

ISSUE TWENTY-FOUR

TUSH



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Yourself For
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OUR NEW CRUSH

DAMI ONIRU



**Bolatito Bashiru
Eniola Omoniyi
Fola Sheva
Ozedikus Nwanne
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REMA

POSTER BOY FOR GENERATION Z



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EDITORS NOTE

TIME FOR GENERATION Z HAS COME

It is getting harder to keep with new generations. No sooner have older ones come to grips with Millennials than Generation Z has arrived in the ecosystem.

Though the first of Generation Z are finishing school, they are not interested in careers. They prefer “side” work or setting up their own business online and are more attuned to opportunities living online.

Like Millennials, they expect instant satisfaction but their ambitions are said to be more realistic, more to do with financial stability and social responsibility.

Most Gen Zs have likely never posted a letter, read a newspaper or even used a phone with a numeric keypad. Across the developed world, Millennials, who reached adulthood in the early 2000s, embraced the digital revolution and helped drive its innovation, while Gen Z was born into a digital world.

In the entertainment industry, we have seen the exponential growth of Gen Z in a space where Millennials are finding it hard to adapt. This edition combines the faces from Millennials and Gen Z with our cover star taking the lead for Gen Z.

Rema who is our youngest cover personality so far became a widespread interest on social media after his introduction by Don Jazzy; this is one of many cases where Gen Z is utilizing internet penetration to their advantage – saw a challenge on the internet, participated on the internet, reached out to via internet, got announced via the internet and living up via internet.

We also have other amazing personalities for your reading pleasure including – Dami Oniru, Fola Sheva, my personal favorite – Eniivy, Uthman Wahab amongst other interesting articles.

I urge you to read, share and also follow us on verified social media accounts @TushMagazineNig, on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Yours in Love,

Auslem Jon

Generation Name	Births Start	Births End	Youngest Age Today*	Oldest Age Today*
Xennials	1975	1985	34	44
Millennials Generation Y, Gen Next	1980	1994	25	39
iGen / Gen Z	1995	2012	7	24
Gen Alpha	2013	2025	1	6

Source - Careerplanner

MY NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE

written by
Ljiljana Kostic

It is a general knowledge that countries outside of the African continent receive very biased, skewed and limited information; and therefore, have inadequate knowledge about what life is really like here.

The western world is fed with images of poverty, epidemics, crime, underdevelopment and just a glance of beautiful Safaris and animals.

When I decided to relocate to Nigeria, the unpleasant images dominated my expectation. To my greatest surprise, Nigeria demystified those stereotypes. The beauty of its complexity and diversity is enchanting and breathtaking. Nigeria has it all! Living here is akin to exploring several countries at once.

There is nothing you can't find in Nigeria! From the ancient tribes living in huts to the lavish modern houses, the fanciest cars, the highest levels of education...Nigeria is endowed with mountains, beaches, rainforest, desert, amazing nature, and diverse people; Creative youths, the most beautiful fashion, nightlife, culture, incredible arts...Nigeria has it all! Nigeria is a country of contrasts.

I must confess that I was amazed at my first arrival in the capital, Abuja; what

a beautiful city! It really is no different than any European capital or city in the United States of America. It is a place with opportunity for all. I am amazed to see how people from every part of Nigeria, ranging from different States, cultures, tribes, religions live in peace and harmony. I was also surprised that the city donned with so many architectural styles that you get overwhelmed with a feeling of traversing several continents at once. I learned that previous governments contracted western and local companies to design and develop the Abuja; Asians, Turkish, American and other nationalities equally contributed towards the creation of this first-class city.

My initial plan was to stay in Nigeria for a year, but I quickly became "trapped" by Nigerian "magic". The stories of Nigerian history, tribes, culture, beliefs and languages lured and enticed me. The beautiful nature, amazing arts, and creativity have become a part of me. In Abuja, I get to enjoy arts, theatre, fashion shows, supermarkets, dining, and business but also still be part of Nigerian culture, traditions, and history.





What I definitely love the most about Nigeria are the people! Happy Nigerian people! The people are welcoming and have accepted me as their own and are always happy to help, chat, work with and interact with me. In their usual hospitable nature, they have given me a Nigerian name, a title and taught me everything about their customs and traditions. The resilient Nigerian people, who no matter what happen in their country, remain strong, positive, faithful and happy. The strength and resilience of Nigerian people are immeasurable; their tenacious belief is so fascinating that they can certainly teach other nationalities a thing or two about persistence.

I am often asked why I love Nigeria. How is one supposed to answer that question? It is just like being asked why you love your husband, or mother or a best friend. All the things we love have faults, but we love them despite. We see something in them that others don't. We love the way they make us feel. I love the smell of Nigeria. I can't explain the smell, but I know I love it. I love how green it is and all the incredible, unknown sorts of trees and plants that grow here despite the intense heat during

the dry season. I love the laugh of its people, their songs and the way they dance even when there is no music playing. I love the colours of their traditional clothes as much as I love the colours of the sky above Nigeria- always new, unexpected, perfect blends. I love the loud and exciting way Nigerians celebrate God, full of faith, but are still afraid of "juju" magic. Nigerian people are warm, loving, caring and full of life. There are so many intelligent, creative and talented people here, it is amazing!

I have found a second home here. Nigeria and its people have given me so much and I always try to give back as much as possible.

This year, I have decided to use my voice and my blog www.lilianakstory.com and Instagram profile [liliana_k_story](https://www.instagram.com/liliana_k_story) to show people abroad what Nigeria is really like and all the beauties it possesses. I want them to see that life here can be amazing and that Nigeria is so much more than the negative stories that we watch on Television and the internet. I want them to see another side of Nigeria: nature, the culture, the education, the traditions, the history, fun and amazing people.



FOLA SHEVA

Discusses Resurgence, New Music Business Strategies & Plans to Win

written by Ibironke Tobi

As Nigerian music industry keeps growing, we've had a lot of up and coming artists who step out to share their stories through music.

Nigerian born Rapper, Folarin Ayeni popularly known as Fola Sheva is a recording artist, rapper, producer and a lawyer.

Fola Sheva started his musical journey at an early age. He has a musical background from childhood, knowing how to play instruments like the piano and the guitar.

Nicknamed back in high school after the famous footballer Shevchenko because he was a fast football player back then, Sheva also enjoyed listening to music especially RnB and this has always been his forte.

As his interest in rap grew, young Fola Sheva took interest in rappers like Jazreel, eLDee the don, Terry tha Rapman, Nas and Dido.

When he started his career as a rapper, he faced the problem of juggling his career and his education. Although it was tough, Fola Sheva was able to create a niche for himself with music from his school days.

However, he was and is still known not to have a specific genre of music.

"Different people know about Folarin at different times. This has been one of my advantages as well as my disadvantages at the same time, in the sense that people have not been able to get a stamp on my music. They are always like _we know you do music but what type of music do you do_" he said

As a versatile artist, Fola Sheva, unlike some other artists, doesn't see music as a job but an emotion. "I don't think music is one sound...."

"When I first started, I felt like I was a rapper, it didn't matter what instrumentals they were going to play for me, rapping was like my go-to area. That was my default mode."

However, Fola Sheva further explained that he has learned to become a versatile artist, who doesn't just rap but also sings.

"When I hear a beat and it speaks to me in a manner that I feel I need to sing on it I sing on it, if I have to rap on it I rap on it, and if I have to do both of them I do both of them on it. I have learned not to go into the studio with a preconceived plan or thought"

He also shared that he tries to protect his mind and music from being influenced by different sounds from other artists.

"I try not to listen to music; you can't

even the thought of juggling a corporate job and music seems impossible to the average man. I guess we can call Fola Sheva a superhuman.

He explained how he has learned to balance both being an artist and a lawyer;

"I'm still on that journey on learning how to balance music and law together. I take each day as it comes. It's almost like having a misplaced identity.

All through the 6 years Sheva has been in the music industry, he has also been a lawyer. He didn't deny that there are a lot of challenges he faces, juggling both law and music together.

He says; "At some point, I will have to let go of one of them. It is unrealistic for me to be trying to chase these two as aggressively as I am."

•
I'm still on that journey on learning how to balance music and law together.

come to my house and meet the TV on a music channel. I don't want to be influenced by the sound."

Sheva, known as a storyteller by his fans, when asked what he thinks he gives to the people who listen to his music he said, "I feel like I'm giving honestly to them. I feel like music is the one thing that helps speak my truth"

"One thing I want people to get when listening to my music is honesty. I write all my songs and anytime I write music I feel like I'm giving a part of myself."

Sheva has a day job as a lawyer and

For a year and a few months now, Fola Sheva has had more time to work on his music without the usual break that is caused by his job as a lawyer. Having more time to music has opened his eyes to see the difference between the period he gave more time to work as a lawyer and the period he has given more time to music. Since he doesn't have his education to interrupt the development of his music unlike when he was an undergraduate, he has been able to stay consistent.

"The large chunk of my brain is dedicated to music at the moment.... I think my biggest growth as an individual in terms of learning individually has occurred in the last 8 months, I've discovered certain things I didn't know about myself. This uninterrupted period has also made me a strategist"

Sheva further shares that he already has a roster for the year containing all the things he needs to do and has gotten better with organizing.

●

I woke up one morning and said to myself, time is going ooo, I'd not been making the right moves....In an actual sense, I've been playing around.

Sheva who didn't have a team before said he used to be his own manager, PR, Writer, Producer, and brand manager.

"I found out that I was only chasing my tail; around and around."

People know Sheva to mostly talk about women in his music. "I love women!" he said, explaining how easy it is to write about women.

"The attention from women is something I've been used to. Even from primary school and college. I feel like first some of these women like me because of my honesty. I'm always really honest with what I say, I don't do pass myself."

He also shared that writing about women comes with the "brand" and that it's his default mode.

Fola Sheva talked about his Album "When The World Turns Story" which was released in November 2017 just when he started becoming a bit consistent with music. However, he had a break for some months, which led to his first music video from the album to be released in September 2018.

He said within that break it felt like life has been stuck and he then got his perspective together.

"I woke up one morning and said to myself, time is going ooo, I'd not been making the right moves....In an actual sense, I've been playing around"

Sheva talking on his genre of music, he explains, "At the moment I've coined my own world, I'm not just Hip Hop, I'm more! I infuse rapping, singing, and folk; I'm just doing my own thing"

Sheva's tone currently is more melody-driven and filled with honesty but rap is one major part of his music.

"I'm still rapping; I'm never going to stop rapping"

Fola Sheva has a new project that is due to be released in the last quarter of the year. He shares that the album is ready and he has been on the edge to release it but he has chosen not to be in haste and has kept modifying and organizing the new project so that when it is finally released, it will worth the wait. He doesn't want to chase his own tail like before.

He further disclosed the title of the forthcoming album- "Heart of Gold"

Explaining the album title, "I feel like I have a heart of gold. But the title itself has different meanings. Just because a thing shines, it doesn't mean it is good"

On the Heart of Gold Album, there are collaboration tracks with artists like Ice Prince, Jesse Jagz and so on.

"It's just a body of work that I'm excited about. The album is still going through structuring"

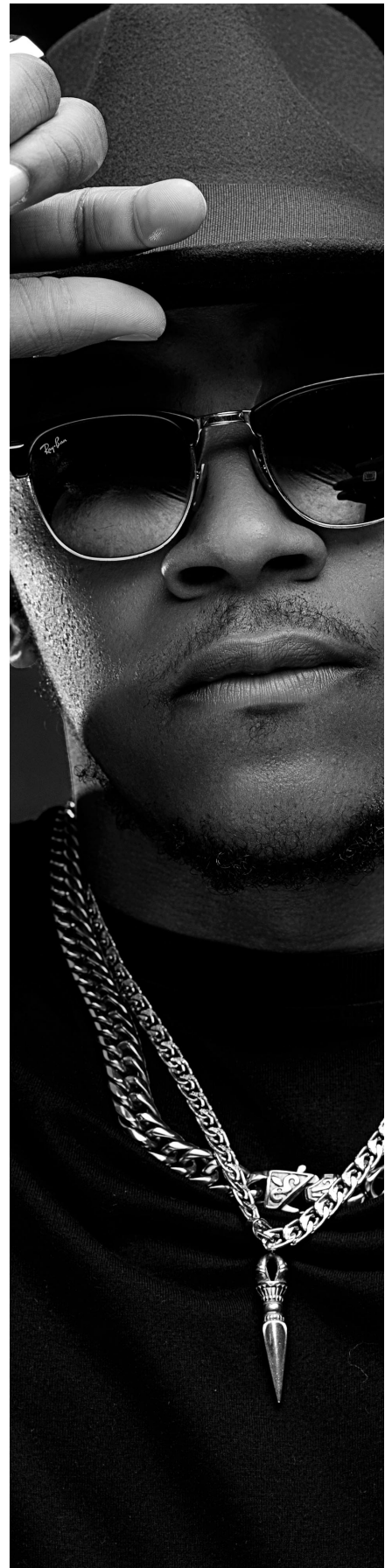
Fola Sheva uses his music to say his truth. Unlike most upcoming artist whose goal is to have a wide fan base, Sheva is only after telling his stories and letting people see things from his own point of view.

"I want more shows. I don't want a national pool of fans."

"I'm not afraid to expose my vulnerability. It doesn't have to be the truth but it is my truth"

These words were said to buttress how he wants his music to impact and speak to people, rather than give people music they can only dance to and not understand a word from the music lyrics, or understand whatever message or story he is trying to tell.

All Folarin Ayeni wants is for people to remember his music for honesty even



The 7 Strangest Diseases Ever

written by Alexander Ndace

There are healthcare inventions in the world that have been able to combat and eradicate different diseases, ailments and infections. Not even the fear and fatality of cancer has been discovered but the perseverance to pass through chemotherapy can be the bravest steps of tumorigenic patients beating cancer and its wrath. Nevertheless, there are still some deadly diseases out there:

AIDS

It's been more than 25 years that the first patient of the Acquired Immune Deficiency syndrome was tested positive and the world's brightest scientists and researchers have failed to find a cure asides minor hopes that were presented to the world

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

As people age, especially old athletes that engaged in contact sports forgetfulness has been identified in most old people. Till now, there is no known cure for this nervous system disorder.

COMMON COLD

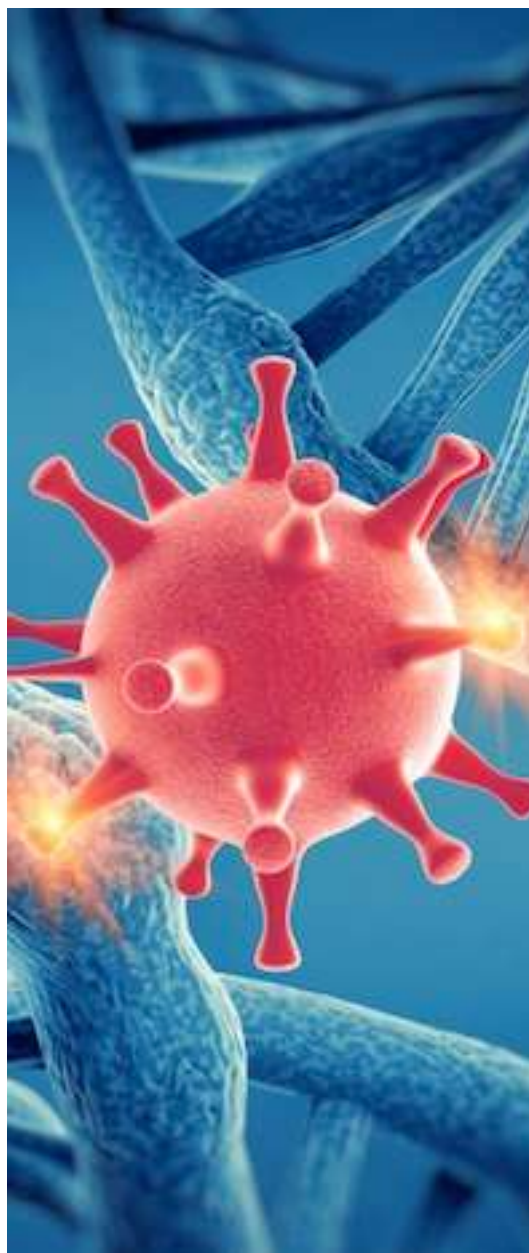
Cough, headache and running nose are associated with common cold but there is so much for an infection in which the most effective cure is chicken soup.

AVIAN FLU

Human beings still have no control and cure for a disease carried by birds and it can also be transmitted by vulnerable humans among themselves. The death rate for this infection is as high as 60% but the highest chance of contacting it is through direct contacts with infected pets especially parrot.

PICA

The disease known to be associated with mineral deficiency makes infected patients crave glue and clay and the worst substances ever. Health experts have not discovered a



suitable cure for this weird infection.

AUTOIMMUNE DISORDERS

This is the collective name for afflictions such as lupus and other autoimmune disorders that treat body's organs and other body functions as invaders. Doctors can do less about this except to curtail the symptoms.

MORGELLOS DISEASE

Crispy strands and tacky skins are the symptoms of this illness. As worse as it may seem, psychotic delusions are responsible for this disease, according to clinical experts. The symptoms are real.



Dami Oniru

Daring to Defy the Standard

If you listen to Nigerian music beyond the playlist of club DJs and that of the disc seller down your street, you would be aware of the ongoing shift in the music culture. If you read Nigerian music beyond the gossip on Instablog, you would know the name, Dami Oniru. Native compared her riffs on FALLIN to the chord progressions on Rihanna's STAY. Lucid Lemons described her artistry as 'affective singing and relatable songwriting.' I'd say her music is made of a comforting rhythm with a soulful texture. Dami Oniru is a sing-out-my-soul kind of artist, but with all her vocal gift she won't sing a note of her praise. If you press for a boastful statement she'd tell you, 'go listen to my stuff', or her favorite line: 'I am going to be here for a longtime.'

Written by Ibironke Tobi

Four years of making music professionally has seen Dami experience progress – creatively, in popularity, and in perception. 'I think watching myself grow as an artist. Watching myself grow as a person and the way I do things now is an achievement', she said. This is amidst the wave of having to complete her first degree program, continuous artistic experimentation, and going through a quiet label exit. The soulful songstress has put out 2 body of works, tens of singles, multiple collaborations (including one with V.E.C.), performed at a run of Lagos' trendiest events and acquired more evidences of an advancing music life. Dami, in a 2017 interview with Pulse, revealed her early struggle with the uncertainty of how her music would be received. Fast-forward to 2019, she is as assured as Wizkid performing to an audience in Ojuelegba, with her rollouts – the feedbacks and fan notes have helped in her transformative experience.

It does not take much discerning to trace the artistic exploration in Dami's music, particularly for a listener who has been following the singer from the primal days of 'Iyawo' and 'See.' The warming innocence of her early compositions seems to have been charged up with pop infusions on the Cliché EP of 2017. However, her evident and exciting synergy with Remy Baggins has given her RnB side a careful nudge, making her sound not too far from that of influentials

like Brandy, Usher. On the Bri Lounge singer's list of fave, she mentioned Santi twice, alongside names like Post Malone, Bryson Tiller, Travis Scott. The attraction to Santi is no surprise considering he is a leading force in the revolutionary push for a diversified Nigerian music culture – a movement Dami is proud to identify with.

The conversation on the emerging force of genre diversifiers like Dami and the strictness of the mainstream construct against nonconformist ethos, has been on the board for sometime. Even though layers of the mainstream walls have been pulled off, some remain impregnable for the daring force of nonconforming artists who many have dubbed 'alternative artists' – a term that has irked some of these emerging artists. Dami, responding to my question on this subject, told me, 'ideally, I make music that is not mainstream. My music is alternative in some way.' But alternative is not how Dami wants to be described except it means 'being expressive and comfortable' in her own distinct way. It is logical to think up thoughts of Dami of challenging the status quo which has a stereotypic construct. Dami is in-fact not hiding this non-conformist nature of hers – she is not hiding making her own rules under a coat. 'I don't like rules', she said with two support examples to nail her point.

Beyond music, Dami works in Tech

“Alternative is not how Dami wants to be described except it means 'being expressive and comfortable' in her own distinct way.”

and she has her hand in philanthropy where she, along with friends, set up a foundation named, The Raising an Equal Community Foundation, to help people from ages zero - twenty-five to find fair chances at life - be it in the area of sharing clothing materials, opportunities and other life-improving offerings. Although The REC Foundation is not fully-formed, an orphanage home and a correction centre for women located in Lekki Free Zone benefitted from this thoughtful initiative. 'We gave out 500 pairs of shoes, clothing materials and more.' It is no surprise that her long term aspiration is to 'solve the problem of people of the world', even though she understands her limitation. Dami Oniru says she'd try.

PACKAGING 101

How to position yourself for the right opportunities

Written by Phidelia Imiegha

Opportunities are not always lying around waiting to be grabbed, but sometimes they are. However, they are fleeting and they don't care if you are ready or not. They require you to take initiative, step out of your comfort zone and apply yourself. Only meaningful actions will translate into possibilities for you. Consider the soil; it doesn't care about your need for food. It cares about your initiative to plant the seed. The key to creating and attracting more opportunities is definitive action.

How do you position yourself for the right opportunities though? Nigerians call it 'packaging'. You've got to work on yourself and your environment to attract the right opportunities.

Here are some things you can do.

1) Look Inwards, know yourself.

This is a foundational step that you must take. To know yourself means knowing what you desire, what your personality traits are, where your strengths and weaknesses lie, and how to use these to your advantage. Take time to scrutinize yourself and understand the things that make you tick. Self-awareness will open your mind to your most intimate motivations and that of others towards you. It will also help you to decide what opportunities you

desire. Only by knowing what you seek, can you go after it. Visualize and write down where you want to be and the opportunities you need to get there. Then set SMART goals that can help you get there. Goals help you stay on course and on schedule. Goals also help you filter out distractions along the way, so you can stay alert and focused on the important things. Without clarity of where you are going, you may end up somewhere you'd rather not be.

2) Explore, Learn and Network

The world is filled with opportunities but you'll never learn of them or grab them if you don't leave your comfort zone. Attend free events, conferences or seminars in the industry you're looking for opportunities in. Network, introduce yourself, tell people what you can offer – some of the best opportunities fall on your laps when you least expect it. If you're trying to meet someone who you don't have direct access to, find a mutual friend who does, and request an introduction. Sometimes, you may even have to be introduced to the person who will introduce you to them. Don't falter, determination produces results.

3) Surround yourself with inspiring people

The attitudes of the people around you play a big role in shaping your attitude as well as the quality of opportunities that you find. Your circle can either push you towards your dream or keep you stagnant. Their lifestyles can either motivate you or discourage you. To get ahead in life and attract the best opportunities, choose wisely whom you spend most of your time with. Surround yourself with positive, inspiring people. A continued association with positive, supportive and inspiring people will influence your future because you subconsciously start to model these behaviours. Likewise, negative people significantly impact their surroundings, often lacking ambition and spreading pessimistic thoughts. So, make sure to start and nurture relationships with people whose lifestyles and choices inspire you to do better.

4) Let your work do the work

Are you an amazing writer? Then create a blog and start publishing articles or submit to other magazines or journals. Do you have an eye for fashion and style? Start sharing blogs or vlogs sharing your fashion tips and tutorials. Are you amazing at graphic design? Are you a badass digital marketer? Share some of your coolest tips and tricks online. The more information you put out there, the more

“Open yourself up to alternate opportunities that may have not been on your radar.”

people will recognize your name and think of you as an expert. You must position yourself as an expert in your field, to be recognized as such. By showing that you are great at what you do, your chances for getting opportunities and offers will increase exponentially. Make sure to keep track of all your work, content, accomplishments in a portfolio, blog or an online resume.

5) Remain open to alternate Opportunities

You might set out with a goal in mind of exactly what you want to do and how you want to do it, but rarely will life work out exactly how you think it will. Open yourself up to alternate opportunities that may have not been on your radar.

For instance, a writer can go on to take a corporate communications or brand management job where they will still be telling stories with their skills. A graphic designer may find themselves accepting an opportunity to do UI/UX design. It might even be a complete pivot from what you wanted when you set out, but the best opportunities aren't always what you envisioned. Sometimes opportunities that use your skills are different than what you expect.



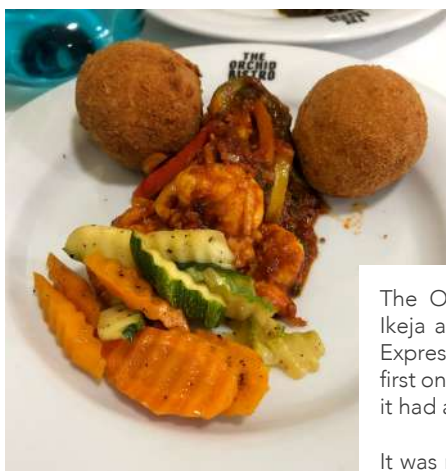
HOPPING COZY OUTDOOR SPOTS IN LAGOS

Written by Mercy Imiegha

As the Lagos restaurant and bar scene continues to grow, so do the opportunities for dining and drinking outdoors. There's little better than enjoying good food and cheer outside, with a view of the skyline.

I had presumed that one major drawback that outdoor spots in Lagos may experience would be constant rain during the rainy season, but I quickly realized that most, if not all of these spots, have indoor spaces as well.

Lagos has an impressive array of unique outdoor restaurants and bars, and so offers a lot to both Lagosians and Tourists alike. However, with a wide variety to choose from, here are the 5 spots I checked out during my tour:



THE ORCHID BISTRO

58A, Isaac John Street, Ikeja.

The Orchid Bistro has two branches in Lagos; one in Ikeja and another in Victoria Island (called Orchid Bistro Express). I chose to visit the one in Ikeja because it was the first one opened, and from pictures online, I could tell that it had a bigger outdoor space.

It was raining when I got there, and so I had to sit inside the restaurant while waiting for the rain to subside. The general ambience of the indoor space was great, there was classical music playing in low volume, and the waiter was very helpful with his menu suggestions. I ordered the Prawn Relish and Mixed Fruit Smoothie, which was a great choice, even though I felt the portion of the food could have been bigger. Their food menu is very extensive with breakfast to dinner, mains, sides and dessert inclusive.

Thankfully, it stopped raining so I had the chance to sit at the outdoor space, and the waiter was kind enough to find a mini Bluetooth speaker so I could have music playing outside. This space is unlike any other space I've visited in Lagos. If you're drawn to spending time around plants and nature, then you could easily decide to live there. The outdoor space at Orchid Bistro was designed primarily using plants, real plants, by the way, to create a garden ambience. The space simply exuded an air of tranquility, the waiters were kind and well-spoken and the service was fast and impressive.

Damage:

Prawn Relish (Spicy prawns served with sweet potato parcels) - N6000

Mixed Fruit Smoothie - N1500



NOK BY ALARA

12A, Akin Olugbade Street,
Victoria Island.

This restaurant bills itself as a Fine Dining Contemporary Pan-African Restaurant.

Nok by Alara has an indoor restaurant, outdoor garden restaurant and a concept store.

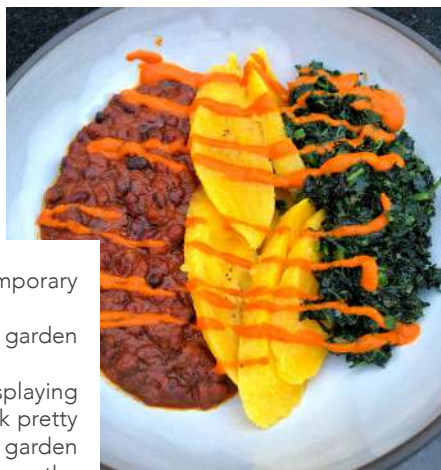
Nok garden's very unique and eclectic space, displaying vibrant furniture and decor pieces, makes it look pretty as a picture. There was no music playing at the garden on the evening I visited, not sure if this is a regular, so the atmosphere was generally quiet.

It took me nothing short of 10 minutes to select a meal from 3 extensive menus and I finally chose the "Red Red" Beans Stew with Steamed Plantain, simply because I'd been craving beans for quite some time. I thought the beans could have tasted less sour and spicier but I wouldn't say the food was terrible, I'm excited to revisit and try other options from the menu.

The concept store, called Alara, collects and stocks various fashion, art and design objects from all over Africa, alongside western brands.

Damage:

"Red Red" Beans Stew with Steamed Plantain - N3200
Coke - N700



BOLIVAR BAR

Plot B20, Wole Olateju Crescent,
Lekki.

This gem is located in the heart of Lekki Phase 1, just by the Lagoon waterside. Having visited this spot at night in the past, it was definitely a different experience being there in the early evening. One thing I've always taken out of Bolivar Bar is great vibes from the music and the ambience of the space.

The space is adorned with a lot of Wall Murals and Sculptures which makes the design really gorgeous. There are regular outdoor seats, hammocks and cabanas, which used to be free in the past, from what I remember, but are charged for now. I was told to either pay fifty thousand Naira or spend up to thirty-five thousand Naira on a bottle, to get access to the Cabanas. I wasn't having any of it, I had experienced sitting on the cabana in the past and that was enough for me Lol.



The Menu at Bolivar Bar is very sparse. It shouldn't be your first choice if you're looking for a space with fine dining because they only serve finger foods. I ordered a Hamburger with fries on the side and it was a fairly good tasting burger. There is a gallery in the premises which houses some good paintings and I got myself a cute painting postcard.

Damage:

"Red Red" Beans Stew with Steamed Plantain - N3200
Coke - N700

ATMOSPHERE ROOFTOP

**The Roof Terrace, Lennox Mall,
Admiralty Way, Lekki Phase 1.**

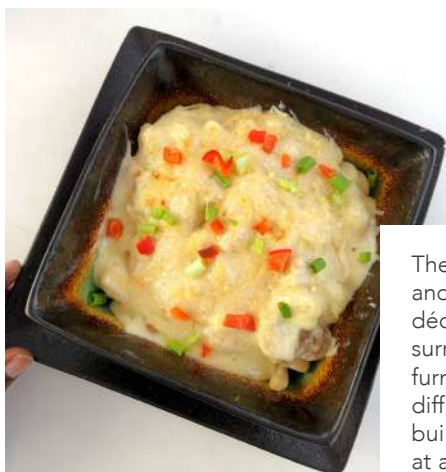
There is a growing number of rooftop restaurants and bars in Lagos, but this one has the most stunning décor I have seen. The restaurant is spacious, surrounded by a lot of greens and is beautifully furnished. I must admit though, that it was a little bit difficult locating the entrance to the space. The main building elevator was faulty, and there were no signs at all or security guards in place, to direct intending visitors to the entrance.

The menu was not extensive, so it was easy to settle for the Alfredo Pasta and a glass of homemade lemonade. The Pasta was basically Mac and Cheese and could've used much less cheese than what was served. I cannot recommend the pasta but I'd be willing to go back and try something else if the menu is expanded.

Generally, Atmosphere Rooftop could be a great place to get drinks after work while enjoying the view of the skyline. It's also an "Instagrammable" space for picture lovers.

Damage:

Alfredo Pasta - N4000
Homemade Lemonade - N2000



HARDROCK CAFE

Plot 3&4, Block XVI, Oniru Estate, Victoria Island.

As a beach lover, this space could not have been left out of my list. Hardrock cafe Lagos is situated just by the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, which if you already haven't guessed, makes it a very relaxing space, thanks to calming sounds of the waves and the soothing ocean breeze.

The classic RnB music playing contributed to how much I enjoyed being in this place. I ordered the Smokehouse Chicken and a Bitter Lemon, and the speed with which the food was served was very much unexpected. The waiter had asked if I wanted the chicken spicy and I agreed, but the level of pepper I tasted in the chicken threw me off balance. I adjusted anyways and enjoyed the roasted chicken and fries on the side.

The beach is freely accessible by visitors from the outdoor space of the cafe, so I took a walk down to the shore, sat on the sand for a bit, took pictures and just enjoyed watching the waves of the ocean. The outdoor space of Hardrock cafe is very family-friendly, and a great place to get food and catch up with a group of friends.

Damage:

Smokehouse Chicken - N5800

Bitter Lemon - N700



WHY THE 9 TO 5 LIFE SUCKS FOR SOME OF US

Written by Joyce Imiegha

The 9 to 5 life is a tree, and I am a fish who can't climb them.



We despise the endless routine and do not understand the need for strict workplace norms. We really hate wearing those formals to work; we prefer working in casual, comfortable clothes. We do not want to sit on a desk for 8/9 hours and then go home to eat and sleep.

Sometimes, we honestly do not feel the need to get on a long commute to work when we can actually get the job done while

working from home. We easily get distracted, exhausted and mentally drained just having to unnecessarily interact with too many people in a day.

We do not like the fact that our bosses tend to micro manage us sometimes; we do not enjoy the attention of that nosy colleague who wants to always have shallow conversations with us. And no, we cannot stand the other annoying colleague who constantly shuts the lids of our laptops in a bid to get us to take breaks from work.

Don't worry. There's nothing wrong with you if you feel this way, and there are more of your kind. The creatives especially, misfits you dare say. Humans are different, and a good number of them are simply not built or tailored to survive the endless dynamics of working a 9 to 5 job.

This is not to say there aren't great places to work where people love their jobs; in fact, a lot of startups are beginning to adopt better work cultures today. But ultimately, you do not need to be a genius to realize and agree that the 8/9 hour work duration doesn't make sense given the human brain was not



**Maybe we were
built to create, to
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8/9 hour onsite work
routine.**

designed for it and we are now in a knowledge economy as opposed to an industrial one which dominated the 1960s.

The 8-hour work day was a byproduct of the industrial revolution; working in a factory was not cognitively demanding or deep work. So, companies that maximize production had people work as long as they could without physical harm, and that totally made sense. But the industrial revolution ended more than 50 years ago and we are a lot smarter now and should know that you can only get so much active cognitive work done from a human being in so much time.

Whether they be physically or cognitively demanding tasks, most people tend to perform their best either in the earlier part of the day

(i.e. larks) or in the later part of the day (i.e. owls). These individual differences are rooted in our bodies unique biological rhythms- when various hormones associated with energy and focus are released, and when our body temperature rises and falls. — Steve Magness.

When you look around you, you see how a bunch of (un)happy people constantly count the days left until the next weekend, public holiday and annual leave simply because the majority of us are busy exchanging time for money, instead of money for time.

Maybe we were built to create, to be free of the nearly compulsory daily 8/9 hour onsite work routine. Maybe we are more likely to come up with genius ideas and solutions between the hours of 9:00pm—5:00am and not 9:00am—5:00pm.

Just maybe.

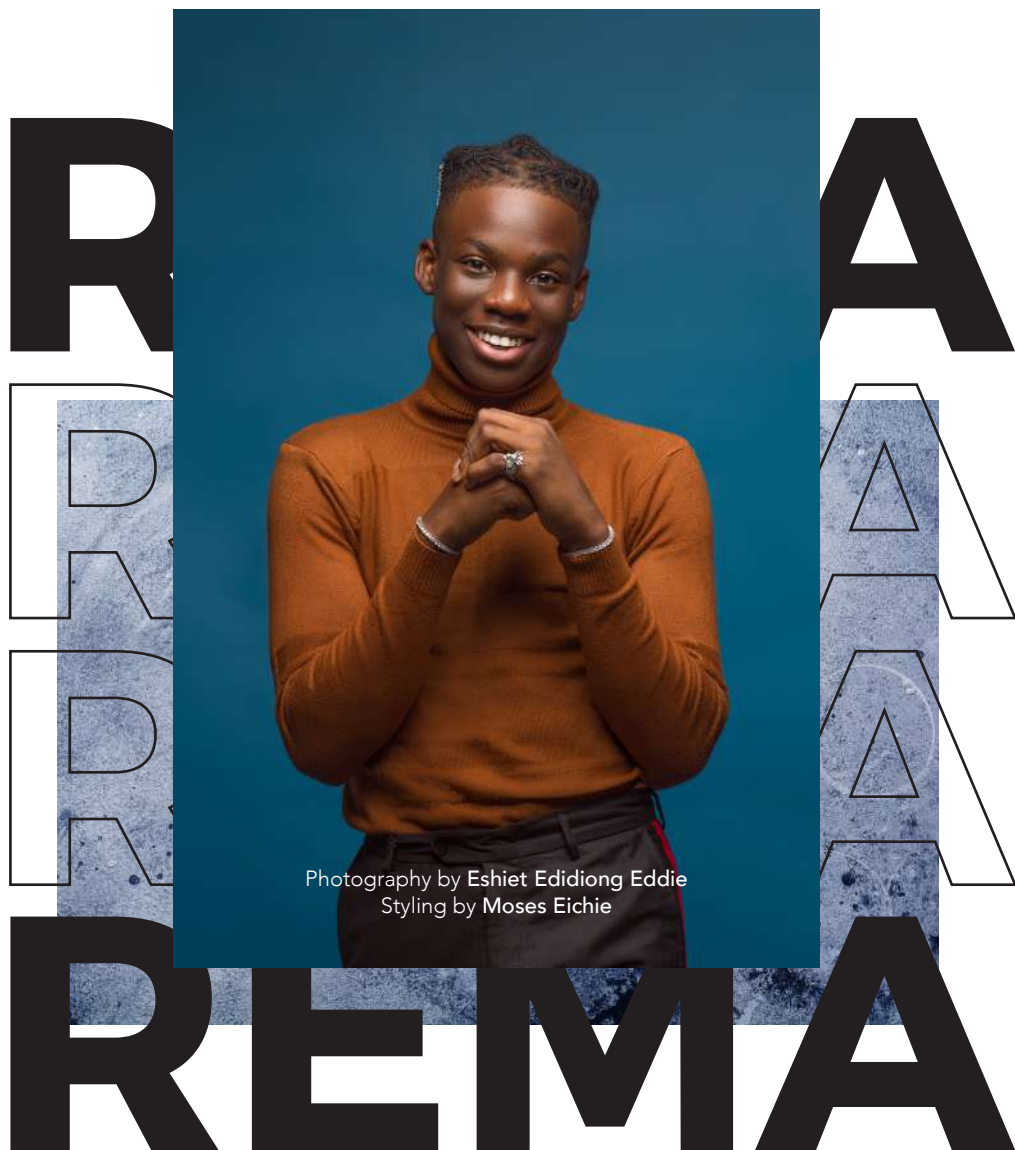
Whichever side of this scale that you choose to stand on, this one is for the minority of us who deem it impossible to fully exist in rigid working conditions. I hope we find our balance and purpose, and I hope we fulfill our dreams and ambitions.



PRODIGY IN THE ROOM

REMA JOINS THE A LIST RANKS

Words by David Hundeyin



Photography by Eshiet Edidiong Eddie
Styling by Moses Eichie

When was your first "it" moment? You know that instant when you heard a brilliant new artist and you remember exactly where and when you were as the hairs on your back stood? That moment when you instantly knew that you were witnessing the birth of a bona fide star? My first "it" moment was at Bar Fusion on Cottingham



Road, Hull in December 2010 when the DJ put on a track called "Don't Dull" by a rookie Nigerian artist called Wizkid.

I had never heard of Wizkid or his music before, but less than a minute into the song, my friends and I found ourselves on the dance



floor gassing our heads off to this unknown song that absolutely slapped. This was a hit and we instantly knew it. Nine years later, history has been made but I have never forgotten that feeling of stumbling into pure musical talent and knowing that you are witnessing history. The intervening period has

seen no shortage of new artists promising a lot and delivering what ranges from very little to a fair bit. I had not felt that rush of excitement when discovering a new artist until I stumbled across a song called 'Dumebi' earlier in the year. I was having lunch at a restaurant and the music video came on. Five minutes later, with my food still untouched and losing heat, I was furiously Googling 'Rema' because "Wow, who is this kid?!"





Divine started his musical career at the ripe old age of 11, rapping and singing at churches across Benin. In 2018, he appeared on the radar of Jonzingworld Records CEO D'Prince.

That was my second "it" moment.

Profiling a Star

18 year-old Rema (real name Divine Ikubor) would probably not be thrilled to find himself on the cover of Tush Magazine being mentioned alongside 'the other guy' yet again, but the comparison is inevitable. Both scored their breakout hits as teenage protégés of established industry figures. Both quickly became every Nigerian (perhaps African) schoolgirl's sweetheart as well as a guilty pleasure of the 24 – 40 year-old female demographic on the back of charming, boyish looks. Both started out with playful, age-appropriate music with a hint of naughtiness, and both had/have a big future ahead of them.

The similarities end there though. Instead of a flamboyant, hard-nosed product of the street, Rema cuts a more aloof, somewhat reserved figure that only comes alive when the music comes on. Having grown up in a middle class family in Benin where he honed his musical ability in church, free of the stress and craziness associated with Lagos, it is clear that Rema is a supremely talented, confident and unhurried young man with a laser focus on building his career. On a cursory observation, he is not the guy to get into twitter spats or public feuds. He wants to do all his talking in the studio and on the charts, and thus

far there has been a lot of that. His debut EP which had 4 songs spawned two hit singles Dumebi and Iron Man, which both crossed the psychologically important mark of 1 million YouTube views in a matter of weeks. More impressively, just a few months into his frontline career, he is already building a substantial continental fan base. In an industry that is moving toward global convergence with increased genre-hopping, this places Rema in a unique position to explore new territory and open previously locked doors for young Nigerian music acts. He certainly has the talent to justify the optimism, and then there is the small matter of the music industry juggernaut that is behind him.

Coincidences Don't Exist

Rema is not the first talented young artist to burst on the scene in a blaze of talent and promise. Where others rapidly plateaued or fell by the wayside however, his case is very unlikely to go the same way, and this is because of two words – Mavin Records. In Don Jazzy and Tega Oghenejobo, he has arguably Nigeria's most seasoned duo of music business managers behind him. Unlike other talented young acts who rose to prominence through stage appearances and album features with established artists, Rema was announced to the world in a snazzy Instagram video, complete with music videos and an

entire EP prepared ahead of time to plug into the burst of publicity.

The message was clear – this guy is a star already, check him out!

Thus far, he has lived up to the hype in terms of public reception, song airplay, chart positions and personal brand positioning. None of this is down to luck or raw talent. Mavin Records has put an incredible amount of work into creating the (un)finished product. In fact, to understand how Divine the church boy from Benin morphed into Rema the budding African pop superstar, one needs to dive into his personal history a bit.

Reportedly obsessed with music from an early age, Divine started his musical career at the ripe old age of 11, rapping and singing at churches across Benin. In 2018, he appeared on the radar of Jonzingworld Records CEO D'Prince. The record executive, who is Don Jazzy's younger brother and a founding member of the defunct Mo'Hits Records heard of a promising young talent who could rap and sing in equal measure, with smooth, velvet looks and the voice of a sweetheart.

D'Prince sent Rema a DM via Instagram and Rema was on board a flight to Lagos and the rest is now history. His vision was to create a shared management deal with Mavin Records to bring him to the limelight as more than just another talented artist who would achieve moderate success and find a comfy

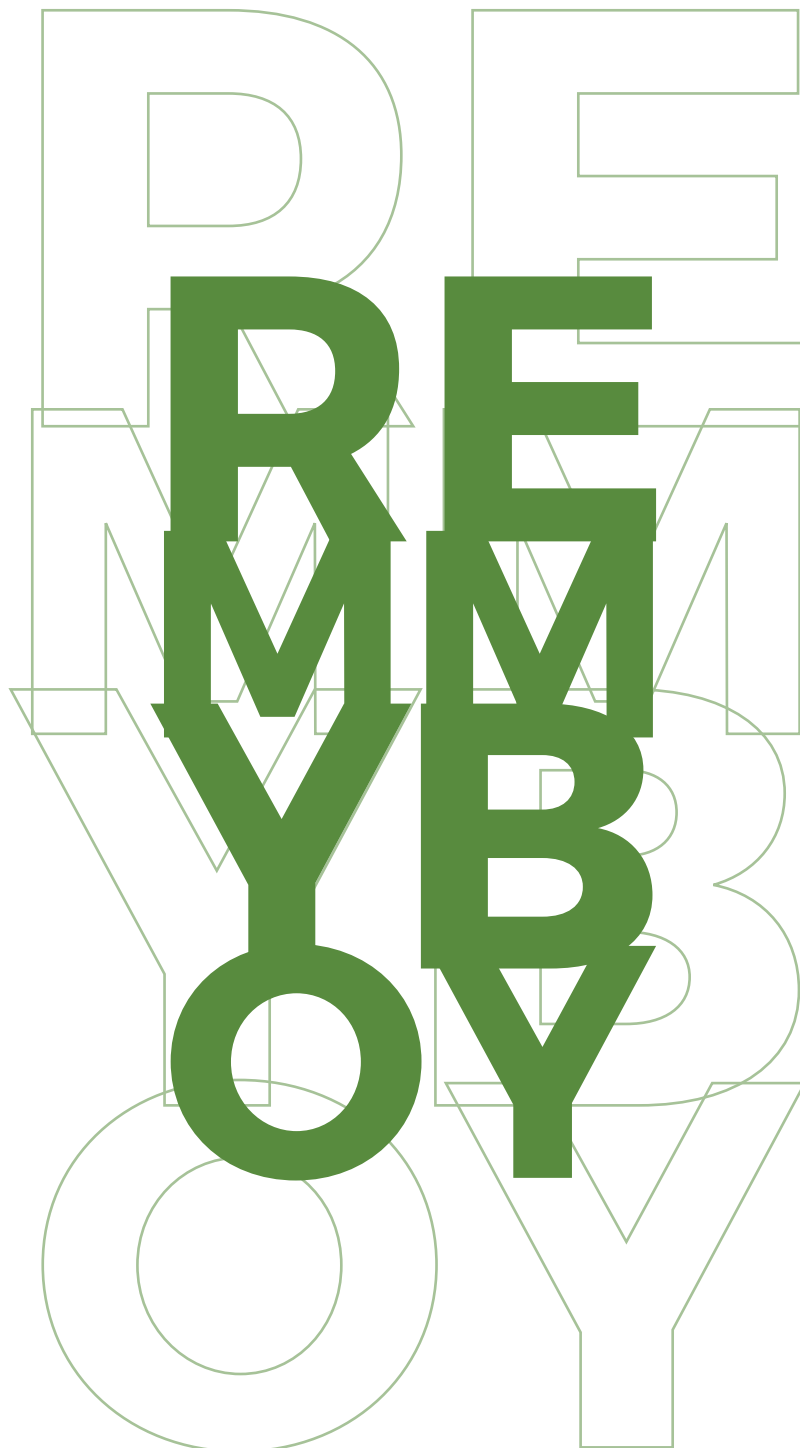
plateau. What he wanted was to maximize the kid's full range of abilities – from singing to dancing, to modeling to rapping – so he could become a one-man creativity and marketing machine in the mold of a typical Korean pop idol.

A few months later, following an intensive period of coaching, studio work and a rebrand that saw him adopt the stage name Rema, Don Jazzy announced him as the latest addition to the superstar Mavin Records roster. He joined some of Nigeria's biggest names in music including Tiwa Savage, Aphrodisia, Korede Bello, Johnny Drille, Dr. Sid, DNA Twins, Poe and D'Prince. If he was ever fazed or star struck by his stratospheric environment, he never showed it. Honed by years of practise, Rema consistently delivers onstage and in the studio as though he is an industry veteran.

Opportunities Galore

On an individual level, Rema is at a stage in his career where he has the opportunity to become as good as he wants. He has the sexy boy-next-door appeal of a 2012 Davido, the undoubted talent and confidence of Burna Boy with none of the visible ego, the consistency of Kizz Daniel and the stagecraft of a young D'banj. Don Jazzy must look at him and lick his lips at the thought of breaking into the lucrative global streaming market. Of course being Don Jazzy, he has already planned for that scenario.

It is no coincidence that the deal with Rema came shortly after Mavin Records signed a groundbreaking partnership deal with Kupanda Holdings that injected investment into the label for a new phase of continental and global expansion. At a time when African cultural elements like food and music are making an unprecedented breakout in global markets led by young Nigerians, Rema is at the vanguard of a new generation of Nigerian talent that is positioned to open doors and change the game permanently. Speaking about Rema some months back, Don Jazzy had this to say:



"Rema is a formidable young artist: with his skill and versatility, he has a unique place in the future of Afro beats. At the same time, we're excited to launch our first imprint deal with Jonzingworld."

If like you ever slept on an emerging music phenomenon until something finally forced you to sit up and take notice, then you definitely want to take note of Rema right now.

This kid is going places.





OZEDIKUS NWANNE

talks Dumebi, Mavin Records & International Aspiration

written by Ibironke Tobi

2019 has seen a number of new and exciting names rise from private corners to become popular industry references. Rema, for instance, became a music sensation following the viral spread of his freestyle video that coincided with him signing to Jonzing World – a subsidiary of Mavin Records. Like many prospects before him, the wonder kid almost instantaneously scored his first hit. The hit came in the form of ‘Dumebi’ – one of the four constituent songs of his eponymous extended playlist.

The dance-stimulating pop tune has an infectious ring to it, which has helped it to achieve an ubiquitous reach. Dumebi is without doubt one of the year’s anthems; the young love it, the young at heart play it. It was therefore shocking to hear the producer of the record, Ozedikus, refer to it as ‘one of my beats that people don’t like’ – apparently, he was talking about the acceptance of the beat before it was morphed into the chart-topping and border-crossing Dumebi.

Before this sudden breakthrough, Ozedikus had racked up 3 progressive years of music production experience, starting with a 180-degree switch from graphic designing to earning his first doe as a producer – a sum of N3000 which he was glad to earn and gleeful in sharing with his tutors. He cracked a smile as he said, ‘graphic designing... the money there was really small. I would get N500 for one artwork, some people managed to pay N1000.’ ‘The highest I got was from a guy from Sierra Leone. I met him on Instagram. He paid me N30,000 for two or three artworks.’

It is a thing in the industry:

practitioners tracing their formative music experiences to religious roots, particularly, the Church. For instance, Simi grew singing as a choir member, Terry G also started in the choir of his local church, Masterkraft served as an instrumentalist in a place of worship. Ozedikus’ story is in line with this custom. His adeptness with the piano, from playing the instrument in Church, contributed to a smooth career transition for OZ. He held up the life of Masterkraft as the model he studied and is emulating. ‘Masterkraft is like the person that inspired me to enter this production business.’

Now, with a number of hits to his name and credit for producing one of the continent’s leading songs, Ozedikus has attracted the attention of the leading figures in African music including role models like Masterkraft and Don Jazzy, whose record label OZ is affiliated with today. ‘Do you have a relationship with Masterkraft?’, I asked. Ozedikus took me through the origin of their few months old relationship. He said, ‘I was surprised when I got a DM from Masterkraft.’

The relationship between both producers appears to be blooming – from text exchanges, to calls trades and home visits. The highlight of their relationship which Ozedikus shared, includes his visit to the studio of the veteran, during which he got to listen to some of Kraft’s unreleased works. The experience, as Ozedikus narrated, left him in awe. ‘After I left his house that day I couldn’t do anything for like a week because the sounds I heard that day ehn...’, he couldn’t find words to nail the description. I assume he meant to say, ‘the things I heard that day was

mind-blowing.’

Don Jazzy belongs to the generation of creatives who advanced the position of African music on the global front. The iconic producer anchored the successes of two of the most productive label formations around – Mo Hits and Mavin Records – creating some classics in the process. It is expected that new school producers like Ozedikus idolize him and would jump on any opportunity to work with the icon. ‘I never knew I would meet Don Jazzy at this stage of my career’, he said. ‘He is someone I have always looked up to.’

The meeting with the Don started like an obvious prank. The doubting Thomas in OZ kept him from believing that a song he produced for his ‘day-one’, Crayon – one of the new Mavin signees – had earned them an invite from Altimis to the Mavin Headquarters. ‘I didn’t believe it’, he said and added, ‘I kept telling Cray to check the address to be sure it wasn’t a prank.’ The meeting with the mastermind happened at the second visit of the duo to the nerve center. ‘He had always been a beacon to me but my mentee experience increased after that meeting.’

With the new affiliation and the buzzing attention coming in his direction, Ozedikus has his aspiration reaching continental and global heights. ‘I am hoping to work with artists from within and outside the border’, he said. He later mentioned that his ‘major goal is to carry this sound outside, to US, UK and across.’ The publicized Mavin Global report is another thing Ozedikus mentioned in his plan for global impact. He said, ‘I am involved (in the movement). It is really something you should watch out for.’

Real Talk with *Envy*



6TH SENSE_MEDIA

TV's Newbie

Talks Juggling Multiple Talents, Having A Friend In Her Manager & Family.

written by Ibironke Tobi

The creative space in Nigeria is a booming place for talents – painters, musicians, actors, poets; the land is filled with them. Eniivy is one of the flurries of budding acts scattered across the entertainment space, albeit there's a peculiarity to her person that seems to distinguish her from the bunch. Eniivy, whose christened name is Eniola Omoniye, embodies a set of talents that makes it near impossible not to like her for one thing at least – whether it's for the playfulness of Iyalode Eniivy of Nigeria, the actress in her who can play the role of any character, the TV host of Real Talk With Eniivy, the hilarity of Auntie Wumi and so on; there's a shade of Eniivy that would charm your eye and win your heart.

It was bright and temperate – one of those dry Sunday afternoons in the rainy month of July – when Eni and I sat for a chat. Eniivy picked the location – we sat by the waterfront at Sea Lounge for the conversation, in the presence of her manager, Joyce. Eniivy, as she is fondly called sipped her chilled bottle of Fanta in bits as she discussed her formative experiences. "I used to play alone as a child", she said. "Playing alone as a child in a big house, you find yourself acting a lot of drama", she added. She was a bubbly and spirited child who had so much alone time, which she used in unsolicited housekeeping – shift around chairs, cleaning rooms and arranging clothes for her brothers, her mom, and anyone with clothes where young Eni could find.

Eniivy is a care giver, she said; "I am a people's person". She is the kind to hand a handkerchief to a friend in tears even when her eyes are soaked. "I concern myself with the welfare of my people. I like to be in people's business but only when I am welcomed", Eniivy told me. This nature of Eniivy leads her to engagements that involves supporting people and building communities. This is no surprise, as Eniivy is one of the drivers of the Mutare Clan – a gathering of young intellectuals from across different industries, rubbing minds and sharing ideas on social subjects. Eniivy's mummy-habits were obvious to me at the group's meetups even as a first timer – I noticed her anchor the games (I still bear grudges for the manner

with which I lost out), I noticed how she kept her eye on our orders, I noticed how she steered the flow of the discussion.

Instagram these days, is a platform for all the actions – the amusing skits which trigger a sudden burst of laughter in an otherwise solemn place, the trending gossip stories that leads to a conversation between you and a total stranger in the comment section of Instablog. We stumble on these contents from following shared post on the stories of friends; some from the explore page. I encountered one of such – a skit with an interesting character called "Auntie Wumi." Eniivy would later tell me how she created the character "that stuck". "I modelled the characters (in the skit) after real life characters like my mother who would literally take few steps back to refrain from expressing her anger. Interestingly, I have an Aunt named Wumi – the wife of my elder brother who is, maybe not savage but, blunt. It was her, who inspired the character of Auntie Wumi in the skits"

Life can be busy, particularly for persons like Eniivy who juggle multiple engagements all at once – she is an actress, a facial model, a radio personality, and on the day of our chat she had just launched her TV Show (Real Talk with Eniivy) on Pop Central TV. Eniivy told me a secret with a teary eye and a heavy heart; "When people ask me how I juggle these things together, I point at my manager", she said. "She is my manager, my friend, my sister, my strength".

The dots in the eulogies started to connect when Eniivy shared some of their private experiences in which Joyce, her manager, played the hero – Joyce pushed her to record the skits when she was stalling and nursing self-doubts, Joyce opened her door for Eniivy to share her space with her for the convenience of work. "If not for her (Joyce), I would have run back to my parent's house the week I left home", Eniivy said. Family featured prominently in our discussion; Eniivy narrated the back and forth that saw her tour about 5 tertiary institutions before finally nipping post-secondary education in the bud with a diploma from Yaba College of Technology and a Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communication from ESAE.

She mentioned the covert support she got from her Mother and eldest brother in her rebellious career path, and the opposition from her Father. He had plans for her to have a career in the medical line, and later, his vision for her tilted towards the line of finance but Eniivy had her own plans which is finally playing out. The twist has reached a pleasant point for Eniivy, who is now often cheered at home as "our celebrity".

Style ByTito

A Fashion House Built From The Ashes of 9-5 Life

Written by Ibironke Tobi

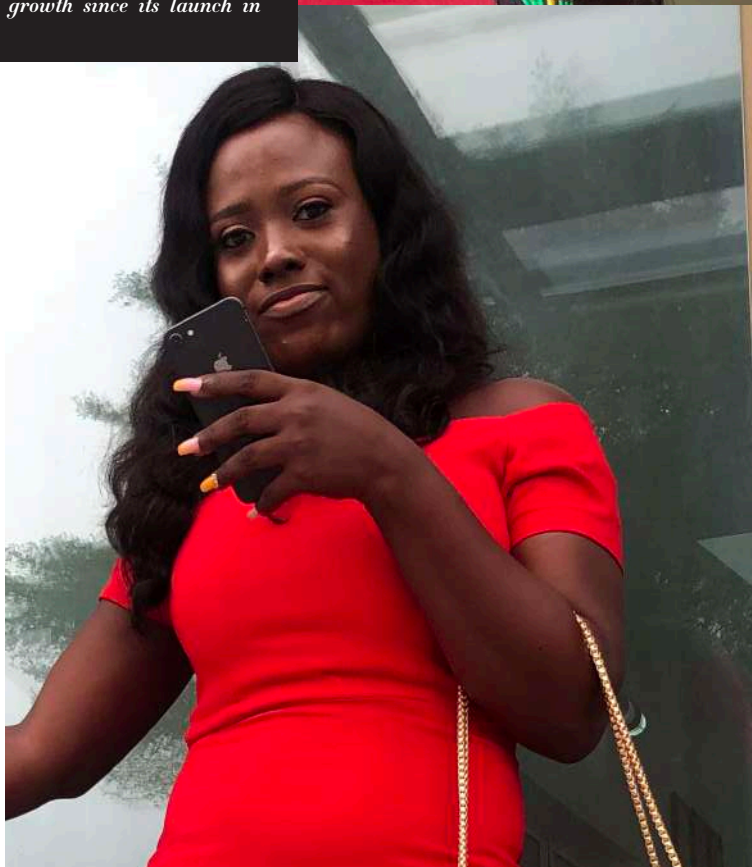
The resurgence of native outfits and traditional attires, after a long period of style importation, has to be the highlight of the Nigerian fashion industry in recent years. With public-named trends like 'Oleku' and 'Senator', style in new millennium Nigeria has never felt so close to home. Likewise, the nifty hands and creative minds driving the evolving fashion culture has never been more Nigerian – excluding the pre-colonial era that precedes the start of cultural importations.

The Nigerian fashion bubble has been one of the few fruitful branches of the national tree, giving rise to the flourish of an encouraging number of Nigerian stylists – a lot of them youthful and exploratory imaginative. The likes of Mai Atafo, Yomi Casual have blossomed into top fashion brands from small corners of the Nigerian fashion industry; a flurry of budding stylists have joined in exercising the potential of the industry to grow their brands – just like Bolatito Arinola Bashiru is doing with StyledbyTito.

StyledbyTito is one of the emerging Nigerian fashion brands creating excitement among enthusiasts – both within and outside the borders. What catches the eye at first is the inventive yet simple design products of StyledbyTito, which attracts tens of thousands of viewers to the brand's Instagram page. Mostly, this leads to flowery comments and translates into patronage on many occasions. Bolatito said, "Lots of people have reached out through social media" – the number she didn't say but she made it obvious that social media has been crucial to the brand's growth since its launch in January, 2017.



She made it obvious that social media has been crucial to the brand's growth since its launch in January, 2017





The huge shortfall of opportunities in the country's labour market and the growing gap between what's deserved and what's offered has forced the entrepreneurial spirit on many Nigerian natives, particularly the young and vibrant like Bolatito. However, her entrepreneurial early steps and the background story of the StyledbyTito brand is not the typical "subject quits a 9-5 job in pursuit of an entrepreneurial experience."

In fact, Bolatito holds a degree in Business Administration and she worked in the banking industry for more than two years but her interest in fashion designing has always been there. "I always wanted to be an entrepreneur", she said. "I learnt fashion designing even before gaining admission and was doing it by the side even when I had a 9 – 5."

The decision to leave a relatively safe life of paid employment for a chancy entrepreneurial life is one that many often consider but only few act on. Bolatito's decision, as she said, was inspired by her desire to make "timeless pieces for trendy and stylish women." This ambition guides the path of the brand in creating a niche, although scope-broadening adoptions have been made over the course of the business – the StyleByTito brand has added Ankara designs for men to her list of offerings. The diversification is among the evidences 'Tito sees as growth signs.

It is popular belief that great responsibility drags along great power. This saying reflects in the case of StyleByTito. Although the brand is still only an emerging fashion house with distance to cover, its

Bolatito is looking at continued expansion for StyleByTito – expansion in customer base, expansion in the impact on the fashion culture, expansion in accolades.

expansion over the years has come with challenges

– challenges of raising capital, challenges of exercising limited resources to meet the growing demand. "The delivery aspect has been a big challenge", she narrated.

For the future, Bolatito is looking at continued expansion for StyleByTito – expansion in customer base, expansion in the impact on the fashion culture, expansion in accolades. Already, the brand has scored a number of wins – a N1million Cannes Prize, for instance – but Bolatito is still as hungry for growth as the passion-driven young lady who stepped out of the banking industry to take a leap into fashion designing and styling. She made this clear in her concluding statement during our chat, "the vision is big and wins must come."





sheila gashumba

East African Icon Of Fashion & Style

Written by Ibironke Tobi

In the media space in Eastern Africa, the name 'Sheila Gashumba' resonates, just like 'Ehiz' or 'Toke Makinwa' rings in an audience of West Africans, or say Nigerians. Sheila is an elite TV show host, a beauty icon, and a lifestyle influencer. The resonance of her name is a product of a decade and a half of media practice experience – a medal usually found in the profile of practitioners who are advanced in age; some nearing retirement. Interestingly, Sheila is young and only starting – she is 23, with plans to further impact the fields of media and beauty.

At about age 10, Sheila first appeared on a TV show called Kid Corner on popular Ugandan TV station, Wavah Broadcasting Services (WBS). This became a start of a journey that led to her actively featuring on Teens Club on the same station as her debut – a promotion for her ace performances. She told me – “when I became a teen, I was promoted to a show called Teens Club on WBS.” The early exposure to the screens aptly put her curiousness and expressive style to use in a manner that she enjoyed while serving a similar spice of life – amusement – to others, on a mass level. “My confidence led me into journalism. I was just naturally a kid in school who always wanted to do anything they brought to the table”, she said.

Just as she was about outgrowing teen age, Sheila took a break from TV show hosting – a break that allowed her time for exploration. “I took a two year break off TV to explore spaces outside the media.” This break ended when she returned on T-Nation – an award winning television program dedicated to recognizing and

appreciating the talents of young Ugandans. “I returned to the screens with the teen show, T-Nation.” Sheila's progression has since continued without halts – from the teen show to a daily music show, and now, the NTV Style Project – a leading platform in the areas of fashion and style.

Sheila, alongside Solomon Tazibone and Bettinah Tianah, sit to discuss the shifts in the fashion culture in Uganda, and in Africa, extensively. The trio, usually, with a guest, pick topics like the highlights of the South African Sun Met Horse Race of early this year, growing fashion trends on the side of the continent to discuss. Sheila often does a review of fashion items along the lines of trends, influences, and epochs. She is a voice recognized and respected by a lot of fashion enthusiasts in Uganda and beyond. With references to her comments and her endorsements, Sheila's voice is trusted for fashion tips and style trends.

People often wonder what she'd do with the size of her influence on the culture. Sheila knows this – the potential of exercising her influence beyond show hosting. She told me, “I am working on opening my first ever store called Gash Glam after operating it as an online business for over 3years now.” “I am hoping to expand to other countries and opening up branches in Kenya, Rwanda, and South Africa”, she added. She mentioned a body care line, cosmetic products and a lingerie line as projects for the future. “The beauty industry has a lot of money in it”, she said. However, Sheila wants self-love and appreciation for women to be at the core of her future brand's purpose. I listened as she said, “I love it when women love their bodies more and feel sexier for themselves first and then for other reasons” “So why not make another woman sexier.”

**I took a two
year break off
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spaces
outside the
media.**

UTHMAN WAHAB

One man, his art & the viewing world

Written by Ibironke Tobi

Nijideka Akunyili Crosby's 'Bush Babies' sell for \$3.4million USD; Ben Enwonwu sets a new African record of £1.2million for 'Tutu'; Toyin Odutola earns N215million for 'Compound Leaf'; Lagos Photo Exhibition holds in grand style; the finest of African artists gather in Lagos for African Arts Foundation; West African's 1st international affair, Art X attracts a community of art enthusiasts: these familiar headlines capture the booming art culture in Nigeria, particularly the commercial sprout for the long established abundance of artistic talents in the country.

On the international scene, one of the emerging names from the Nigerian art's circle is Uthman Wahaab – Huffpost referred to him as a very passionate Nigerian artist who "paints beauty big", Sapar Contemporary dubbed him a multidisciplinary artist who possesses an overarching interest in social

phenomenon. The passion, the versatility, and skill of Uthman, mentioned in the feature articles on the international platforms, were evident to me during our 3-hour plus chat at his charming studio located in the heart of Surulere, Lagos, which was decorated with paintings of different forms and filled with the smell of coffee and incense.

It has been three decades since Uthman has been into arts – from learning as an apprentice at a roadside arts shop in Lagos to studying Fine Art in the reputable Yaba College of Technology after multiple application failures, leveraging on the craze for customized shirts to launch a clothing line, then interning at a small scale advertising firm, before exiting to plunge into the pool of painting, which marked the start of a life as a studio artist. The experience at the Advertising firm raised concerns from

Seeing a young artist, there was a stance. There was a way they want to deal with you as a young artist and it got me irritated.





Photos by Adeola Gold

Uthman's contemporaries that exposure to digitized art methods "spoils the hand of artists." Uthman said, "I told them that that is not true." "I designed a routine to endure that I do not lose my skills. I would paint till 9(pm) after returning from work and I painted during the weekends."

It is a popular chorus that "it is not easy in the early stages"; Uthman Wahaab sang this song as he narrated his experience trying to get his art into a gallery. "Then, seeing a young artist, there was a stance. There was a way they want to deal with you as a young artist and it got me irritated", he said. Few of the galleries he approached were willing to give as much as a listening ear to young Uthman, most dismissed him even before he said a word of introduction. It was the usual tactic for art collectors and gallery owners at the time – the first step in the patient manipulative process of pricing a piece of art lower than its worth.

Another factor in play at the time was the thematic uniqueness of the art. Uthman, at the time, steered away from the common arts of portraits and paintings of traditional essence. Instead, his art leaned towards music and instruments. A gallery named Signature Gallery welcomed Uthman's proposal to sell some of his works, albeit he was told to come back at a later time – "when we are taking new materials", he recounted. Uthman

returned to the gallery with 13 pieces and left with only 4. "I sold some and had others up for display", he said. This tilted the scale for Uthman. "So the dream of working in Advertising for 3years and traveling to South Africa, I aborted it", he told me.

It's common knowledge: art goes beyond the aesthetic appeal. The social conscious writings of Soyinka compliment his voice of advocacy; Fela's music makes a subject

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Sometimes the acceptance (of plus-size persons) is as a result of the attractiveness of their faces

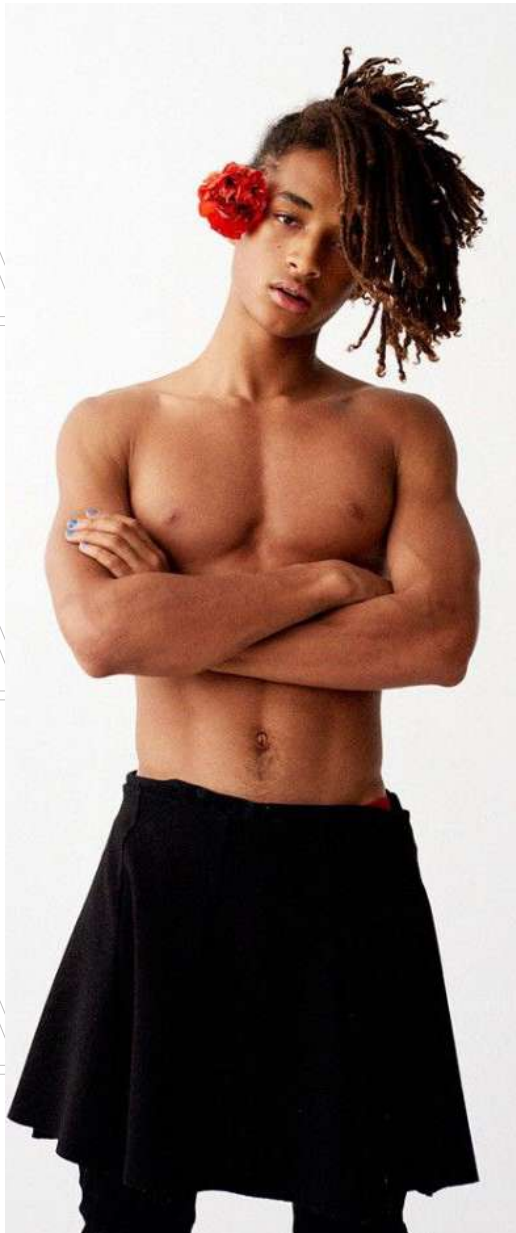
out of societal evils and manipulations. Uthman "chooses to deconstruct notions" with no basis of truth, using figurative representation and naturalism as the primary genre of his art. Scattered across his studio were paintings of plus-size female figure in their finest elements – one portrait is of a big beautiful ballerina; another is of singing sisters in their big form. Uthman revealed that the inspiration came from an experience he had with a pen friend during his early painting days. The lady and Uthman had

struck a smooth online relationship but she didn't have the confidence to meet with him. She hid from him until Uthman gave her assurance on their first and only ever meeting. Uthman said, "She told me how she had to make an extra effort for things other ladies would get freely."

This experience evoked reflective thoughts for Uthman – thoughts like: "what is the right body type to have; what is the wrong body type to have." Uthman made the decision to "deconstruct the notion that big women are unattractive." Mostly, these lovely figures wear and unrecognizable face. Uthman explained the deliberateness in this. "Sometimes the acceptance (of plus-size persons) is as a result of the attractiveness of their faces. I want acceptance for the body and appreciation of the beauty of their form." Uthman's sight spreads to the aspects of culture, traditional, and Africanism. The exploration of these areas has helped him get on the radar of International art exhibitors. "Perseverance and hard work" are the secrets that Uthman spilled during the lengthy and insightful chat.

ANDROGYNOUS FASHION

written by Violet Johnson



Fashion has always been a way of communicating one's personality, mood or life in general to the world at large. Thankfully, designers and brands inevitably create a much-needed sanctuary for those set of people who have otherwise been excluded — thus, the old rules of conformity have to be continuously challenged both from an acceptance and commercial point of view. One thing is certain, for any seemingly new trend that sets in, be rest assured that it made waves back in the day. A good example is the concept of androgynous fashion whose main aim is to avoid gender stereotypes. The androgynous style portrays a human as neither a typical boy nor a girl.

In the past, androgynous fashion held a huge stigma due to its ties to the feminist and LGBT or gender fluid communities. But in modern day, androgyny has gradually become far more accessible. It has gone beyond a male dressed as a woman just because he's gay, for instance. It is now more about how the style in itself reflects one's mood in that moment or personality as a whole; exclude any form of gender bias.

Nigeria, for instance, is a country filled with fashion-conscious individuals. These people draw inspiration from and get influenced by the western world which not only shapes their ideas or illustrations but how best one can express themselves through their attires. Since the genderless concept isn't widely accepted in this part of the world, it is hard to fully enforce these new trends seamlessly in such a society. Notwithstanding, many are thriving while at it even though it still doesn't stop the average man from dashing a glance at the individual in a rather judgmental manner.



While any one piece of [unisex] clothing can't be labelled androgynous —depending on the way you wear it — there are some favourites that scream androgyny. It is to be noted that androgyny can be depicted in several ways besides cross-dressing; some of which include:

- Loose, black, geometric clothing which is an automatic fave in the 'high street fashion' community.
- Capes and hoods are also androgynously stylish.
- Science fiction references are common within this style due to futuristic fiction and

film depictions of style tending to portray such. For example: plastic clothing, shiny metallic materials, alien style makeup and hair.

- Gender crossing in makeup and style. You want one side of your hair short and the other long? Go for it! You want to wear a skirt over a pair of skinny jeans? Great! Androgyny is all about breaking the boundaries of gender, so don't give room for limitations of any sort. Express yourself freely.

While borrowing fashion from the opposite sex is hardly a new and controversial premise, it is one trend whose full potential should be explored around the world. Notable individuals who make this trend interesting and admirable are Janelle Monae and Jaden Smith, to mention a few. One can feel how comfortable they are in their different attires.

But, at the end of the day, what matters most is your comfort and how best you can interpret your personality through your style, in easy ways for the world to understand.

DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL

THE CONCERN FOR MANCHESTER UNITED

written by Alex Ndace



Fans are losing it with Manchester United. They lack a football director and no wonders players are thinking twice about joining them. Ed Woodward is still heading the transfer decisions and Paul Pogba still keeps shooting shots at potential bigger clubs and he might just land in the middle of the Bernabeu wearing a Real Madrid jersey. There are claims that Ed Woodward, Manchester United's executive vice-chairman is pushing for Steve Walsh to fill that role.



as the director of football at the club. Walsh will always be regarded as the man that single-handedly orchestrated the moves of N'golo Kante and Riyad Mahrez to Leicester city. The internet provides unclear clues and it backs the character of Sir Alex Ferguson in the football department for close to two decades. It was imminent that the role that he played was seen in the arrival of David Moyes. To think he had control of all departments is an eyesore.

These days, fans and club insiders will prefer to leave it to Ed – he calls the shots and has direct contacts with the glazier family. Until United appoints a proper director, they will keep wallowing in sinking grounds and signing players without future plans in place. The thought that United had a perfect in-house policy regarding signing of players is faux and they needed a finer recruitment plan was revisited after Jose Mourinho left last December. There were links with Paul Mitchell, Darren Fletcher and Rio Ferdinand in which all these people were unfitted for the demanding role – for that period. The search has been on for a while now. It added to the wound of failing to qualify for the Champions League and they will remain reliant on Ed to table suitable transfers before

other traditional English teams will aim to overtake them.

It should never be that way. For a big club like Manchester United often turned down by even the worst of experts on the transfer window and market. However, it is surprising that consistency is far from reach.

United are unaware about the ease and relief that a manager enjoys when he does not have to bother about dysfunction off the pitch. With all the billions they will never attract Pep Guardiola while Liverpool is a great example of spending and managing funds wisely. It is very unlikely that they would get seal the cracks on the walls now. Managers always want a club with a plan.

The same value applies to players to choose career progression over money. Once Manchester United has figured the right things and ways to handle this key department in the club, potential signings will be happy to make that move to Old Trafford. One thing is certain in football: **PLAYERS NEED EXTRA CONVINCING TO JOIN A CLUB.**

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