

BlackMen **Blow Me Ten**

RHOA
CLAUDIA
JORDAN

ALL GROWN
UP & FACED WITH
REALITY!

DOUBLE COVER

MASIKA

FAREWELL LHHLA

GET FIT...SHORT CUT
TO 6 PACKS

PRESSURE

THE MUSIC OF ST THOMAS

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COVER 1 OF 2

VOL. 18 #3

BLACK MEN

OCTOBER 2015

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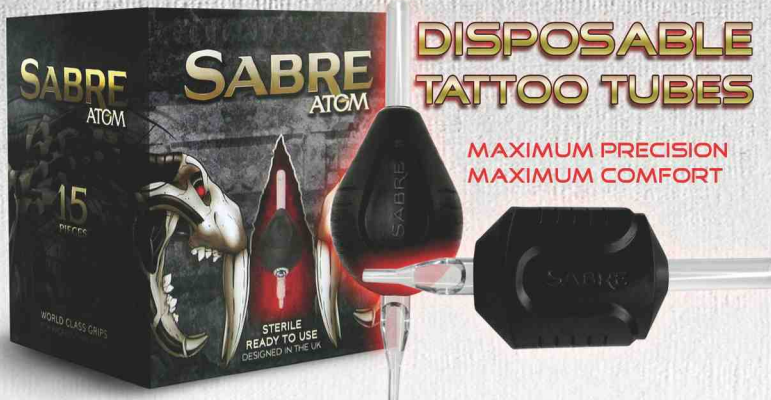
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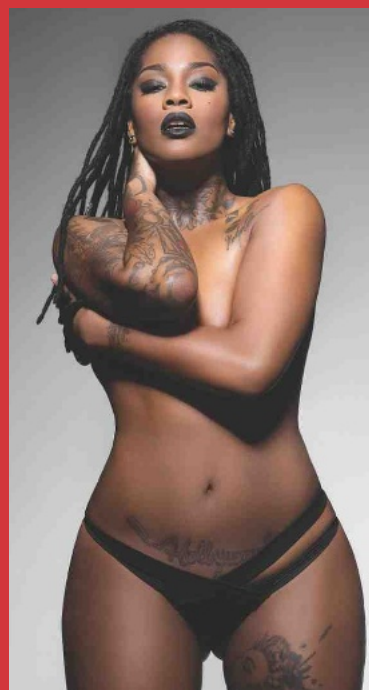
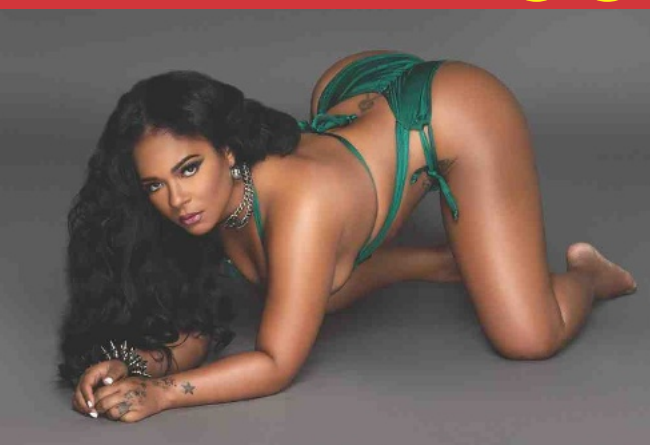
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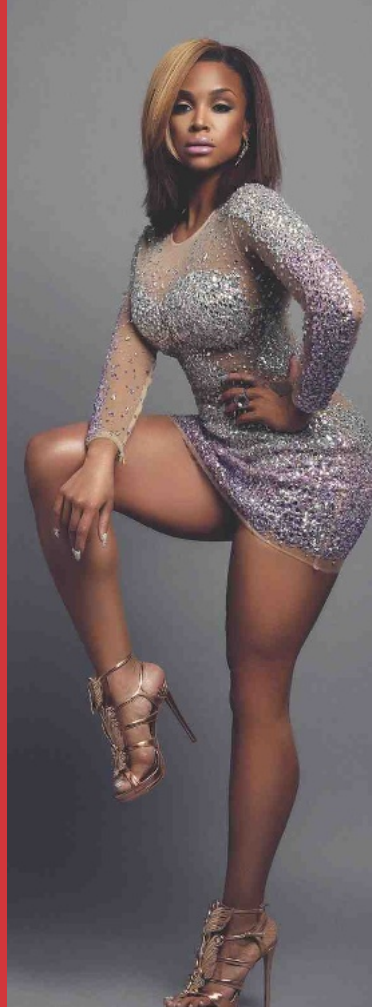
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BlackMen

OCTOBER 2015

6	EDITOR'S NOTE
8	NIKKI RENEE
14	CRYSTAL HUGHES
20	PERSUASIAN
26	HALEY CHRISTIAN
32	LYNN MACK
36	BOI TOI
40	CHARLIE
44	RILEY
48	AIDAN NYCOLE
52	DEBORAH LEE
54	ASHLEY ROSAMILIA
56	GEMINI
58	CLAUDIA JORDAN
	REALITY'S READER



64

PRESSURE

THE VIRGIN ISLANDS' REGGAE AMBASSADOR

67

CARNIVAL J'OUVERT

PRESSURE BRINGS AN ADDED BONUS
TO ST. THOMAS

68

KAYLIA ADAMS

72

AUDEANA RENEE

76

JADE SIMMS

80

SUNNY MONROE

86

TORI SWEET HEART

88

KYESHA MARIE

94

KRYSTAL THE BRAND

98

SHIEK MAHMUD-BEY

FOR THE LOVE OF ACTING

102

MASIKA KALYSHA

THE REALITY OF IT ALL

110

BRANDON CARTER

HOW TO GET A 6 PACK FAST AS F*CK!

On the Covers:
Claudia Jordan - Images by Will Sterling
Masika Kalysha - Image by Aderon Mothersill

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I've been working in the media business for quite some time, and I remember when a talent's career was based on their TV and film credits, their status in advertising branding, how many recording albums they sold and, at times, their entertainment social stature.

I, also, remember when Hip-Hop became a super giant business and engulfed the world—expanding opportunities for the less-advantaged dreamer to claim a piece of the industry pie and succeed. The “Hip Hop” business enabled entrepreneurs to become publishers, fashion designers, photographers, stylists, glamour and hair techs, managers, agents, marketers, publicists, automotive distributors, wine and spirit developers, casting directors, video directors, writers, label owners, sneaker designers, CEOs and most importantly, to us in media, “advertisers.” With the decline in the music business, it affected Hip-Hop, which affected the opportunities spawned by it.

Affected by web and social media, with the ability to resource product and information five times faster and more critically apparent, for *free*, the original forms of media and sales of music and products from Hip-Hop and those that fall under the category suffered. No more music ads for magazines, no more music videos for models, no one wants to be seen in rappers' clothing lines, no more ridiculous budgets for clothing and a glamour makeover (unless you are like Beyoncé or Rihanna—status and half of their perks come free from their status).

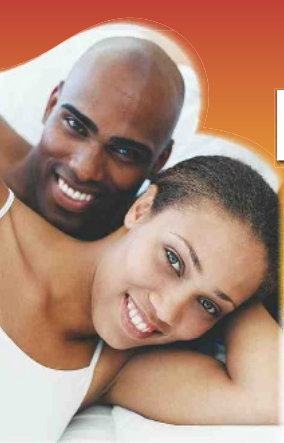
So, what is the source for all of these opportunities now? Models are rushing to reality TV to get their status where the once profitable music video placement has now become defunct. Social media has taken the place of the music industry, and no longer is the budget available to support, thus it's become a self-sufficient hustle, which is still less than half of what was available in days past.

Our two cover personalities derive from two different markets: Claudia Jordan was more on the commercial side of things, whereas Masika had more of the urban support, but are both now on reality TV.

Black Men is happy to be equally successful in print as well as the web. In deciding to marry the two, the synergy allows us all to produce the amazing spread of sexy pictures that you are enjoying now. Share it with a friend. Tweet about it. Post it on Instagram. Let everyone know that you are a part of the *Black Men* magazine legacy.

Thank You For Joining Us,

Marcus Blassingame
Editor-in-Chief



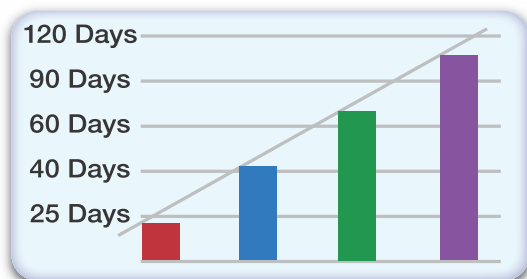
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Photographer: 2020 Photography
Stylist: Marcus Blassingame
Hair & Makeup: Tia Jefferson
IG @iam_muatia

NIKKI RENEÉ

Name: Monique
Nickname: Nikki Renee
Hometown: Dallas, TX
Zodiac: Aries
Bust: 32
Waist: 23
Hip: 38



Web:

Official Web/Fansite: TheNikkiRenee.com

Twitter: @MsNikki_Renee

Of Followers: 4.6k

Instagram: @Nikki.Renee, Urban Glamour:

@MsNikkiRenee Fitness: @Fit.Nik

Of Followers: 35k

Snap Chat: TheNikkiRenee

Tumblr: TheNikkiRenee.tumblr.com

Resume:

Magazine: *Glaze*, *iDymes*, *Show*, *BaddMag* and *TitaniumGirlz* and my own personal magazine, *The Erotic Masquerade*.

TV: Had a little TV experience with the "Bad Girls Club," but not advertised nationally.

Advertisement: Some experience but definitely something I would love for my portfolio to include.

Do you have the proper model materials?

Portfolio? Yes.

Comp Card? Yes.

Head Shot? (Acting) Yes.

Bio/Resume? (Acting) I do have a resume with my modeling, but not one as far as acting yet.

Training? (Acting) Training in acting would be really cool to have under my belt, because I believe I have one hell of a personality! I would be explosive on screen!

How do you dress for an audition?

Depending on what the audition was for, but more then likely I would dress professionally to any audition.

How many on camera go to poses do you have?

I can't count. I just move!

Have you checked out the TSD Pose Workshop (#tsdposeworkshop)?

I haven't! I unfortunately missed the one in Dallas, but I am looking forward to them coming back!

Popular:

Favorite TV Series: "Empire," "Bob's Burgers" and "Family Guy." I watch tons of cartoons [laughs].

Favorite Reality Show: "First 48" type of stuff. I can't get with the ignorance of today's reality shows.

Favorite Gossip Blog: I don't listen to nor read gossip, but I do laugh at Instagram [laughs]!

Favorite food/Restaurant: Italian food. Macaroni Grill has the most authentic spaghetti I've tasted in awhile!

Favorite Drink: Mountain Dew, man! [Laughs.]

Favorite Smart Phone: Galaxy Series. I love Samsung products, and I'm an Android fan!

Favorite Smart Phone App: Candy/Soda Crush and Kayak for my traveling!





NIKKIRENEE





- Swimwear: Bikinis That Create Curves
- Accessories: @ofhopejewelry
- Shoes: @jetaimeshoess
- Belt: Patricia Field
- Swimwear: Bikinis That Create Curves
- Accessories: @ofhopejewelry
- Shoes: @jetaimeshoess
- Shrug: Jaesyn Burke @ Versailles Brooklyn



NIKKI RENEE

A word to your fans and readers:

Thanks for all of these years of support, and I plan on continuing this wonderful journey the Lord has put me on. I hope you guys stick around to watch me grow! Check out my website, TheNikkiRenee.com, for new updates and merchandise. Also, be sure to check out my new book *Erotic Masquerade*. It's for a mature audience only, so...be mature [laughs]!



Photographer: 2020 Photography
Hair: Bennie V Mallory | IG: @skolar_vangawd
Email: skolar85vangawd@gmail.com
MUA: Amanda Carrete | IG: @amandacarrete
Email: muanina@yahoo.com

crystal hughes

Name: Crystal Hughes
Nickname: Crystal The Doll
Hometown: Detroit, Mich.
Zodiac: Leo
Bust: 34-C
Waist: 24
Hip: 42 1/2

A full-page photograph of Crystal Hughes. She is a Black woman with long, wavy brown hair, wearing a black lace-trimmed strapless bodysuit and black lace-trimmed underwear. She is sitting on a transparent plastic chair with a chrome metal frame, leaning back and looking over her shoulder at the camera. She is wearing beige high-heeled sandals with multiple straps. A tattoo is visible on her left ankle. The background is a solid dark brown color.

crystal hughes

Web:

Instagram: @crystal.the.do

Of Followers: 123k

Resume:

Magazine: *Hip Hop Weekly*,
Straight Stuntin and *Pole Blvd*
magazine.

Do you have the proper model materials?

Portfolio? Yes.

Comp Card? Yes.

Head Shot? (Acting) Yes.

Bio/Resume? (Acting) Yes.

Training? (Acting) Self-taught.

How do you dress for an audition?

It depends on what kind of audition it is—my outfit is based on what fits the role.

How many on camera go to poses do you have?

I have four camera go to poses that never fail me.

Have you checked out the TSD Pose Workshop (#tsdposeworkshop)?

Yes, I have it's a great workshop.

Popular:

Favorite TV Series: "Power"

Favorite Reality Show: I don't watch much reality TV, but if I had to choose, I'd say "Love & Hip Hop."

Favorite Gossip Blog: The Shade Room

Favorite food/Restaurant: My fav food is seafood. I don't have a fav restaurant, as odd as that is, so my favorite place to eat is my mom's kitchen.

Favorite Drink: Everybody that knows me knows that I love Patron Margaritas [laughs].

Favorite Smart Phone: iPhone

Favorite Smart Phone App: Instagram

A word to your fans and

readers: Never give up on your goals and dreams! It's mind over matter at all times. The only person that can stop you is you. What we put out there into the world is what we get back; so make sure you treat people how you want to be treated. Regardless of how the world treats you, never change who you are—and put God first at all times.









crystal hughes



Photographer: 2020 Photography

Stylist: Marcus Blassingame

•Swimwear: Versailles Brooklyn, Bikinis that create curves.

•Accessories: IG @ofhopejewelry

•Shoes: IG @jetaimeshoess

persuasion

Name: Elliadria Griffen

Nickname: Sua

Hometown: Dallas, TX

Zodiac: Pisces

Sizes: 3/4

Bust: 34

Waist: 26/27

Hip: 36











Web:

Official Web/Fansite: iampersuasian.com

Twitter: @IamPersuasian

Of Followers: 4458

Instagram: @IamPersuasian

Of Followers: 135k

Snapchat: [iampersuasian00](https://www.snapchat.com/add/iampersuasian00)

Resume:

Magazine: *Black Men: Ink Dolls*
Special and *Straight Stuntin*

Do you have the proper model materials?

Portfolio? My portfolio is in the works.

How do you dress for an audition?

Jeans, white t-shirt, heels and my hair pulled back and out of my face.

Have you checked out the TSD Pose Workshop (#tsdposeworkshop)?

I've seen and heard about it, but I haven't attended one yet.

Popular:

Favorite TV Series: Tyler Perry's "If Loving You Is Wrong" and "The Haves and the Have Nots."

Favorite Reality Show: "Love & Hip Hop: Atlanta"

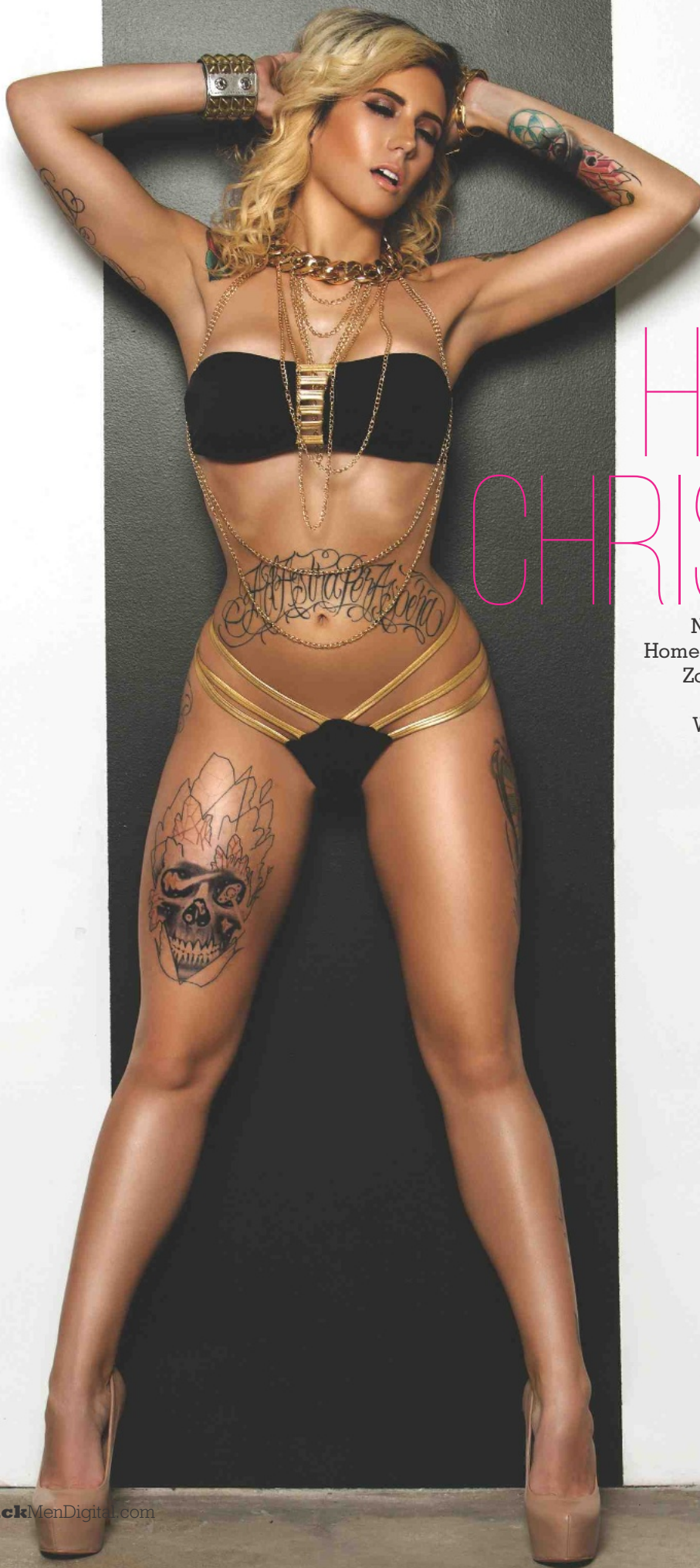
Favorite food/Restaurant: Ruth Chris

Favorite drink: Patron and limejuice

Favorite Smart Phone: iPhone

Favorite Smart Phone App: Instagram and Pandora

A word to your fans and readers: I just want to thank everybody who has supported me and believed in me. I want everyone to wait on it. The best is yet to come from me. Trust me.



Photographer 2020 Photography
Stylist: Marcus Blassingame
Hair & Makeup: Tia Jefferson
IG @iam_muatia

HALEY CHRISTIAN

Name: Haley Christian
Hometown: Dallas, TX
Zodiac: Aquarius
Bust: 34-D
Waist: 26
Hip: 37

Web:

Twitter: @Princesspeach_

Of Followers: 7k

Instagram: @xoHaleyCxo

Of Followers: 5k

KIK: HaleyBaby2992

Resume:

Magazine: *Glaze*

Advertisement: Spencer's
and Forever 21

*Do you have the proper
model materials?*

Portfolio? Yes.

Comp Card? Yes.

Head Shot? (Acting) Yes.

*How do you dress for an
audition?*

Dressy casual.

*How many on camera go
to poses do you have?*

Around four.

*Have you checked out
the TSD Pose Workshop
(#tsdposeworkshop)?*

Yes, and I would love
to attend—it looks very
informative.

Popular:

Favorite TV Series: "Star
Trek" or "Ancient Aliens"

Favorite Reality Show: I
don't have one.

Favorite Gossip Blog:
TMZ

Favorite Food/

Restaurant: Breakfast
food

Favorite Drink: Lemon
water or coffee

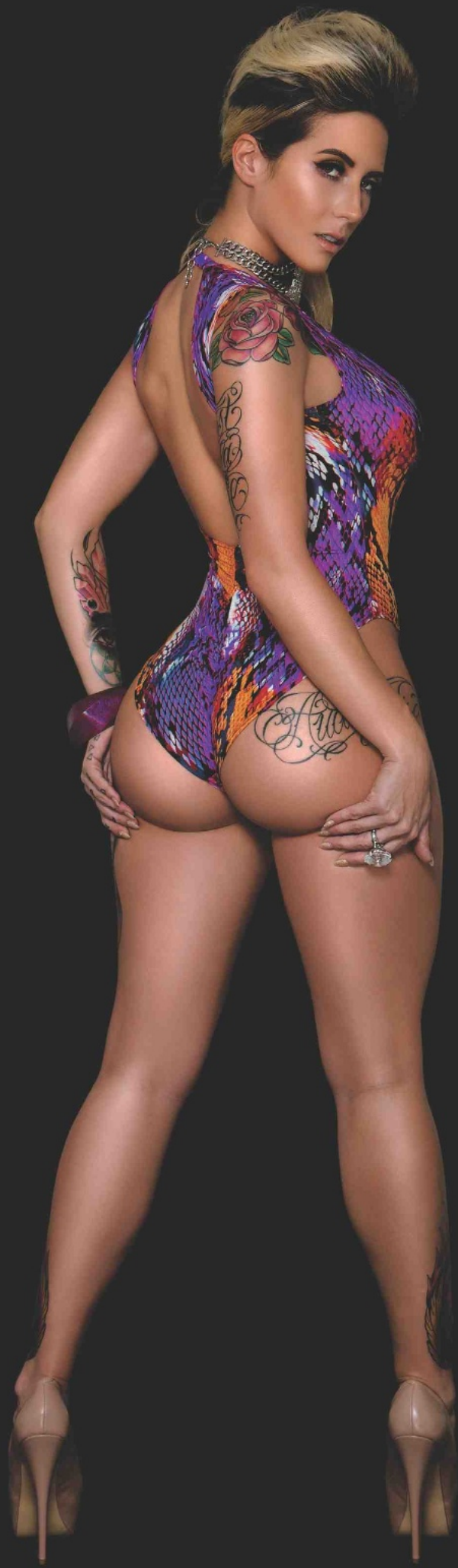
Favorite Smart Phone:
iPhone

Favorite Smart Phone
App: Science Daily

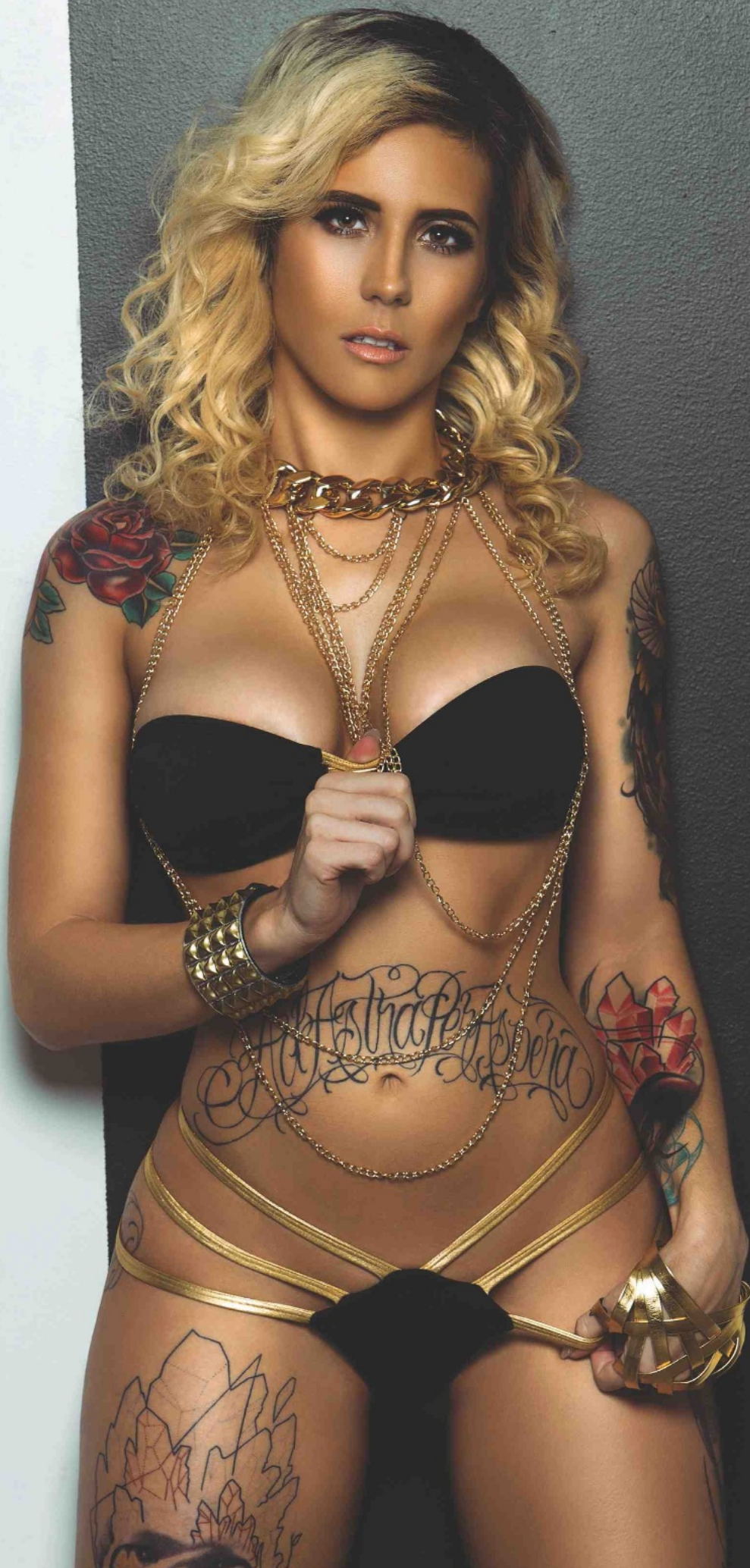
**A word to your fans and
readers:** Thanks for all
the love and support, and
keep an eye out for my
new work.

- Black & gold bikini: Bikinis
That Create Curves
- Accessories: IG @
ofhopejewelry
- Shoes: IG @jetaimeshoes
- Silver Necklace: IG @
ofhopejewelry











Photographer: 2020 Photography
Stylist: Marcus Blassingame
TSD Pose Workshop
Model Coach: Kelsey Adams
Event Hosts: @7mile_tone @jdee313

Lynn Mack

Name: Darrellyn McCreary
Nickname: Lynn Mack
Hometown: Detroit, Mich.
Zodiac: Gemini
Bust: 32-B
Waist: 24
Hip: 37

Web:
Official Web/Fansite: No website yet
Twitter: @Enduringrose_ (Haven't used it since I discovered IG)
Of Followers: 665
Instagram: @Enduringrose_
Of Followers: 5K
Snapchat: Lynn.Mack

Resume:

Runway: I will be doing the Amor de Fashion 4 fashion show in July in Royal Oak, Mich., and auditioned for "America's Next Top Model" in Cincinnati in 2014.

Do you have the proper model materials?

Portfolio? Yes, currently building my portfolio now.

Comp Card? Yes.

Head Shot? (Acting) Yes.

Bio/Resume? (Acting) No.

Training? No.

How do you dress for an audition?

White shirt, jeans and black heels, hair down or in a ponytail, no jewelry and no makeup.

How many on camera go to poses do you have?

I have at least three I always go back to, but I play off those poses and come up with new ones.

Have you checked out the TSD Pose Workshop (#tsdposeworkshop)?

Yes, I have, in February. It was awesome. I learned so much and had a blast doing it! Kelsey is amazing! She really knows her stuff!

Popular:

Favorite TV Series: My all-time favorite is "Martin," but this year I became hooked on "Power," "How To Get Away With Murder" and "Empire." I have also seen about every episode of "Criminal Minds."

Favorite Reality Show: Probably "Keeping Up with the Kardashians" as much as I hate to admit it [], and "The Voice."

Favorite Gossip Blog: Baller Alert

Favorite food/Restaurant: I love food. I can't just choose one thing. My top favorite is Mexican food and seafood. I could probably eat it everyday and not get sick of it—also, French fries with a lot of ketchup!

Favorite Drink: For alcoholic drinks, I usually go for Grey Goose with cranberry juice.

Favorite Smart Phone: iPhone, of course!

Favorite Smart Phone App: Instagram—I use it everyday!

A word to your fans and readers: Thanks a lot for the love and support to my family. I love you guys very much!



- Shoes: JeTaine Shoes NJ
- Make Up and Hair: Angeleah Speights
- Location: Duo Lounge
- La Mirage Shopping Center, 29555 Northwestern Highway, Southfield, MI 48034 (248) 996-9929







Photographer 2020 Photography
Stylist: Marcus Blassingame
Hair: Kayree Jonae @platinumdreamstudios

BOI TOI

Name: Angela L. Milner
Nickname: Boi Toi
Hometown: Atlanta, GA
Zodiac: Libra
Bust: 34-DD
Waist: 28
Hips: 42



- Blue Bikini: Versailles Brooklyn
- Accessories: IG @ofhopejewelry
- Shoes: IG @jetaimeshoess
- Silver Jump Suit: Grace & Jo TX
- Accessories: IG @ofhopejewelry
- Shoes: IG @jetaimeshoess

Web:

Website/Fansite: boislultois.com (under construction)
Twitter: @1boislultois
Instagram: 12k

Resume:

Magazine: *IDYMES*
/ *Sophisticates Hair* /
BlackmenDigital.com (2015)
TV: A Lifetime reality show, which is still under contract, so I can't reveal what show it is yet.
Advertisement: Ambassador for All Virgin Hair Boutique

Do you have the proper model materials?

Portfolio? Almost Finished
Head Shot? 2020 Photography
Bio/Resume? Yes.
Acting Training: Dwayne Boyd

How do you dress for an audition?

Simple makeup, and also it depends on what you are auditioning for. Dress accordingly.

How many on camera go-to poses do you have?

Two.

Have you checked out the TSD Pose Workshop?

Yes!

Popular:

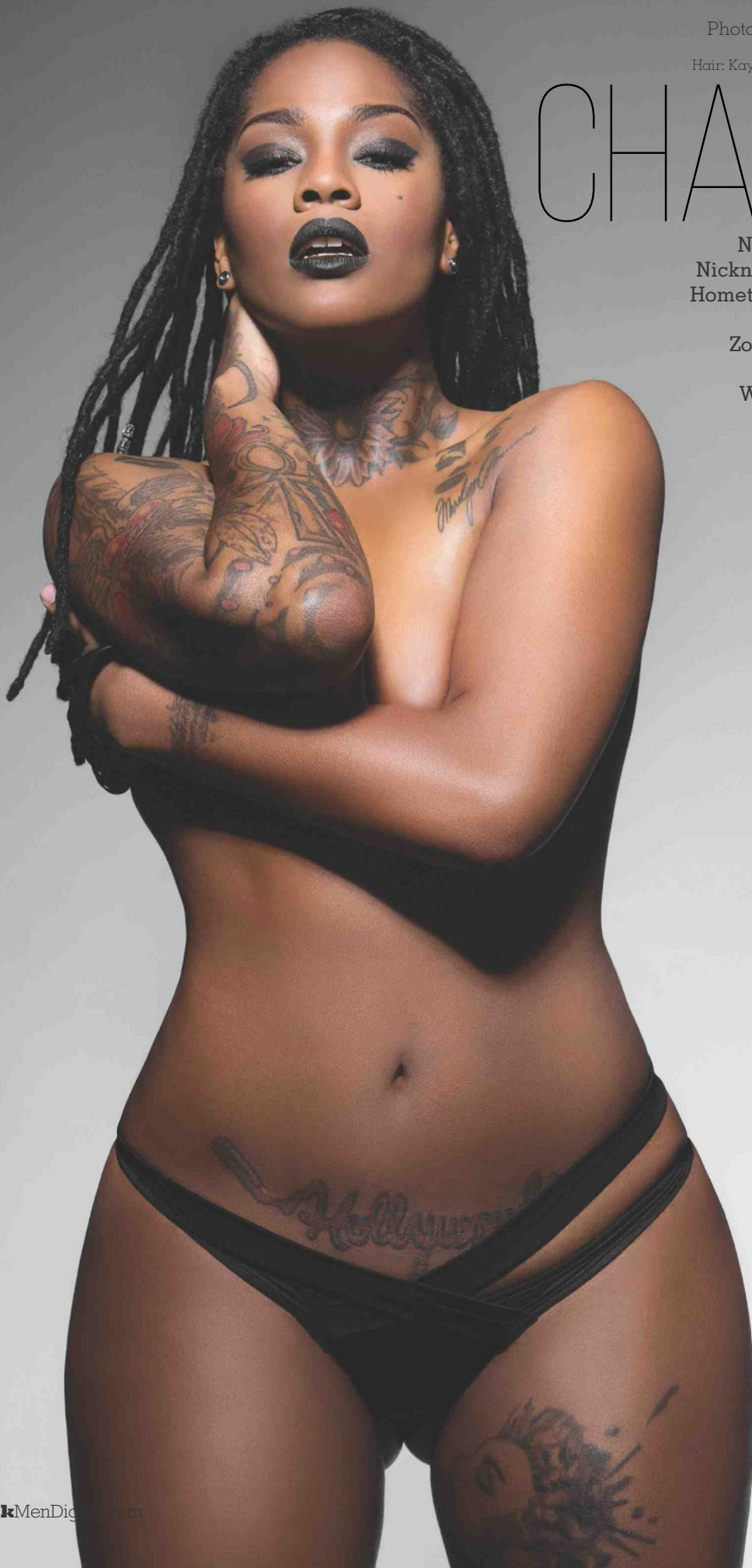
Favorite TV Series: "POWER"
Favorite Reality Show: "Keeping Up with The Kardashians"
Favorite Gossip Blog: TMZ
Favorite Food/Restaurant: Seafood/Crustaceans
Favorite Drink: H2O
Favorite Smart Phone: iPhone 6+
Favorite Smart Phone App: Instagram

A word to your fans/readers: No matter what anyone says or if anyone discourages you about your dreams, never, ever give up. What God has in store for you, no one can take away. When it's in your heart and soul, no one can destroy that but you! Dream on!



BOI TOI





Photographer 2020 Photography
Stylist: Marcus Blassingame
Hair: Kayree Jonae @platinumdreamstudios

CHARLIE

Name: Charlie Blakk
Nickname: Charlie
Hometown: NYC but resides
in Maryland
Zodiac: Leo
Bust: 32-B
Waist: 29
Hip: 44

Web:

Twitter: @shejustBLESSED

(New page)

Of Followers: 300

Instagram: @

charliebobmarley

Of Followers: 5k

Resume:

Magazine: *Seductive
Complexions / Frame*

Runway: DC/Philly/NY

**How do you dress for an
audition?**

Black tank or white fitted tee
and skinny jeans.

**How many on camera go to
poses do you have?**

Three poses.

**Have you checked out
the TSD Pose Workshop
(#tsdposeworkshop)?**

Yes, I worked with Kelsey for
my most recent photo shoot.

Popular:

Favorite TV Series:

"Botched"

Favorite Reality

Show: "Keeping Up with the
Kardashians"

Favorite Gossip

Blog: Baller Alert

Favorite food/Restaurant:

Cheesecake Factory

Favorite drink:

Pomegranate Martini and

Peach Patron Margarita

Favorite Smart Phone:

iPhone 5S

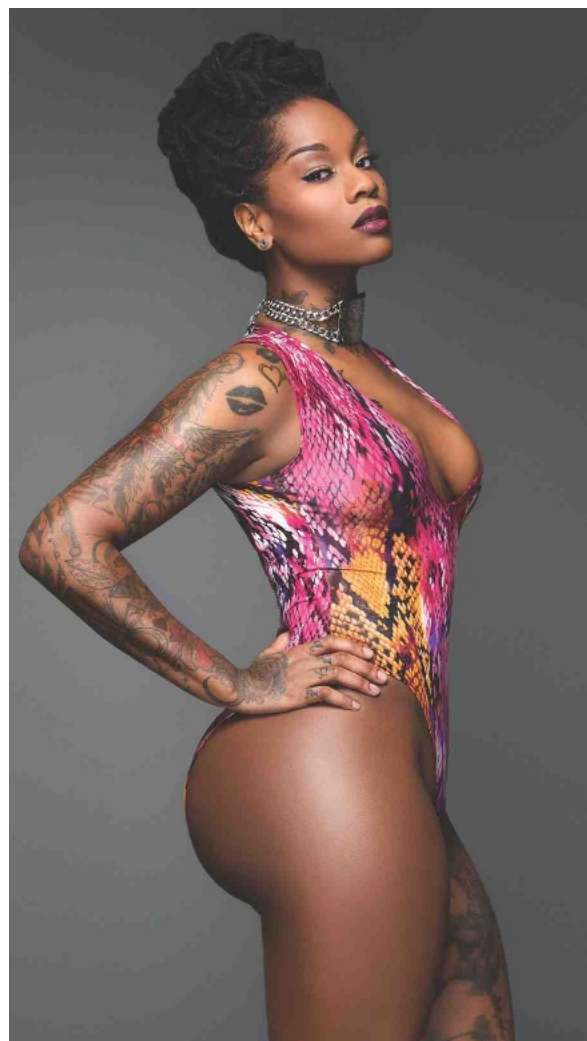
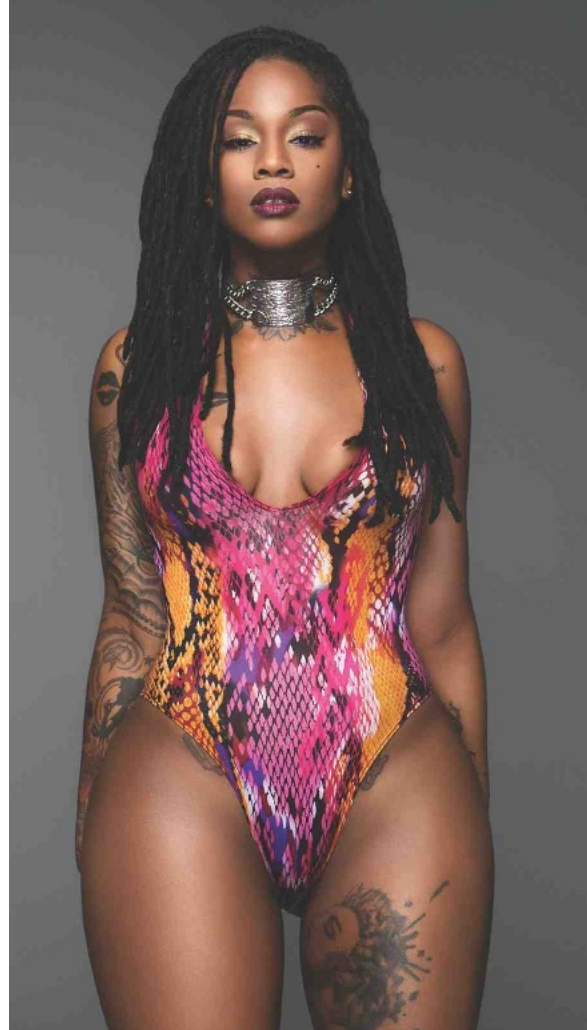
Favorite Smart Phone App:

Pandora

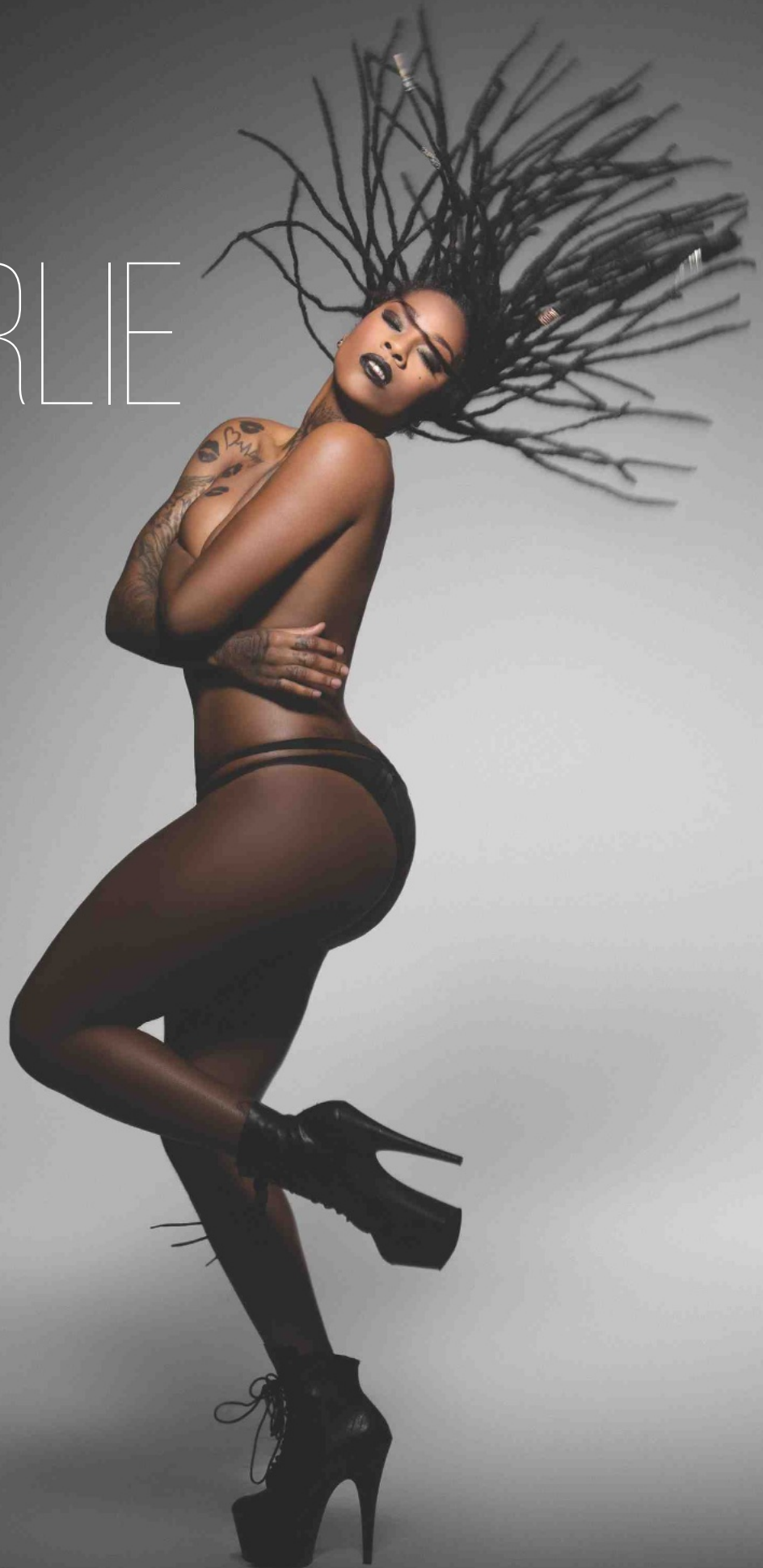
A word to your fans and

readers: Get used to
seeing this Cuban dread-
head. This is only the
beginning.





CHARLIE



- Blue& gold bikini: Malanski Boutique
- Green Bikini: Veneo dersigns
- Accessories: IG @ ofhopejewelry
- Shoes: IG @jetaimeshoess
- Silver Necklace: IG @ ofhopejewelry





Photographer 2020 Photography

Stylist: Marcus Blassingame

TSD Pose Workshop

Model Coach: Kelsey Adams

Makeup: Erika @erika_lapearl_mua

Hair : Kayree jonae @platinumDreamStudios

riley

Name: Riley Keese

Nickname: Riley

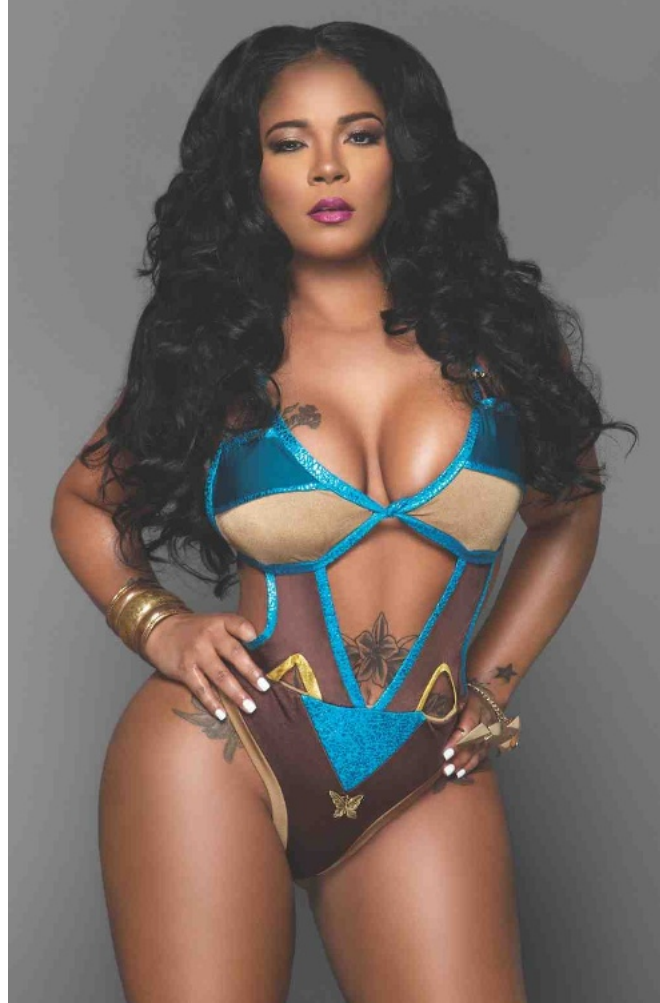
Hometown: Philadelphia, Pa.

Zodiac: Virgo

Bust: 36-DD

Waist: 25 1/2

Hip: 44 1/2



Web:
 Official Web/Fansite:
 whoisriley.com
 Twitter: @whoisriley21
 # Of Followers: 30
 Instagram: @wjo_is_riley
 # Of Followers: 30K

Resume:
 Magazine: *Straight Stuntin*,
Ggurls, *Stunnaz*, *Curves*,
Dynasty Series

Do you have the proper model
 materials?
 Portfolio? Yes.
 Comp Card? Yes.
 Head Shot? (Acting) Yes.
 Bio/Resume? (Acting) Yes.
 Training? (Acting) Yes.

How do you dress for an
 audition?
 Business casual.
 How many on camera go to
 poses do you have?
 Ten.
 Have you checked out
 the TSD Pose Workshop
 (#tsdposeworkshop)?
 No.

Popular:
 Favorite TV Series: "Power"
 Favorite Reality Show: "Run's
 House"
 Favorite food/
 Restaurant: Chinese/Mr.Chow
 Favorite Drink: Patron
 Favorite Smart Phone: iPhone 6
 Favorite Smart Phone App:
 Words with Friends

A word to your fans and readers: Thanks for all the love and support. Make sure you check out all of my magazines dropping soon. Be on the lookout for my 2016 WhoisRiley Calendar coming 9/2015. Make sure you follow me on Instagram and Twitter. Be sure to check out my website for any updates and appearances.



Photographer Crowley For Ason Productions
MUA/Hair: Crystal Cadahia

aidan nycole

Name: Aidan Nycole
Nickname: Nads
Hometown: Miami, FL
Zodiac: Scorpio
Bust: 32DD
Waist: 24.5
Hip: 40

create





Web:

Instagram: @Aidan_Nycole

Of Followers: 109k

Snapchat: ikn0wuseeme
(with a zero)

Tumblr: aidan_nycole

Periscope: aidan_nycole

How do you dress for an audition?

Usually, business casual. It's always important to be sexy, but you don't want to always be looked at as a sex object. Let them see that you can be attractive and still be covered. Versatility is key in this business

How many on camera go to poses do you have?

Probably five that I love and always end up going with.

Have you checked out the TSD Pose Workshop (#tsdposeworkshop)?

No.

Popular:

Favorite TV Series:

"Orange is the New Black,"
"Sons Of Anarchy" and
"The Blacklist."

Favorite Reality Show: I don't watch reality TV, but I watch "SportsCenter." That's real TV.

Favorite Gossip Blog: I don't try to surround myself in gossip, but I have a soft spot for Baller Alert, because I just adore Robin! She's really built up her website! Super proud of her!

Favorite food/Restaurant:
Zuma

Favorite Drink: Vodka soda with a lime.

Favorite Smart Phone:
iPhone 6

Favorite Smart Phone App:
PayPal

A word to your fans and readers: I'm really grateful for everything that's happened over the past year. I just got into modeling this past year, and I have had a great response. Photographers have been patient with me, and my fans have really been supportive. I just hope doors continue to open and I am able to keep both feet on the ground.



Photographer: Alcole Studios

DEBORAH LEE

Name: Deborah Lee
Nickname: D.Lee
Hometown: New York City
(Lower East Side, but I grew
up in Washington Heights)
Zodiac: Aquarius
Bust: 36-D
Waist: 24-22
Hip: 38



Web:

Twitter: @CupThemCakes

Of Followers: To be very honest, I have a Twitter but I'm not very active on it. I know, I know—shame on me. I don't even know how many followers I have.

Instagram: @CupThemCakes @_cupthemcakes

Of Followers: I have 65k followers, but let me honestly say, I don't think that always defines a person's success. I mean, yes, it helps and it's great promotion, but I don't think it makes or breaks your career. Let's be honest—if social media shut down today, do I think I would still be relevant? Yes, I would.

Snapchat: CupThemCakes

Resume:

Magazine: I have done *Straight Stuntin*, *Originators*, *Seductive Complexes*, *FBM* magazine, *GGurls* magazine, *idymes*, and I'm very proud and honored to now add *Black Men* to my growing resume.

TV: I have been in a few videos, and I'm an extra on an upcoming season of a reality show, but I can't talk about that. I'm very interested in taking my career in that direction

What kind of work do you do besides modeling?

Well, I don't like to answer this question because it causes so much conservative outrage, and it takes away from my modeling...but I'm not ashamed. So, here it goes...I'm an exotic dancer. But please do not prejudge me—I am not my job. I'm a normal person with normal goals. I just walk a different path with dignity.

Is there good money in modeling?

For me, an urban vixen model, not really. It's great promotion and sometimes it leads to paying jobs, but not speaking for myself, I can't live off of my pay as a model.

Which type of jobs (that you have done) pay the most?

Videos and extras on television.

What do your model friends do to make money when the modeling jobs are slow?

A lot of my friends dance as well, or a have a normal nine-to-five—whatever works for them. It's called surviving and following your dreams.

How do you dress for an audition?

I wear a pair of denim jeans and a white wife beater and nudes shoes. I feel you can't go wrong with that.

How many on camera go to poses do you have?

Each time I get in front of the camera I find a new pose. It's crazy how I'm rediscovering myself! I would say I have about 50 poses.

Popular:

Favorite TV Series: I love, love, love, "Bates Motel." It's a must-see!

Favorite Reality Show: I'm a fan of "Love & Hip Hop Atlanta."

Favorite Gossip Blog: O-M-G! Now we are getting juicy! I'm a big fan of Baller Alert—don't judge me.

Favorite food/Restaurant: I love Cafeteria, and I'm a sucker for a cheese burger medium well, to be honest.

Favorite Drink: I like Patron and lime juice on the rocks.

Favorite Smart Phone: Team iPhone, baby!

Favorite Smart Phone App: I love Waze! It's a great app, and it helps me save time when it comes to traveling. It's a must-have for me personally

A word to your fellow models: A lot of you have inspired me, and I wish you all nothing but the best. It's a hard road, but with patience and determination anything is possible. Make it happen!



ASHLEY



ROSAMILIA

Photographer K Rish Photos
Stylist: Marcus Blassingame

Name: Ashley Rosamilia
Nickname: Cashley
Hometown: Bethlehem, Pa.
Zodiac: Aries
Bust: 27
Waist: 25
Hip: 34

Web:
Twitter: @ashleyrosamilia
Instagram: @cashwavvy
Of Followers: 684
Snapchat: cokegirl_ashley

Do you have the proper model materials?

Not finished, coming soon, though.

How do you dress for an audition?

Based on what the audition is about.

How many on camera go to poses do you have?

Many.

Popular:

Favorite TV Series: "One Tree Hill"

Favorite Reality Show: I don't watch reality TV shows.

Favorite Gossip Blog: I don't have one. I didn't know they had gossip blogs.

Favorite food/Restaurant: Sweet potato, one-third is my favorite for cheats days!

Favorite drink: Mango protein smoothie

Favorite Smart Phone: iPhone 6+

Favorite Smart Phone App: kicksonfire

- Black Jersey: Members Club, Lingerie-D&G
- Swimwear: Malanski Boutique
- Accessories: IG @ofhopejewelry
- Shoes: IG @jetaimeshoes
- Silver Necklace: IG @ofhopejewelry



Photographer K Rish Photos:
Stylist: Marcus Blassingame
TSD Pose Workshop
Model Coach: Kelsey Adams

GEMINII

Name: Geminii
Nickname: Gem
Hometown: Brooklyn, NY
Zodiac: Gemini
Bust: 34-C
Waist: 27
Hip: 41.5
Web:
Instagram: @Miss.geminii
Of Followers: 2,509

Resume:
Magazine: *Implicitt*

Do you have the proper model materials?

Portfolio? Yes

How do you dress for an audition?

For acting, a neutral color shirt. I avoid white and jeans.

How many on camera go to poses do you have?

Four.

Have you checked out the TSD Pose Workshop (#tsdposeworkshop)?

Of course! I learned some great tips and poses from Kelsey!

Popular:

Favorite TV Series: I never get tired of "Fresh Prince of Bel-Air."

Favorite Reality Show: "Real Housewives of Atlanta"

Favorite Gossip Blog:
theshaderoom.com

Favorite food/Restaurant: I love seafood. My favorite restaurant is The Oceanaire Seafood Room.

Favorite drink: Mai Tai

Favorite Smart Phone: My iPhone, of course!

Favorite Smart Phone App:

Instagram—I'm on it all day!

A word to your fans and readers:

Always strive to be the best you can be, and don't let anyone get in the way of your dreams.



- Black Jacket: Reve Boutique , Swimwear: Shalaja Swimwear
- Accessories, gloves: IG @ofhopejewelry
- Shoes: IG @jetaimeshoes



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www.BlackMenDigital.com



Photographer Will Sterling
Stylist: Marcus Blassingame
MUA: Jourdan | Hair: Terrence Davidson

CLAUDIA JORDAN

REALITY'S READER

Article by Dove Clark

From pageant princess to radio host and reality television star, Claudia Jordan has lived much of her life in the spotlight. The Rhode Island-born beauty is currently enjoying success on the nationally syndicated Rickey Smiley Morning Show, and recently wrapped her first season on Bravo TV's "Real Housewives of Atlanta."

Aside from her work, another factor that has kept Jordan in the public eye, ironically, has been her private life. Gossip and rumors have swirled around the sharp-witted actress, but to let her tell it, the juiciest of the juice is likely the most unreliable information.

So, what makes a go-getter like Claudia Jordan tick? You'd think that the fame monster could have overtaken her, but she's far more levelheaded than you might expect. *Black Men* spoke with the unintentional diva to find out about her life's work and much more.

Black Men: What would you say has been your favorite aspect of your career so far?

Claudia Jordan: Just having a lot of variety and trying different things. I started off as a model in pageants, and I didn't think I'd end up on the radio or whatever. Being open to other opportunities has led me to where I am now, and I really like to try a little bit of everything to make sure I'm covering all of my bases.

- Burgundy sheer dress with gold accessory at Reve Boutique





Has being on the radio given you more empathy on how you report on other celebrities? How has your own experience affected the way you do that job?

Absolutely. I sometimes find myself defending celebrities, because I can't stress enough that things are not always what they seem. You take a picture of two people that run into each other on the red carpet at a certain angle, it looks like they're kind of boo'd up or they're kind of having an intimate moment and you can basically place any caption under a picture and make the story what you want it to be. I've definitely found myself the victim of that, and you've got all these ridiculous liaisons with these people you may have just been meeting in passing.

At the end of the day, celebs have real lives, and real people they deal with and family members and relationships. When you have a lot of cameras on you and are constantly being photographed, they're gonna catch you in a moment where it may look like it's more than what it is, and a lot of the times it's innocent.

How do you deal with rumors that get out there about you, whether they're true or not? How do you keep the peace within yourself?

It's funny... I've actually dated people in my real life that would have been newsworthy, but I've been really private with it. But the ones they put me with are not the people I've dated, and it's like they'd have a way more interesting story if they put the truth instead of someone they see me at an event with. We kind of laugh at it sometimes like, "Wow, if they'd only knew what we knew. The real deal."

I think because I've been so private, it makes people more likely to jump the gun like, "That must be who she's with!" I mean I went and got married without anyone knowing, so I know how to keep a relationship private. When I was younger I wanted to put everything on MySpace and stake my claim, and I've learned from one relationship that once you start doing that, you open yourself up to everyone's opinion - and if it's someone a lot of women are crushing on, your relationship will be destroyed.

Not everyone is strong enough to go through that and deal with the nonsense, and social media has been really terrible for a lot of relationships. The traits that I seek in a mate are people who are like very kind of independently thinking, not influenced by that, and they're all man. Like all that stuff doesn't really affect them. That's hard to find now, but it's definitely out there.



• Canary Bikini, White Jacket: Reve Boutique

- Nude swimsuit with Diamond embellishments: Reve Boutique
- Accessories: IG @ofhopejewelry
- Shoes: IG @jetaimeshoess





How did getting on "Real Housewives of Atlanta" affect your life in terms of your privacy?

When I got on Housewives, it's just amazing how different people can interpret scenes to be different things to them, depending on who their favorite is on the show. You get into it with someone they like, they hate you and they go for the jugular. It's not just, "Hey Claudia, I don't like that scene you did with such and such." It's, "I hate you. I hope you die. I hope your mom gets hit by a car and your ass gets kidnapped!" They go so hard. People are very emotional and involved and invested in reality shows, and it's amazing—and also, when they love you, they ride so hard for you. You've got to take it for what it is and with a grain of salt.

Have you embraced the fact that people love your snappy, witty sense of "reading"?

I have, but people that know me know that's just how I am. I really am a fighter of what's right, and if I see someone else getting disrespected on my time if I'm around, I kind of feel like a champion of justice. I know that sounds kind of funny, but when I saw how wrong Demetria was being treated and how mean the girls were being to her, I kind of felt like I had to say something. It really wasn't much about me, but I can't sit there and watch someone get bullied right in front of me and just let it ride.

People thought that was such a read, but I was on the Foxxhole for four years with Jamie Foxx and that was mild compared to some of the stuff we would do on that show. When you do a radio show with comedic geniuses such as Jamie Foxx, you've got to come with you're A-game every single Friday. When people are like "Oh my God you read the hell out of such and such..." or whatever I'm like, "Oh, okay. I felt I was just getting things off my chest."

What are some goals for you within the next year?

Well, I'm working on a fitness apparel line. I'm gonna work on a skin care line. I have two films I did, one that is called *The Hills* and one is called *Love Is Not Enough*. I've gotten offers for three more. I'm shooting one in two weeks.

It's funny because that was something that was said to me in Puerto Rico [on RHOA] that Hollywood wasn't checking for me. Hollywood started to check for me a whole lot lately. It's kind of been poetic justice in some kind of way. I feel like if you stay humble, stay the course, and focus on what you should be doing, the right things that are supposed to be for you will come to you. I'm really excited about that.

There's a travel show I wanted to do, and I have a producer that's been talking to me about that. There are so many things on the table. Right now, it's a matter of finding the time to do everything. I'm so very grateful and blessed right now.



PRESSURE

The Virgin Islands' Reggae Ambassador

Article by Kathy Iandoli

Photographer: Rodney Gibson

Stylist: Marcus Blassingame

MUA: Carlos Martinez | Hair: Candi Amrich

The kneejerk reaction for any entry level Reggae fan is to assume it all comes from Jamaica. That's far from the case, as Reggae artist Pressure is a legend in his own right and isn't from Jamaican soil. The singer hails from St. Thomas, of the U.S. Virgin Islands. The music specific to St. Thomas is a hybrid of many sounds, including Calypso and the aforementioned Reggae. But for Pressure, he treated Reggae like a student, studying it to perfection. Now with his project *Lovers Rock*, he hopes to continue in that progression as he has over the years. We checked in with Pressure while he was in Miami and he discussed his past, present and future.

Black Men: What is the music scene like in St. Thomas?

Pressure: Well, the music scene in the Virgin Islands is multi-cultural. We're dominated by Calypso, Reggae Music, and of course American culture like Rap and R&B. We're under the United States, so we're an American territory. We're well-rounded where music is concerned, but mostly for the culture of the Virgin Islands it's Calypso and Reggae music.

When you combine those two worlds, it takes on a whole other dimension sonically.

Definitely. For me, I have studied the Reggae culture of Jamaica and the Dancehall culture from a very young age. I'm one of the few that really took Reggae music seriously coming from the Virgin Islands. I'm making a name for myself internationally, and still being able to be in the Virgin Islands. I'm still pushing to really get the music on a higher level. It's moving very good and very fast. I'm loving it and working diligently to bring a good name to the Virgin Islands and put them on the map for great music.

What made you get involved with Reggae on such a graduated level?

Well, Reggae music is to me the poor and the have nots. I came from the ghetto, and Reggae music spoke to me in ways that a lot of other music couldn't. When you listen to certain Reggae artists' songs, it relates to you coming from the streets, coming from the ghetto—uplifting you to find ways to get out of that state of mind. Reggae music has helped me spiritually and mentally. I just felt like it was my rightful place.

How did you take your first step to fame?

I was a drummer in high school, and

I always wanted to do something with music. I wasn't doing too well in school, so my mom took me out of the Virgin Islands and sent me to live with my uncle in America—Georgia to be exact—to stay in school and be more focused on my academics. When I got to Georgia, I wasn't doing too good in school there either, so my uncle took me out of all of my musical activities. I couldn't play my drums or any other instruments. Being that I was into Reggae music and knew all of the music from my favorite artists, I just started writing my own music and started to sing. At a time when I didn't have my drums or a trumpet, I decided to try something different. My friends supported me very much and told me to keep it up, so I did just that. More and more I started getting support from friends, people would hear about me and the community started to pay more attention until I became an artist that people learned to love.

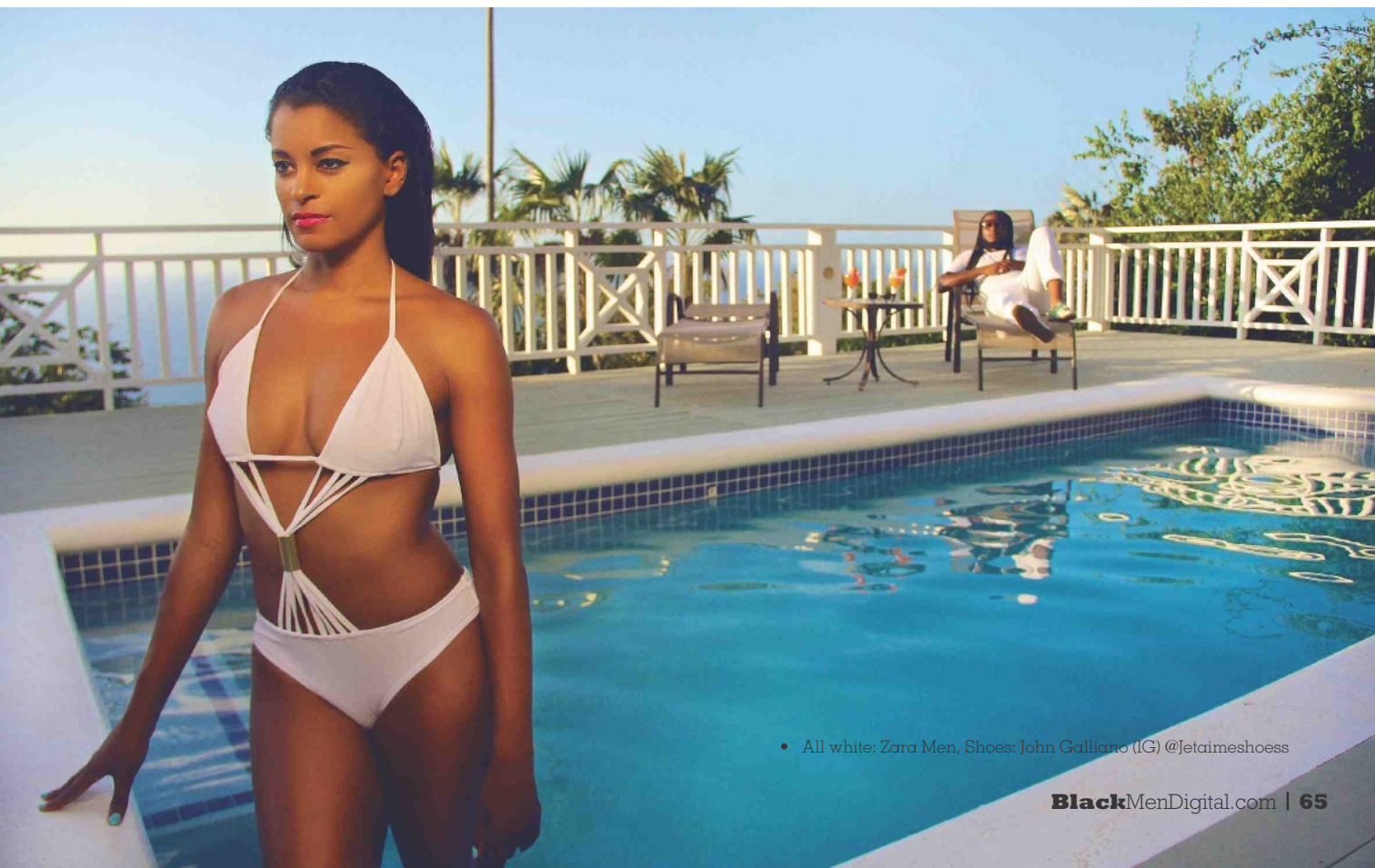
When did your efforts start paying off?

The first album I recorded was *The Pressure Is On*, which got me a lot of good reviews on the internet and my community. People really loved it. My music was heard by Don Corleon, who is the platinum producer, and at the time was producing for Vybz Kartel and Sizzla. He had hit songs on MTV

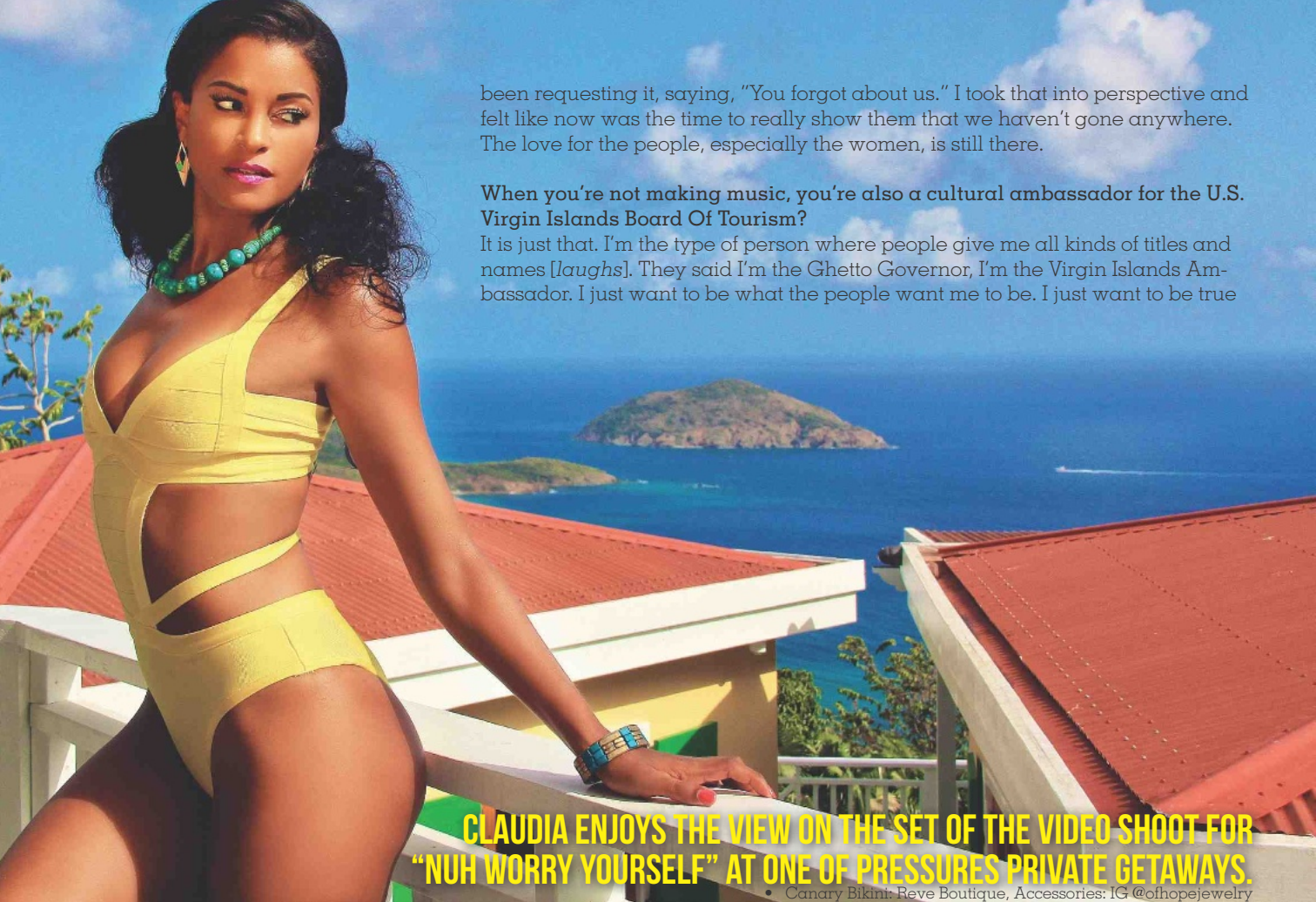
with Keyshia Cole and Sean Paul. When he reached out to me to do some work because he loved my first album, it was like a big happy moment for me. It was a stepping stone for me. He sent me a lot of riddims, like 13 riddims. He was sure he wanted to work with me. The first track was "Love And Affection," which gave me almost immediate recognition. I was getting calls from all over the world. My MySpace page was lit up! Within a month I had my first concert in the Bahamas.

You've managed to go completely beyond "Love And Affection," though. So let's talk about *Lovers Rock*.

Well, I'm actually out here in Miami finishing it up and it's going really well. I released "Nuh Worry Yourself" and that's been doing well, especially in the Virgin Islands. The rest of the album—we have songs produced by Don Corleon, a song called "Once Again" on the island roots riddim. There are a lot of things happening right now where *Lovers Rock* is concerned, and I'm grateful to have Malik Yoba and Claudia Jordan to be a part of the video for "Nuh Worry Yourself" as well. I really feel like this album will make a statement for all *Lovers Rock* lovers. This is the first time that I'm trying an album like this. The last two albums that I released weren't really that romantic. My female fans have



• All white: Zara Men, Shoes: John Galliano (IG) @Jetaimeshoess



been requesting it, saying, "You forgot about us." I took that into perspective and felt like now was the time to really show them that we haven't gone anywhere. The love for the people, especially the women, is still there.

When you're not making music, you're also a cultural ambassador for the U.S. Virgin Islands Board Of Tourism?

It is just that. I'm the type of person where people give me all kinds of titles and names [laughs]. They said I'm the Ghetto Governor, I'm the Virgin Islands Ambassador. I just want to be what the people want me to be. I just want to be true

CLAUDIA ENJOYS THE VIEW ON THE SET OF THE VIDEO SHOOT FOR "NUH WORRY YOURSELF" AT ONE OF PRESSURES PRIVATE GETAWAYS.

• Canary Bikini: Reve Boutique, Accessories: IG @ofhopejewelry

to the people. It's a good feeling to have people acknowledge you and put you on a high pedestal, but I never wanna be better than the people. You know? I'm not that person. I like to communicate with people and say hi and take a picture here and there because I'm a human. When I was young, we didn't have much of that in the community. So to me, being that I have gotten all of this popularity, I like coming back to the community where they can feel your presence and your skin. I'm all for that.

• Blue Linen Blazer: Francis Hendy NYC



• Animal Print Dress : Reve Boutique, Accessories, His Linen Suit: Zara Men, Shoes (IG) @jetalmeshoes

PRESSURE BRINGS AN ADDED BONUS TO ST. THOMAS CARNIVAL JOUVERT

Article by Kathy Iandoli



(Claudia and Pressure with The Honorable Governor Kenneth E. Mapp)

Every year, the U.S. Virgin Islands kicks the heat up with a carnival known as J'Ouvert. The carnival's history spans 50 years on St. Thomas, as people from near and far gather for the celebration that lasts two weeks, with a huge concert that closes the extended party. Parades, food, liquor and fun—J'Ouvert is the place to be.

Earlier this year, reggae artist – and St. Thomas native – Pressure made the J'Ouvert carnival a part of his own movement by doing the double duty of performing there and shooting his latest video for “Nuh Worry Yourself” off his *Lovers Rock* album.

“It was very important for Pressure to execute this video here during the cultural experience of this carnival,” explains Trevor Julien, Brand Manager for Pressure. Julien also wrote the treatment for the video and is a U.S. Virgin Islands native as well, from St. Croix.

“I have a vested personal interest in Pressure and his brand,” Julien adds. “I’ve seen him grow to the magnitude that he has.”

Pressure made it a point that everyone on his team, along with media guests, experiences the island and the carnival in addition to coming for the video shoot.

Empire actor Malik Yoba (a good friend of Pressure’s) and *Real Housewives Of Atlanta*’s Claudia Jordan both make cameos in the video. “Malik had an amazing year, but he’s just an amazing actor. Period,” Julien says of the choice in video stars. “Claudia is a client of mine and done so much work with TV and videos for a number of artists, like the Isley Brothers and R. Kelly. When we were done with the shoot, everyone left that island like a family.”

As an added treat, everyone witnessed Pressure’s magic on stage. Don’t miss J'Ouvert next year. You never know what could happen there.

Photo: Rodney Gibson | IG: RG5Canon ; Hair: Candi | IG: Suicidegalcandi ; Makeup: Carlos Martinez | IG: loso_mua





Photographer: Alcole Studios

kaylia

Name: Kaylia

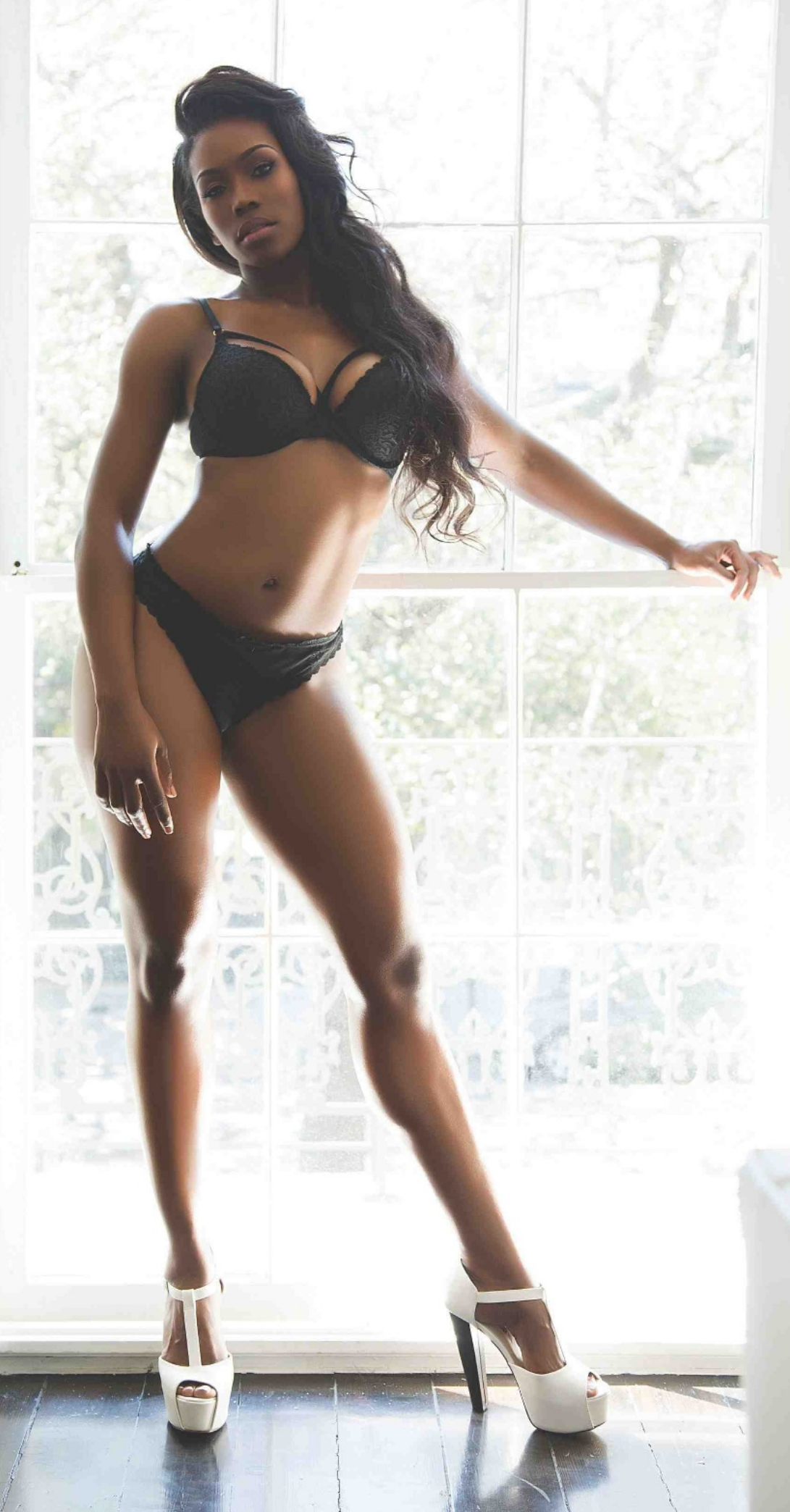
Hometown: Berbice, Guyana

Zodiac: Gemini

Bust: 34-D

Waist: 24

Hip: 38



Web:

Instagram: @thisiskaylia

Of Followers: 6,000

How do you dress for an audition?

Black skinny jeans, black tank top, hair pulled back in a ponytail and no makeup.

How many on camera go to poses do you have?

I have five poses.

Have you checked out the TSD Pose Workshop (#tsdposeworkshop)?

No, I haven't checked out the TSD Pose Workshop, but I would definitely try to attend a class in the near future.

Popular:

Favorite TV Series: "24"

Favorite Reality Show:

"Love & Hip Hop"

Favorite food/Restaurant:

Texas De Brazil

Favorite Smart Phone:

Galaxy Note 3

A word to your fans and readers: "You've got to win in your mind before you win in your life." –

John Addison

kaylia





Photographer Alcole Studios
Stylist: Marcus Blassingame
TSD Pose Workshop | Model Coach: Kelsey Adams

- Green: Bikinis That Create Curves
- Corset: Malanski Boutique
- Accessories: IG @ofhopejewelry
- Shoes: IG @jetaimeshoes



aundre



auna rene

Name: Aundreana René
Nickname: Dreky
Hometown: New Orleans, L.A.
Zodiac: Lucky Libra
Bust: 34-D
Waist: 24
Hip: 42





Web:

Instagram: @Iamaundreanarene

Of Followers: 44K

Pinterest: Aundreana Rene

Tumblr: Aundreana Rene

Resume:

Magazine: *Pressure* / *I Adore* / *Straight Stuntin*

Do you have the proper model materials?

No, I'm working on it.

How do you dress for an audition?

Depending on what I'm auditioning for I dress casual or business professional.

How many on camera go to poses do you have?

At least eight.

Have you checked out the TSD Pose Workshop (#tsdposeworkshop)?

I haven't attended the class yet, but I have checked it out and am aware of the pose workshop.

Popular:

Favorite TV Series: "Law & Order: SVU" / "Power" / "Empire" / "Snapped"

Favorite Reality Show: "Keeping Up With The Kardashians" and "Love & Hip Hop"

Favorite Gossip Blog: I skim through Media Take Out just to get a laugh sometimes.

Favorite food/Restaurant: Seafood is my favorite. My fave restaurant is Morton's The Steakhouse.

Favorite drink: Patron Margarita

Favorite Smart Phone: iPhone 6

Favorite Smart Phone App: I love all the apps.

A word to your fans and readers: Thank you for checking out my spread, and stay tuned for more dope work.





Photographer: Alcole Studios

JADE SIMMS

Name: Jade Ati Simms
Hometown: Phoenix, Ariz.
Zodiac: Aries
Bust: 34-A
Waist: 26
Hip: 38
Web:
Twitter: @jadeasimms
Of Followers: 41
Instagram: @jadeasimms
Of Followers: 1361

Resume:

Magazine: *Skin Tight* and *Pressure*
Runway: MLK Weekend Hair and
Fashion Show by Bradley Brothers
Entertainment

Videos: Tyga – “Real Deal,” Meek Mill
ft. Big Sean and ASAP Ferg – “B-Boys”
and Lupe Fiasco – “Next To It”

Do you have the proper model materials?

Bio/Resume? (Acting) Yes

How do you dress for an audition?

I try to wear what fits the audition role
or casting role by doing my research—
even if it's lingerie. I enjoy being
prepared and well versed with regards
to the client I am working with.

How many on camera go to poses do you have?

I have at least ten poses on-hand for
the perfect shot upon arriving at a
shoot. However, beyond that, I enjoy
receiving coaching from a movement
coach on set or the director.

Popular:

Favorite TV Series: HG TV “Island
Hunters”

Favorite Reality Show: I love reality
TV, so any show with a great story and
dynamic characters, I enjoy.

Favorite Gossip Blog: I would have
to say I don't typically visit a specific
site, but should I be forced to choose,
Mediatakeout.com would be my
favorite.





A full-page photograph of Jade Simms sitting on a wooden staircase. She is wearing a black strapless tube top, a white blazer draped over her shoulders, and white pointed-toe pumps. She has dark curly hair and is looking down with a slight smile. The staircase has a wooden handrail and metal balusters.

JADE SIMMS

Favorite food/Restaurant: I love Mexican food and my favorite restaurant is my kitchen! I can't find a place that can jam on me, but Istanblu in Buckhead has amazing lamb chops.

Favorite drink: Pineapple Mojito with muddled fresh pineapple.

Favorite Smart Phone: My favorite smart phone is the iPhone. I switched to Droid and absolutely hate it.

A word to your fans and readers: Love you, know your worth, know your limits and know that I don't get tired. 100it Gang!

Photographer: Alcole Studios

sunny

Name: Sunny Monroe
Nickname: Sunny
Hometown: Miami, Fla.
Zodiac: Cancer
Bust: 32
Waist: 26
Hip: 42







sunny





Web:
Instagram: @Sunnymonroe305
Of Followers: 42.4k
Snapchat: Iamsunnymonroe

Resume:

Magazine: *DimePiece* and *Ellements*

Video: Trina feat. Lil Wayne – “Don’t Trip” / Trina – “Single Again” / Trina – “That’s My Attitude” / Rick Ross – “Yacht Club (Remix)” / David Banner feat. Lil Wayne, Akon and Snoop Dogg – “9mm”

Advertisement: Paper Dolls Online Boutique

Do you have the proper model materials?

Portfolio? Yes.

Comp Card? No.

Head Shot? Yes.

Bio/Resume? Yes.

Training? I have broadcast training but not acting.

How do you dress for an audition?

Well, depending the audition type, the proper attire is a solid top v-neck or crew neck and jeans.

How many on camera go to poses do you have?

I have seven or eight go to poses, but when all else fails, I just smile—that always works.

Have you checked out the TSD Pose Workshop (#tsdposeworkshop)?

Yes, I’ve viewed some of the pose workshops via Instagram, and I hope to be as fluent posing as Kelsey.

Popular:

Favorite TV Series: My favorite TV series of all time has to be “Sex In The City.” I’m really into fashion, and the fashion on that show was impeccable.

Favorite Reality Show: I love watching the show “Botched”—some of those cases are horrid [laughs]!

Favorite Gossip Blog: With social media being so impactful, all my gossip comes from Instagram pages such as the Shade Room or Baller alert.

Favorite food/Restaurant: My favorite food is lobster-stuffed ravioli. My favorite restaurant is STK or Philippe Chow.

Favorite Drink: Fresh Lychee Martini.

Favorite Smart Phone: Team iPhone!

Favorite Smart Phone App: My favorite app is the Secret Teachings, and then comes Uber [laughs]!

A word to the readers and your fans: When it comes to life, you can create whatever you want in life, eliminate all your doubts and replace them with full expectations. Ask, believe and receive. I’m an example of that, and now I’m the proud owner and CEO of Paper Dolls Online Boutique (iLovepaperdolls.com).

sunny



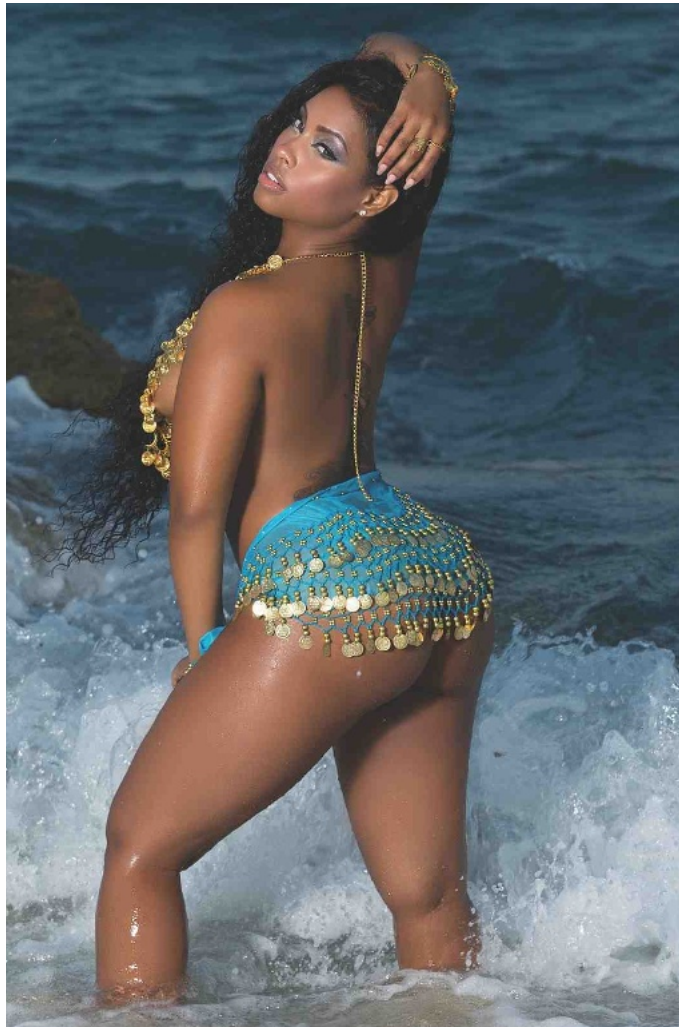
Photographer: Alcole Studios

Tori

Name: Victoria Blackmon
Nickname: Tori
Hometown: Miami, Fla.
Zodiac: Taurus
Bust: 36-C
Waist: 27
Hip: 42

Official Web/Fansite: Torisweetheart.com
Twitter: @torisweetheart2
Instagram: @torisweetheart2
Of Followers: 18.6k

Magazine: FBM / GEI / Luxsious / Undiscovered /
Empire Vixen / FLAVAGIRL / GRINDEHOUSE / Strip
Joint / Straight Stuntin / Thicke





kyesha marie

Photographer **Jessy J**

Name: Kyesha Marie
Nickname: Ky
Hometown: Seattle, Wash.
Zodiac: Libra
Bust: 32-DD
Waist: 25
Hip: 27

Web:
Official Web/Fansite: Kyeshamarie.com
Twitter: @Kyesha_Marie
Of Followers: 14.1k
Instagram: @Kyesha Marie
Of Followers: 13.5k
Snapchat: Kyesha Marie

Resume:

Magazine: *GGurls, Stacked, Stunnaz, Show, Roll Models, So Be It* and *Endee*.
Advertisement: Poster girls air freshener, Bogey Vape, Budnauts Edible Flvr clothing line, Starlight TV, T.I.T.S clothing line, ATL Nightspot and Purple City Dream Girls .

Do you have the proper model materials?

Portfolio? No.

Comp Card? No.

Head Shot? Yes.

Bio/Resume? Yes.

Training? No.

How do you dress for an audition?

In black attire.

How many on camera go to poses do you have?

I have five.

Have you checked out the TSD Pose Workshop (#tsdposeworkshop)?

Yes.

Popular:

Favorite TV Series: "Breaking Bad"

Favorite Reality Show: "Naked & Afraid"

Favorite Gossip Blog: Baller Alert/Shaderoom/ MediaTakeOut

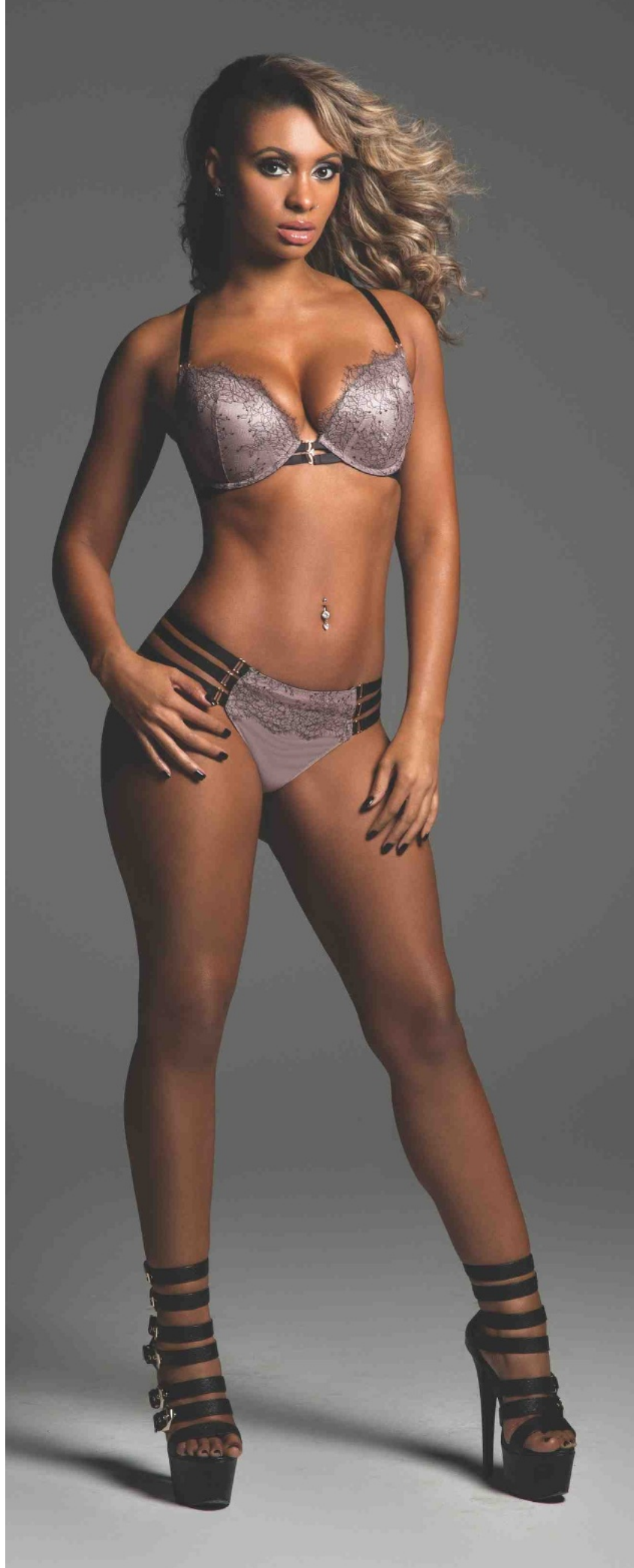
Favorite food/Restaurant: Broiled lobster tail

Favorite Drink: Infused coconut water

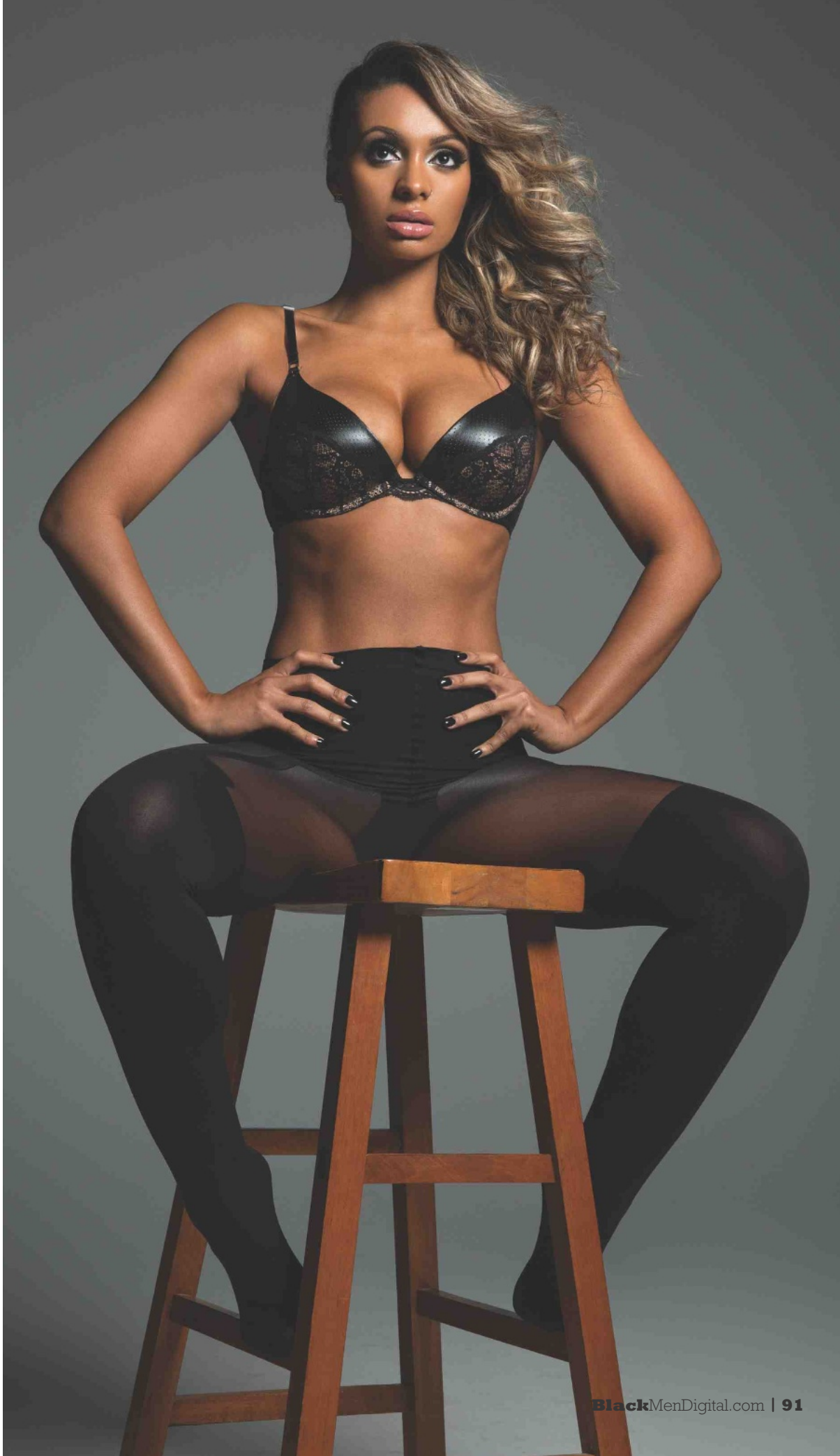
Favorite Smart Phone: Galaxy S5

Favorite Smart Phone App: Datpiff








kyeasha mario



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Accessories: IG @ofhopejewelry

Name: Krystal Brown
Nickname: Krystal The Brand
Bust: 36
Waist: 32
Hip: 44

krystal

Resume:

Magazine: *Black Men / Pressure /
Dulce / IDYMES*

Web:

Instagram: @krystal_thebrand
Of Followers: 6646
Web Site: krystalthebrand.com

*Do you have the proper model
materials?*

Portfolio: Yes, I have portfolio and bio.

How do you dress for an audition?

I dress casual—hair pulled back from
face for auditions and no jewelry.

*How many on camera go to poses do
you have?*

I have up to 20 poses, depending on
theme. I plan on attending pose class
in the near future.

Popular:

TV Series: "True Blood"

Reality show: "Braxton Family Values"
and "Mary Mary."

Gossip Blog: Theybf.com

Food/Restaurant: Italian and Southern
Soul Food

Drink: Juice

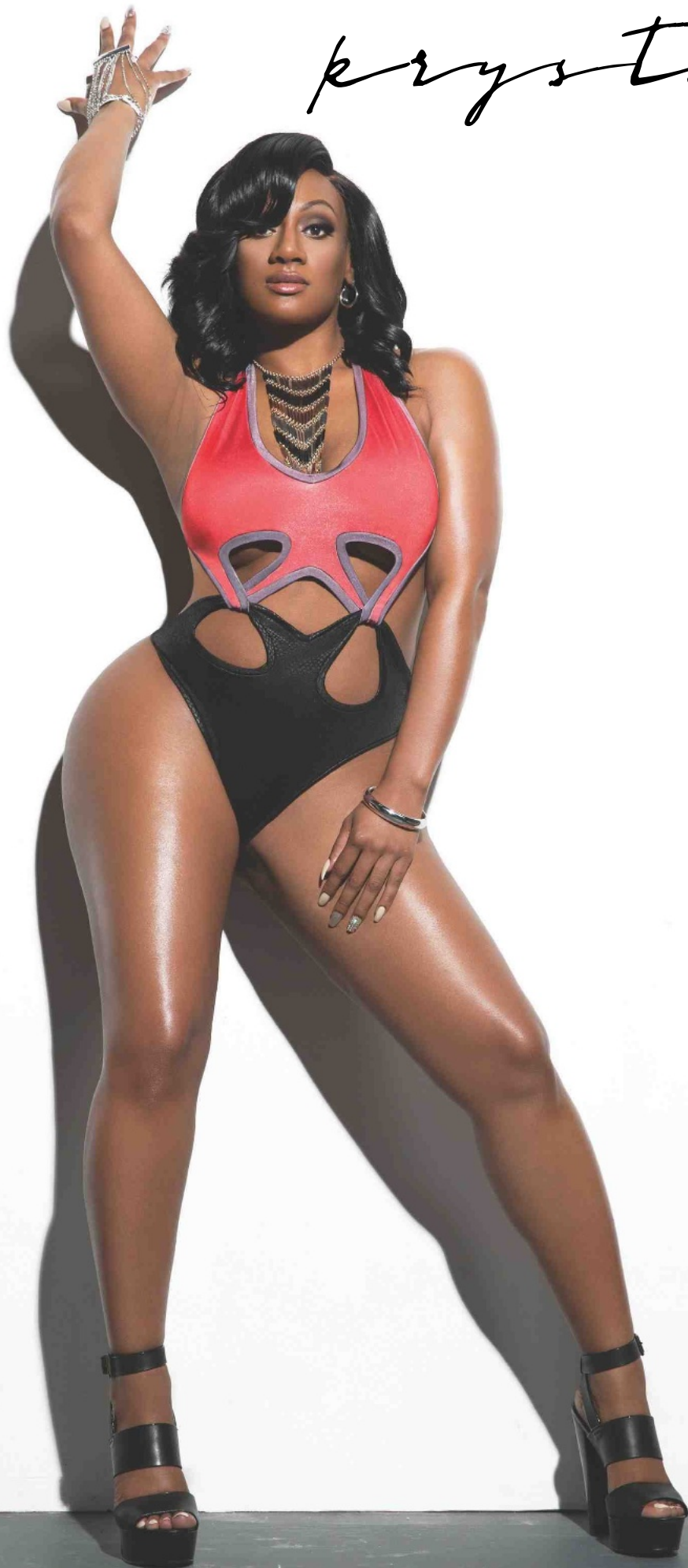
Smart Phone: Android

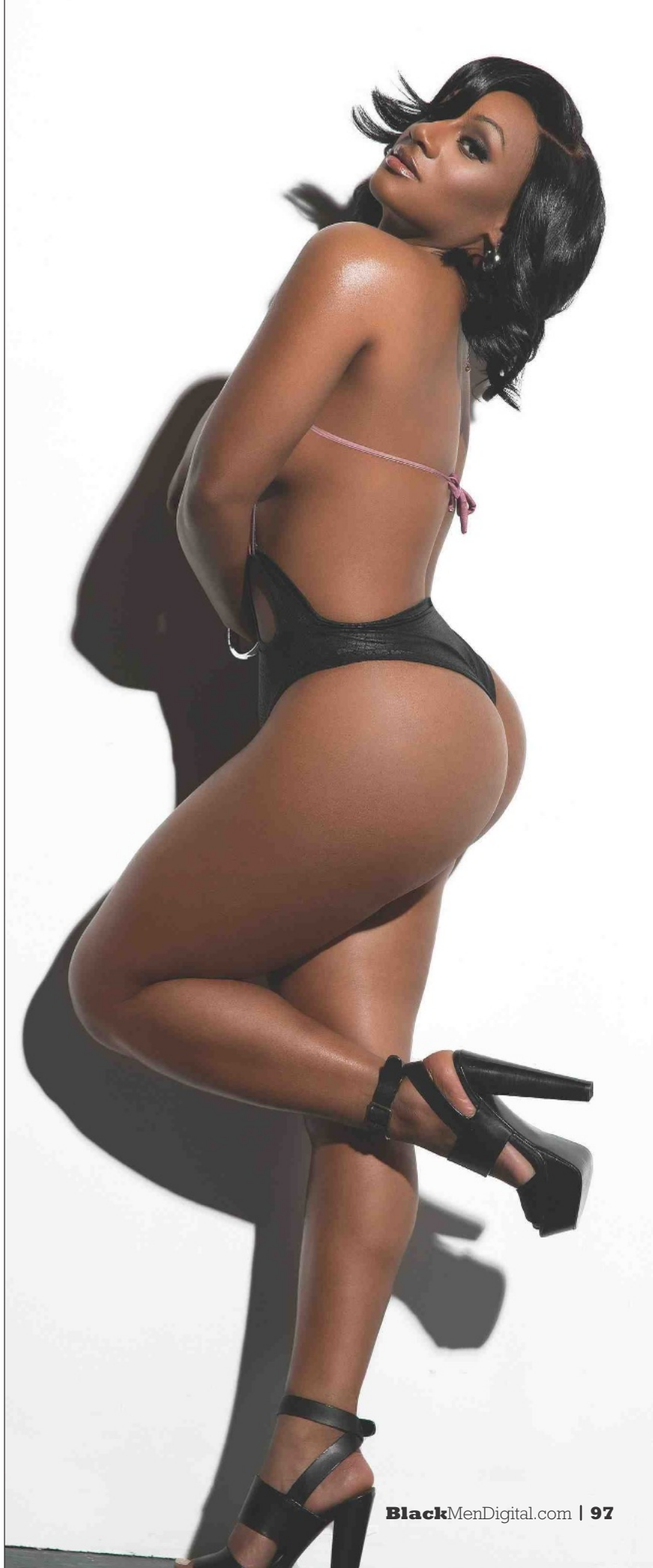
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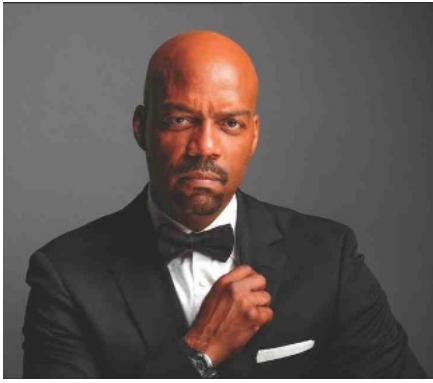
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skilled enough.



krystal







Photographer Aderon Mothersill
TSD Pose Workshop Model Coach: Kelsey Adams

Growing up in a military family where everyone from your father to your siblings and even your cousins and nephews are servicemen and women, you would think that you would eventually throw on a uniform and follow suit. This wasn't exactly what actor/director/writer/producer/instructor Shiek Mahmud-Bey had envisioned for his life's journey, though—neither was acting for that matter. In fact, according to Shiek, he thought he would one day become a million-dollar boxer. "I actually used to box. I was knocking cats out. My first fight was one minute and thirteen seconds of the first round!" he shared. However, a chance meeting with actor/director Adolph Caesar would soon put the Brooklyn, NY-born/Queens-raised actor on a different path, which would ultimately lead him to his life's true calling.

Early in life, Shiek's father—who was a sergeant major in the U.S. Army—instilled in him discipline—which is key in acting—along with the mantra: "Bury the man, complete the mission." His mother, on the other hand, provided

SHIEK MAH

FOR THE LOVE OF ACTING

Article by Emmanuel Ureña

him with artistic nourishment by taking Shiek, as well as other kids from their neighborhood, to Broadway plays and also held Music Appreciation Day every week where they all played musical choices from all different genres which they later discussed at the dining room table.

Years later, during Shiek's boxing days, his best friend—who was dating Adolph Caesar's daughter at the time—introduced Shiek to the actor/director. Caesar had already gained acclaim for his role as Sergeant Waters opposite Denzel Washington on the award-winning Off-Broadway play *A Soldier's Play*, and he was now opening a theatre company alongside fellow actors Roni Dengel and Fred Rolf. The Chameleons, as the company came to call themselves, would recruit kids from all over New York City and instruct them on the art of stage acting. They invited Shiek to join, and as he puts it, "...that's all she wrote, bro."

"I had to be there every Thursday or Tuesday in Harlem. And then, we used to work out of Adolph's brownstone. It was like 30 of us and I'm the only one still acting. That's where I got most of my training," Shiek said.

After some time working with The Chameleons, it was time for Shiek to test his acting chops. His first experience on stage was performing for a group of kids at the children's camp for the famous Hudson Guild Theatre in NYC.

"[The experience] was nice," he told us, but admitted that keeping their attention was the tricky part. "You wanted to say, 'Shut up! We're doing something over here!' [Laughs]. So, you learn to discipline yourself and using whatever is going on in the crowd and incorporating it into your acting. If there were cats yelling and screaming, then it would make me work harder to get their attention."

"Sometimes you can use improv—you'll blow your nose or something—and they'll be like, "Oooh!" and then you got them. Once you got them, you blow them away. That's when I knew that this was it for me," he added.

As time progressed so did Shiek's acting skills...so much so that he landed the role of boxer Rubin "Hurricane" Carter for the theatrical production of *The Way Out*—Denzel Washington played Carter in the film about the legendary boxer. Shiek garnered an award for Best Performance at the New York International Fringe Festival for his portrayal of Carter and his performance was noted as one that "will be remembered" by the *New York Times*. The *New York Daily*

News even went as far as saying, “Shiek’s fierce performance goes a long way towards making audiences forget Denzel Washington.”

Another of Shiek’s roles that captivated audiences was that of a Catholic Priest who was accused of pedophilia in the sold out play *Acts of Contrition*—a role that he had to fight for as the producers initially wanted to cast Edward Norton for the role.

“That was one of the hardest roles I had to play, but it was one of those roles that I wanted to do, because you don’t typically see a black bishop,” Shiek stated.

“It was about a man fighting for balance. He made a promise to God that if you take care of me and keep me away from my weakness, then I’ll be the best servant—and his weakness were kids, little boys. So, I had to break it down,” he told us of the difficult role.

Shiek’s class is not one of those classes where you can come in and stick around for months without gaining anything from it, though. His classes are about results!

He broke it down to us like this: “It’s an eight-week class—you can take it for 16 months, or even a third time. Now, by the third time you decide to re-up, before that third time is over, you have to book a job or you can’t come back. I don’t want professional students—I want professional actors. That’s why so many people in my class are working.

MAH-MUD-BEY

Shiek’s work is not only limited to the stage—he has also worked on TV shows and films alongside some of Hollywood’s biggest names. He notes his work on the Sidney Lumet-directed 1997 film *Night Falls on Manhattan* as his breakout project. He worked with actors like Andy Garcia, Richard Dreyfuss and the late James Gandolfini for this film. Other stars Shiek has shared the spotlight with include Morgan Freeman, Philip Seymour Hoffman and Robert DeNiro.

When asked what are some things he’s picked up from working with DeNiro, Shiek said, “I learned how to master the camera watching him. He’s brilliant in front of the camera and he’s intense. Once, he was having a heart attack and he did his work. He had his cardiologist on the set, and he broke it down. Every day I was so blessed to be on that set.”

Another thing that he learned from DeNiro, as well as every other actor he’s either worked with or has built bonds with—like Daniel Day-Lewis and Ving Rhames—is humility and, that at the end of the day, they’re all just regular people.

“DeNiro is a person. Philip Seymour Hoffman was a person. I met [Laurence Fishburne] when he did *Thurgood*. I went up to the room and talked to him. The people that are brilliant and honest off the screen as well as on the screen—that to me is a freaking star,” Shiek expressed. “These are the people that move me and inspire me at the same time, and that’s why I do things like collaborations. I’m blessed to be around cats who gave me an opportunity. This is my way of giving back.”

Shiek, also, gives back through his eight-week acting course. “I really just fell into teaching. I started a company out in Burbank, Calif., called 4140. It was a group of actors, and we would just get down. They were like, ‘Shiek, you need to teach.’ Teaching to me was for failed actors. I was like, ‘I’m not accepting failure,’” he admitted of his unwillingness to teach at first.

However, his attitude would soon change as his “students” began booking jobs. Soon his celebrity friends were reaching out to Shiek to run lines with them.

“The next thing you know, I’m working with Vanessa Williams. Vanessa and I worked on *Soul Food*! I worked with her for that audition! Then, more people started wanting to do it,” he told us.

My class is not just about acting—it’s a class about life. It’s about how to sustain yourself in this industry.”

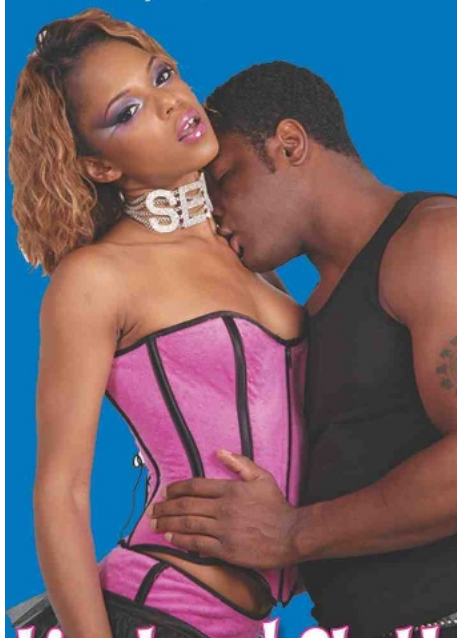
Currently, Shiek is also producing television shows and films—all of which include some of his students. He has a talk show in the works with Dr. LaSonia Barlow called “Psychological Perspectives with Doc B.” There is also a TV pilot that Shiek created with Paris Jones called “The Inner Circle,” which is a drama that centers on the lives of rehab patients in a 28-day, in-patient addiction recovery program. The actor/producer also is in the beginning stages of filming a movie titled *Isaac vs. The Devil*, which is about a man whose son is killed by a cop, and he in turn kidnaps the cop’s son.

Shiek Mahmud-Bey is living proof that when you’re destined to walk a certain path, you will eventually find your way...or it may find you, as was the case for Shiek. However, it’s what you do when you’ve arrived at the crossroads that will determine where you go in life. With the talent, passion and professionalism that Shiek brings to the table, there’s no denying that he’s skillfully navigating the road he was born to travel.

For more info on Shiek Mahmud-Bey and his many projects, or to sign up for his classes, visit: shiekstudio.com.

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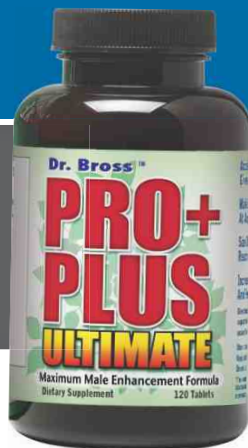
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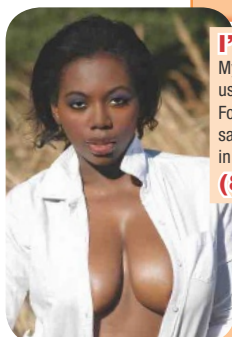
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Masika Kalysha

The Reality Of It All

Article by Kathy Iandoli

Anyone plugged into the matrix known as the "Love & Hip Hop" franchise will readily point out Masika Kalysha and her ever-developing storyline. Kalysha is equal parts gorgeous and feisty, but has endured her fair share of shade from fellow cast members, while casting a few deep shadows of her own. Many know her best from her recurring role on "Love & Hip Hop Hollywood" and from her tumultuous relationship with rapper Young Berg. But Masika has a long history in entertainment, having appeared in 80-plus music videos from the likes of heavy hitters like Wiz Khalifa and French Montana. Modeling also paid the bills, as Masika has spreads between the sheets of *Smooth*, *King* and *XXL*. However, music was one of her first loves and currently her main focus.

Masika, though, became reality TV gold and gossip rag fodder almost simultaneously, as her dealings with Berg on "Love & Hip Hop" became a focal point in the series and beyond. She was also involved with producer Mally Mall, which kicked off Mally's role in the "Love & Hip Hop" saga, as Masika found herself entangled in drama with Mally and his girlfriend Nikki Mudarris. It's a never-ending story that has everyone tuned in. But who really is Masika Kalysha?

The Chicago native was skipped a grade into high school and spent much of her teenage years sheltered at home by her parents. When colleges came a'calling, Masika had partial scholarship offers to places like Loyola and UCLA, but her parents opted for a local school.

"They told me I could go to design school because it was close enough where they could babysit me. Just so I could be in school, I went," Masika explains. "Both of my parents enrolled in my college and they made my brother transfer to my school so they could be on campus with me at all times." A misunderstanding involving a fashion show for a class left Masika kicked out of her home, when Masika's brother suggested to her parents that she wore a bikini for a fashion show. "I was so shy I had a swim top with a long skirt to the floor. My brother told my parents I was wearing a swimsuit, and they told him to bring me home. I got home and got beat down the stairs for walking around school in a swimsuit. They told me to get out and don't come back. It was crazy." Masika never went back home, got three jobs and fended for herself. Her next move was music, as she was writing songs since she was nine-years-old. Bound for Atlanta, she inked a deal with Block Entertainment, alongside Yung Joc, Young Jeezy and many others. "Me not knowing anything about anything, I got signed off two unmixed tracks and a few photos," she explains.







The situation turned uncomfortable when label figurehead Russell "Block" Spencer got a little too friendly with Masika. "Block made it extremely uncomfortable for me," she admits. "He made several advances that I wasn't comfortable with. It turned into a situation where I couldn't even go to the studio anymore." The music industry became an uphill battle. "Everyone wants to Tommy Mottola you, but nobody wants to Mariah Carey you," she says. Her acting and modeling careers were just starting to take off, so Masika made a big decision. "I was making a lot of money doing acting and modeling, so I said let me take off the stress of dealing with these loser men in this industry and put that to the side. I didn't quit—I just lost faith in people."

Masika saved her dough in the hopes of moving to L.A. At around the same time her girlfriend (video vixen Lashawna Threatt) tragically passed away on her 30th birthday, having fallen from a hotel room in Atlanta. "I went to her funeral, and they were reading her eulogy talking about how she was in a Bobby Valentino video and a Nuvo promo girl," she recalls. "At that moment, something clicked in my head. [Lashawna] did not know that she would leave the earth, and this would be what they would say about her." That moment changed her life. "I thought, if I died today, God forbid it said 'Here lies a video vixen.'"¹ She went home that day and packed her suitcase for Los Angeles, and never looked back.

At the suggestion of her two best friends, she tried out for "Love & Hip Hop Hollywood." As for producer Mally Mall, he was persona non grata initially. "[Love & Hip Hop] never even heard of his name," she explains. "When I was casted, I was single. I was in and out of another relationship for three years, and at the time we were still seeing each other but weren't in a relationship that was strong enough for me to bring that onto the show. He played basketball, so it probably would've interfered with his career anyway. So I was casted as a single person. When Mally approached me—he got my number from Justin Bieber—he had actually approached me several months before, and I told him, 'I didn't give you my number. Don't call me.'"



After meeting him in real life one night, Masika explained to Mally her new role on the show and the hot pursuit began. It started with business, as Masika was still actively recording music. "He was like, 'I could help you with your music,'" she tells. "Me, not realizing that he's not the greatest producer, said yes. I thought it was a good idea. I flew out to Vegas with the person I was working with as my manager at the time to meet with him, and we literally had a meeting about music. I think at that point he realized he had a better chance of securing a position on the show if we were dating. So he went full court press."

Her intentions didn't start as romantic. "I had no interest in him whatsoever," she says, "but he was very charming, very charismatic, so any girl being treated a certain way is going to enjoy it." After some coercion from Masika to the producers of the show, Mally Mall was given a big role, making the breakup a sticky situation. "Just because I was finished with the situation, doesn't mean America was finished with the situation," she says. "Even though I was over it, we couldn't just drop him. They have to know what happened. So we filmed with him a few times, and it was just bad. We ended up doing a breakup, where I told him this wasn't going to work and we should stick to business, all of this relationship stuff was ruining things. And we actually shot that. And he stormed off the set, threw his mic, said he was going to go take drugs and overdose and all this dramatic stuff. It was a whole dramatic scene. And that was that as far as I was concerned. We were done with the Mally Mall chapter, and I was continuing with my storyline."

Then along came Nikki. "Nikki tried to get on since the beginning. She tried to get on as Sincere's girlfriend, she tried to get on as Berg's girlfriend. She wasn't interesting, they didn't want her," Masika says. "So when she came back as Mally's girlfriend, oh-hai There's a love triangle. So, in all actuality, when I met Jamal, he had broken up with Nikki prior to that. So I feel like they both joined in cahoots to get on the show because they're both desperate and that's an interesting twist. The funniest thing is it didn't work for him. She got hired, and he didn't. I feel like everything he



did was to get on TV and to appear or look famous. That's all he wanted." While the short-lived affair made her feel "100% used," she sees the bright side of it. "At the end of the day it did make for good TV!" she jokes.

One thing that she doesn't joke about is her music. Masika is back to recording, as her single "Hella Hollywood" is making its rounds, as she's gearing for her reintroduction as a musician. "I have some really amazing records that I'm working on, and fun records for the summer," she says. "I'm enjoying this chapter in my life. I've been waiting for it since I've was nine-years-old."

On the TV side, Masika has two new shows she's working on, along with a movie role in the upcoming thriller *The Prey* with Danny Trejo. "I'm in army clothes and got dirt on my face. It's a whole different look for me," she says. Add to that a makeup line, a skin care line, and a fashion line in the works—Masika Kalysha is a busy woman.

If given the chance, would she venture back into the world of reality TV again? "Absolutely," she says. "I would 100% do it again, but I would come in differently. I'm no longer green to it all."



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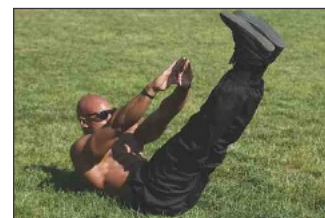
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Exercise 2: V-Ups

Lie down on your back and extend your arms above your head. The back of your hands should touch the floor while your palms face the ceiling. Keep your legs straight and lift them up, and at the same time raise your upper body off of the floor and reach for your toes with your hands (making something that looks like a "V").

HOW TO GET A 6 PACK FAST AS F*CK!

Photography by Brian Ryder (highlifevisuals.com / IG: @highlifevisuals)

Everyone wants six-pack abs, but the majority of people don't know how to build them. You are not going to get a six-pack from "starting to eat a little better recently" or doing occasional crunches. Crunches just aren't a very effective core exercise because they don't target every part of the abdominal region. There are many better ways to exercise your core. *Black Men* enlisted the assistance of fitness expert, Brandon Carter, to show you how it's done!

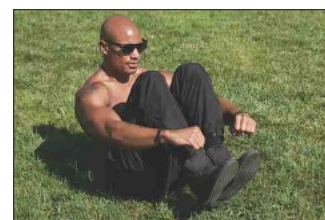
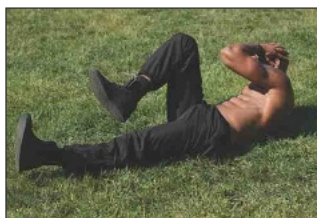
Brandon Carter is the author of two best-selling books: *Ultimate Cuts* and *Ultimate Mass*. His Facebook page has 980,000 "likes" and his YouTube page has over 30,000,000 views.

For this lesson, Brandon has chosen four exercises that hit every section of the core.

Do four sets of each exercise to failure (meaning, do them in until you can't do anymore with strict/perfect form) and rest 30-60 seconds between each set.

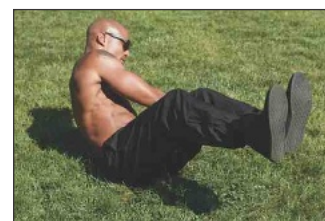
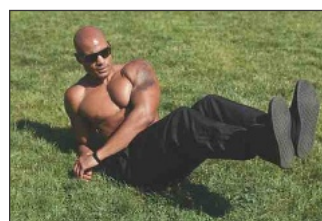
Exercise 1: Bicycles

Lie face up on your back and place your hands behind your head, lightly supporting it with your fingers. Bring your knees to your chest and lift your shoulder blades off the floor without pulling on the neck. Rotate to the left, bringing the right elbow towards the left knee as you straighten the other leg. Switch sides, bringing the left elbow towards the right knee. Continue alternating sides in a 'pedaling' motion.



Exercise 3: Star Fish Crunch

Lay flat on your back. Extend your arms over your head and spread your legs out so that your body forms an "X" on the ground. Bring your torso up and tuck your knees into your chest at the same time.



Exercise 4: Roman Twist

Seated on the floor with your knees bent, heels on the floor, lean back until the core is activated then lift your feet off the ground. Rotate your torso from one side of the body to the other in a swift but controlled manner.

The great thing about these four exercises is that you can perform them almost anywhere. All you need is the ground and gravity. If you perform each of these exercises with strict form, one after the other - each until failure - you can just add time to each round or add more rounds as you become stronger and gain muscle endurance.

For more free workouts, check out Brandon's YouTube page: [YouTube.com/HighLifeWorkout](https://www.youtube.com/HighLifeWorkout).

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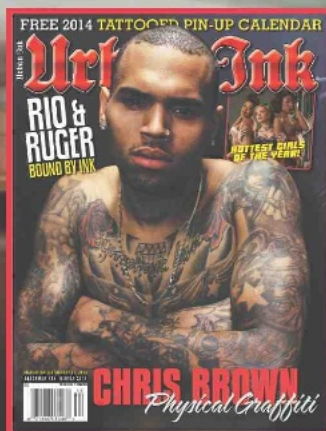
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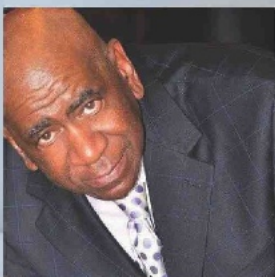
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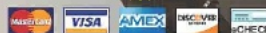
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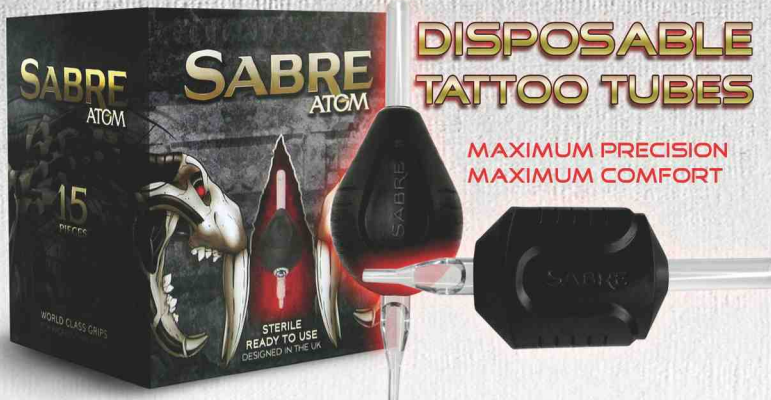
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