mind alert. Instead of constantly chewing kola nuts with high caffeine content, eat moringa leaves. If you are going to try it for the first time, start with a small quantity and watch your skin to see if you experience any allergic reactions like rashes. But generally, eating moringa leaves is safe.

H **K**

Pumpkin leaves are high in folate and antioxidants that enhance memory and mental alertness. They also support overall brain function, helping you stay creative for longer periods. As a creative, it's important to add pumpkin leaves to your soup or stew. Your brain needs it. You can also steam it with fresh tomatoes and fish. You can enjoy this as breakfast, lunch, brunch, or dinner.



Tiger nuts (also called Aya, Ofio, or Hausa groundnuts) have got to be one of the most underrated fruits. This fruit can be processed in several ways for easier consumption, just in case you don't want to go through the stress of chewing it. Tigernuts are rich in magnesium, essential for cognitive function and memory. They also provide a slow-release energy source, which will keep you mentally sharp for hours. Who needs caffeine when there's a better natural alternative.

H **K**



This fruit is also known as the "Tree of Life." Baobab fruit is rich in vitamin C, antioxidants, and fibre. It helps improve blood circulation to the brain, reducing brain fog and increasing mental clarity. It has a tangy flavour that makes it a perfect ingredient for juices and smoothies.



H

K



Hibiscus, popularly known as Zobo in Nigeria, is great for brain health. It improves blood flow to the brain, thus enhancing focus and cognitive performance.



Dehydration is one of the biggest killers of creativity. Watermelon is made up of over 90% water and contains citrulline, an amino acid that enhances blood flow to the brain. Consuming this fruit daily will keep you mentally alert.

H

K



The Brain needs sugar. Sugar is the major energy source for your brain cells. But instead of reaching for sugary snacks, opt for dates. They provide a natural source of glucose that fuels brain activity, and help you think faster without crashing.

p
hpp
T

K



This fruit is the ultimate brain protector. Agbalumo, with its tangy taste, is rich in vitamin C and antioxidants, which protect brain cells from damage. It also aids in mental alertness, making it a great snack for when you need to quickly boost your creativity.

r



This fruit has long been used in African traditions to enhance mental alertness and combat fatigue. It contains natural stimulants that help keep your brain sharp, especially during intense creative sessions. So, if you have deadlines to beat, take Bitter kola instead of kola nuts or several cups of coffee.

3 Power Juice & Smoothie Recipes for your Brain

1. Baobab & Tigernut Smoothie

This smoothie will boost your focus and sustain your creative energy.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup soaked tiger nuts
- 1 tablespoon baobab powder
- 1 banana
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 teaspoon honey (optional)
- Ice cubes

Instructions:

1. Blend all ingredients until smooth.
2. Pour into a glass and enjoy!

2. Moringa & Watermelon Juice

This juice will keep you hydrated and focused throughout your project.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups chopped watermelon
- 1 teaspoon moringa powder or a handful of fresh moringa leaves
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 1 teaspoon grated ginger
- 1 cup water

Instructions:

1. Blend all ingredients together until smooth.
2. Strain (optional) and enjoy chilled.

NB: Use a juicer if you have one. It's better because it will keep the nutrients intact.

3. Zobo & Soursop Smoothie

This tangy drink helps reduce stress and keeps your mind sharp.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup dried hibiscus petals (Zobo leaves)
- 1 cup soursop pulp
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 cups water
- 1 tablespoon honey (optional)

Instructions:

1. Boil the hibiscus petals in the 2 cups of water for 10 minutes.
2. Strain and allow the liquid to cool.
3. Blend with soursop pulp and cinnamon.
4. Serve chilled over ice.

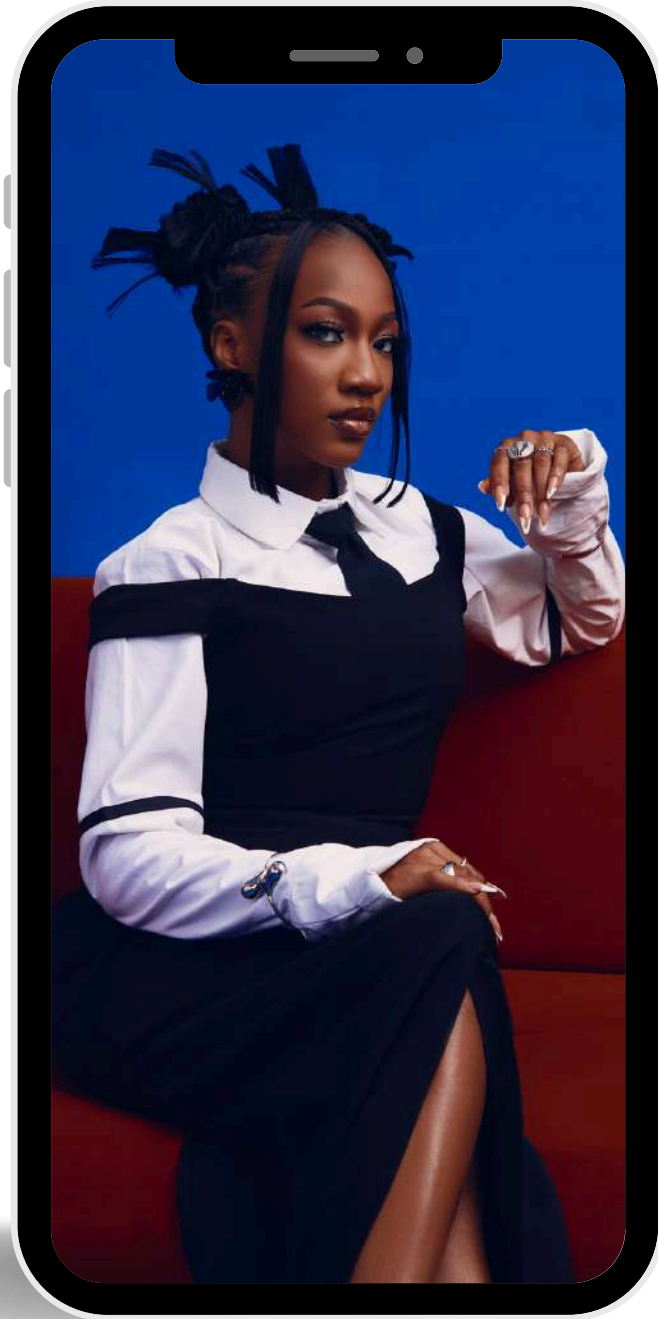
I will conclude by saying that your creativity is sustained when your brain is well-nourished. Instead of relying on caffeine, try incorporating these African fruits and vegetables into your diet to boost mental clarity, focus, and energy naturally.

p p

Lucy Ndubuisi is a Biochemist and certified Fruit Therapist, and founder of Lenawholefoods. She helps people manage chronic health conditions naturally through fruits, vegetables, and 100% natural juices.

Email: lucyndu95@gmail.com
Phone number: 08140295955

Download Wallpapers



Download original wallpapers of Images created
by the EscapeMag Production Team

[FREE Download Now](#)

COLLAB WITH US

EscapeMag is more than a magazine, it's a movement. We're calling on visionaries, makers, and storytellers to join our creative community. Let's turn passion into profit, together.



ESCAPEMAG

WWW.DIGITALESCAPE.AFRICA

[JOIN US](#)