

THE CURRENT

M A G A Z I N E DOCUMENTING THE CULTURE AS IT HAPPENS

ISSUE 003

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A portrait of the rapper Mozzy. He has dark skin, a beard, and dreadlocks. He is wearing a light-colored hoodie and a patterned jacket with the words 'THE NORTH FACE' repeated. He is also wearing several gold chains, including a large one with a portrait of a woman. He is pointing his right index finger towards the camera.

MOZZY
THE GANGLAND LANDLORD
AS REAL AS IT GETS

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

Why Issue 003 is built for the complete story

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

REAL STORIES NEED ROOM TO BREATHE.

The design is tighter, the type is larger and every page works harder.

Issue 003 is where the system becomes the identity. THE CURRENT MAGAZINE is not built to chase a headline and leave the context behind. We are building a record people can return to after the timeline moves on. That requires stronger reporting, longer articles, larger photographs and pages that use their space with purpose. Mozzy leads this issue because his career reflects the difference between attention and foundation. Sacramento gave him the language, the pressure and the responsibility that shaped the music. The wider industry expanded his reach, but the work still sounds connected to the place that made him.

That is the kind of story this publication exists to preserve. The rest of the issue travels from Brooklyn to Milwaukee, from beauty ownership to sports recovery, from music-video strategy to youth programming. The subjects are different, but the question underneath each story is the same: who is building something that can last after the moment changes? Our standard remains verify, context and document. We identify what is confirmed, explain why it matters and make room for the people doing the work. The post may introduce the story. The magazine gives it history, structure and a place to live.

THE ISSUE 003 STANDARD**VERIFY**

Claims are sourced before they become part of the record.

CONTEXT

A moment is connected to the history and business around it.

DOCUMENT

The complete story receives space, readable type and lasting form.

THE MOMENT MOVES FAST. THE RECORD SHOULD LAST.

COVER STORY

Mozzy: The Gangland Landlord — As Real As It Gets

SACRAMENTO FOUNDATION

THE GANGLAND LANDLORD



PHOTO PROVIDED FOR ISSUE 003

Mozzy's music has always sounded accountable to Sacramento. The neighborhoods, grief, loyalty and consequences are not decoration around the records; they are the environment that gave the writing its weight. Long before national features and major-label infrastructure, he built a catalog that made regional listeners feel accurately represented.

That foundation explains the authority inside the title Gangland Landlord. The phrase is not simply a claim of status. It describes an artist whose catalog became a property people returned to because it reflected experiences larger platforms often flattened into stereotypes.

The wider industry eventually arrived, but the order matters. Mozzy did not become credible after recognition. Recognition expanded a credibility that had already been earned through repetition, specificity and a willingness to document consequences as clearly as ambition.

His strongest work refuses the easy version of street realism. Victory and loss occupy the same record. Loyalty can protect and endanger. Money can change the surroundings without removing the memories. That tension is what makes the writing travel beyond Sacramento without losing Sacramento in the process.

THE CITY BUILT THE LANGUAGE. THE CATALOG BUILT THE LEVERAGE.

SOURCES: XXL Mozzy interview and cover reporting; Billboard and REVOLT career reporting; Mozzy catalog and release materials.

COVER STORY

Mozzy: The Gangland Landlord — As Real As It Gets

THE HUMAN COST

AS REAL AS IT GETS



PHOTO PROVIDED FOR ISSUE 003

Children of the Slums placed reflection at the center of Mozzy's storytelling. The project examined survival through the people who carry its cost: families, children, incarcerated friends and adults still trying to understand what earlier decisions changed. The realism is not valuable because it is graphic. It is valuable because it refuses to remove the emotional bill.

Mozzy has also spoken publicly about mental health and the pressure attached to the life behind the music. That openness complicates the image of the untouchable street narrator. It allows vulnerability to exist beside authority and makes the work more complete.

For the audience, that honesty creates connection. Listeners may enter through the detail, the voice or the regional identity, but they stay when the artist names emotions they recognize in their own lives. Grief, responsibility and the desire to protect the next generation are not confined to one neighborhood.

The next stage of realism is responsibility. A mature catalog can document what happened while asking what should happen differently. Mozzy's evolution shows that reflection does not weaken the story. It reveals how much the storyteller has survived long enough to understand.

REALISM IS NOT ONLY WHAT HAPPENED. IT IS WHAT THE EXPERIENCE COST.

SOURCES: XXL Mozzy interview and cover reporting; Billboard and REVOLT career reporting; Mozzy catalog and release materials.

COVER STORY

Mozzy: The Gangland Landlord — As Real As It Gets

FROM CATALOG TO INFRASTRUCTURE

THE NEXT PROPERTY IS OWNERSHIP

MOZZY

CATALOG • COMMUNITY • CONTROL

Years of releases turned Mozzy's name into more than a moment. The catalog created leverage: an audience with memory, touring demand, collaboration value and a regional identity that could not be reproduced by a marketing department. Partnerships, including his connection with CMG, widened the platform without replacing the foundation.

The business question now is how to preserve that value. Music income can rise and fall with release cycles. Ownership, publishing administration, touring systems, merchandise, video assets and artist development can continue working after the first burst of attention.

That is where the landlord idea becomes literal strategy. Control of masters, publishing interests, trademarks, direct audience data and production infrastructure determines who benefits from the story over time. An artist who owns the system can create opportunities for others without giving away the foundation.

Longevity also depends on selection. Every feature, brand offer and public response does not deserve equal energy. The strongest next chapter protects the identity listeners trust while expanding the business around it. Real leverage is not being everywhere. It is having enough control to decide where the story belongs.

ATTENTION RENTS THE MOMENT. OWNERSHIP KEEPS THE VALUE.

SOURCES: XXL Mozzy interview and cover reporting; Billboard and REVOLT career reporting; Mozzy catalog and release materials.

THE TEA

Hard Core Symphony reframes thirty years of impact with an all-Black orchestra.

A CATALOG ENTERS THE CONCERT HALL

LIL KIM GOES SYMPHONIC

Hard Core Symphony reframes thirty years of impact with an all-Black orchestra.



Lil Kim's Hard Core Symphony is built as more than an anniversary performance. The Brooklyn concert places a defining rap catalog inside a symphonic setting and asks the audience to hear the writing, attitude and influence through a different frame. With an all-Black orchestra supporting the production, the event also makes a statement about who belongs inside institutions traditionally treated as separate from hip-hop.

The timing matters. Three decades after Hard Core, Kim's influence can be measured across fashion, performance, language and the visual freedom later generations of women in rap inherited. A symphonic presentation does not make the work respectable; the work already earned its place. The orchestra gives the catalog

another scale.

Legacy events succeed when they reveal something new instead of only repeating nostalgia. New arrangements can expose melody, tension and structure that listeners may have missed inside the original production. The concert can also introduce the catalog to an audience that knows the influence before knowing the complete source.

The sold-out response shows that preservation can be active. Hip-hop history does not belong only in an archive. It can be reorchestrated, staged and experienced in public while the artist remains present to define what the history means.

THE CATALOG DID NOT NEED PERMISSION. THE ORCHESTRA GAVE IT ANOTHER SCALE.

SOURCES: Kings Theatre event announcement; PEOPLE coverage of Lil Kim and Hard Core Symphony; artist announcements.

WHO'S TRENDING

The New Zealand rapper turned Freaked Out into a chart arrival without hiding his Kurdish identity.

ONE RECORD OPENS A GLOBAL DOOR

FAT PAPI GETS THE INTRODUCTION

The New Zealand rapper turned Freaked Out into a chart arrival without hiding his Kurdish identity.



Fat Papi's *Freaked Out* traveled because the record felt immediate. The vocal character, humor and quotable energy translated into short clips without requiring listeners to understand an entire backstory first. That accessibility helped the song move beyond New Zealand and gave the rapper a Billboard Hot 100 debut.

The deeper story is identity. Fat Papi has spoken about his Kurdish background and the experience of building a rap voice from a place outside the industry's usual American centers. Rather than erase that difference, he carries it into the introduction. The result expands what a global rap breakout can look and sound like.

Viral discovery is only the first stage. The audience now needs more records that explain the world around the voice. A follow-up should not imitate the exact trick that created the first reaction. It should use the attention to reveal range, writing and a reason to remain invested.

The opportunity is bigger than one chart position. Independent artists across smaller markets can see proof that regional personality can travel when the record is clear enough to cross borders and specific enough to remain memorable.

THE VIRAL RECORD MADE THE INTRODUCTION. THE CATALOG MUST BUILD THE RELATIONSHIP.

SOURCES: The Guardian profile of Fat Papi; Billboard Hot 100 chart reporting; artist interviews and release materials.

CURRENT SPORTS

A 106 mph line drive tested the Brewers' depth, discipline and humanity in real time.

THE GAME TURNS DANGEROUS

MILWAUKEE RESPONDS

A 106 mph line drive tested the Brewers' depth, discipline and humanity in real time.



When Dustin May was struck by a 106 mph line drive, the game immediately became secondary to the condition of the pitcher. Teammates, opponents and viewers were reminded how little reaction time exists on the mound and how quickly routine competition can become a medical emergency.

The Brewers still had to finish the game. Milwaukee's bullpen absorbed the innings and the offense created separation in an 8-1 win over the Mets. That response demonstrated the hidden value of roster depth: preparation must exist before the moment that requires it.

Statistics can describe the exit velocity and final score, but they cannot fully capture the emotional adjustment. Players have to process concern for a colleague while returning to the same field and trusting their own reactions. Professional discipline in that situation is physical and psychological.

For Milwaukee, the result was evidence of a team structure capable of responding without panic. For baseball, the play renews questions about pitcher protection and how equipment, positioning and rule design can reduce risk without pretending the sport can remove it completely.

THE SCORE SHOWED THE RESULT. THE RESPONSE SHOWED THE TEAM.

SOURCES: Reuters game report on Brewers-Mets and Dustin May; official MLB game information.

BEHIND THE GAME

Expanded music-video tools make the visual part of discovery, pitching and chart performance.

THE RELEASE PLAN GETS VISUAL

SPOTIFY PUTS VIDEO INSIDE THE STRATEGY

Expanded music-video tools make the visual part of discovery, pitching and chart performance.



Spotify's expanded music-video system changes the release conversation for artists and teams. Video is no longer only an external link used after the audio begins moving. Eligible artists can upload official videos, pitch them for editorial consideration and participate in a global music-video chart inside the same platform where listeners stream the song.

That integration can reduce friction. A listener who discovers a track can move into the visual without leaving the service, giving the artist another chance to deepen recognition. For independent teams, the opportunity is strongest when the video is planned as part of the campaign rather than delivered as an

afterthought.

The change also raises the standard. More available video means more competition for attention, so concept, pacing, thumbnail design, credits and delivery timing all matter. A large budget is not the only advantage. A clear visual identity can outperform an expensive video that does not explain who the artist is.

Artists should now coordinate audio metadata, video rights, release dates and editorial pitching from the beginning. When the song and image arrive as one system, each asset can strengthen the other instead of competing for separate attention.

THE VISUAL IS NO LONGER EXTRA. IT IS PART OF THE RELEASE SYSTEM.

SOURCES: Spotify for Artists official music-video upload and pitching guidance; RouteNote reporting on global music-video charts.

CURRENT BEAUTY

The vibrating flat iron expands a natural-hair company without abandoning its original customer.

PATTERN MOVES INTO HEAT

TRACEE ELLIS ROSS PLAYS THE LONG GAME

The vibrating flat iron expands a natural-hair company without abandoning its original customer.



Pattern Beauty entered the market with a clear purpose: serve curly, coily and tight-textured hair with products and tools designed around the needs many mainstream brands treated as secondary. That focus created trust because the company began with the consumer instead of adding inclusion after the strategy was already built.

The expansion into heat styling, including a vibrating flat iron, tests how a purpose-led brand can grow. Natural-hair consumers are not limited to one style or routine. They may wear curls, protective styles, blowouts and straight looks while still prioritizing hair health. Pattern can serve that range without suggesting that

one expression is more valid than another.

The business advantage is adjacency. A trusted wash-day system creates a logical path into tools, heat protection and styling. The risk is expansion without discipline. Each new product has to solve a real customer problem and perform at the level established by the original line.

Tracee Ellis Ross has played the long game by connecting cultural understanding to product development. The brand's next chapter will be judged by whether growth makes the customer feel more fully served, not simply sold more products.

EXPANSION WORKS WHEN THE ORIGINAL CUSTOMER STILL FEELS SEEN.

SOURCES: PEOPLE coverage of Pattern Beauty heat tools; Pattern Beauty official product information and founder materials.

MODELS MAKING MOVES

The retired ballet icon brings movement, control and cultural history to Michael Kors.

DISCIPLINE BECOMES A NEW IMAGE

MISTY COPELAND STEPS INTO FASHION

The retired ballet icon brings movement, control and cultural history to Michael Kors.



Misty Copeland's appearance in Michael Kors' Fall/Winter 2026 campaign is not a departure from the discipline that defined her ballet career. It is another use of it. Years of controlling line, posture and movement give her an understanding of how a garment communicates before a camera.

The campaign arrives after her retirement from American Ballet Theatre, where her historic position as the company's first Black female principal dancer changed who could imagine belonging at the center of classical ballet. Fashion now offers another stage for that visibility without asking her to erase the achievement that created it.

For models and performers, the move demonstrates how one craft can create leverage in another. The body knowledge, professionalism and story built over decades become assets that brands cannot manufacture through styling alone. Copeland brings meaning to the image before the clothes are introduced.

The strongest second acts do not imitate the first career. They translate its value. Fashion gives Copeland room to carry discipline, elegance and representation into a different industry while preserving control of the larger story around her image.

THE STAGE CHANGED. THE DISCIPLINE TRAVELED WITH HER.

SOURCES: Models.com Michael Kors Fall/Winter 2026 campaign credits; Michael Kors campaign materials and Misty Copeland career records.

STREET STORIES

Hip Hop Chess, Sound Labs and restorative art give Milwaukee youth tools to think, create and lead.

YOUTH CULTURE AS PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

YOUR MOVE MKE BUILDS THE ROOM

Hip Hop Chess, Sound Labs and restorative art give Milwaukee youth tools to think, create and lead.



Your Move MKE treats hip-hop as a language young people already understand and a structure through which they can build new skills. Programming such as Hip Hop Chess connects strategy and creative culture. Sound Labs introduce music production and expression. Mindfulness and restorative justice art sessions create space to process conflict without reducing youth to the conflict around them.

The strength of the model is integration. Creativity is not separated from decision-making, wellness or community responsibility. A young person can learn technical skills while practicing patience, collaboration and reflection. Those outcomes matter whether or not the participant becomes a

professional artist.

Milwaukee needs more rooms where youth are treated as contributors instead of problems to manage. Programs rooted in culture can create trust faster because they begin with something participants recognize as their own. That trust creates an opening for mentorship and accountability.

The long-term value should be measured in continued access: repeat sessions, trained mentors, equipment, public showcases and pathways into education or paid creative work. A workshop can change an afternoon. Infrastructure can change what a young person believes is possible.

YOUNG PEOPLE DO NOT ONLY NEED AN AUDIENCE. THEY NEED TOOLS AND A ROOM.

WHAT THEY MISSED

Yo-Yo, Rah Digga and Sweet Tee connected performance, business and hip-hop history in Milwaukee.

THE PARK BECOMES A CLASSROOM

TRUE SKOOL PARK JAM

Yo-Yo, Rah Digga and Sweet Tee connected performance, business and hip-hop history in Milwaukee.



TRUE Skool's Summer Park Jam used the outdoor festival format to do more than assemble a lineup. Performances from Yo-Yo, Rah Digga and Sweet Tee connected generations of women in hip-hop with a Milwaukee audience that could experience the history in real time.

The event also created space for vendors, youth activity and CEO-centered conversations. That combination matters because culture and enterprise are already connected. Artists need production, promotion and ownership. Vendors need customers and visibility. Young people need to see that the stage is only one part of the ecosystem.

What people may have missed was the educational value inside the celebration. A classic artist performing in the present creates a living archive. A founder explaining the business behind the work turns inspiration into a practical lesson. A local vendor making a sale demonstrates how community traffic can circulate economically.

A park jam becomes infrastructure when the relationships continue after the event. Documentation, vendor directories, youth follow-up and future bookings can turn one crowded day into a longer pipeline for Milwaukee culture.

THE SHOW CREATED THE MOMENT. THE CONNECTIONS CAN CREATE THE FUTURE.

SOURCES: Marcus Performing Arts Center and TRUE Skool Summer Park Jam event information and artist lineup.

BOSS MOVES / HUSTLE TO BUSINESS

Markets create discovery. Systems create durability.

OWNERSHIP AFTER THE CELEBRATION

BLACK BUSINESS MONTH NEEDS A FULL YEAR

Markets create discovery. Systems create durability.



Black Business Month creates valuable attention, but a single month cannot carry the complete weight of Black entrepreneurship. Markets, pop-ups and media features introduce customers to founders. The more difficult work begins after the event: retaining those customers, managing inventory, documenting revenue, protecting ownership and building operations that can survive growth.

Milwaukee already has pieces of the needed infrastructure. MKE Black makes it easier to discover Black-owned businesses, while MKE BOSS connects entrepreneurship to a larger conversation about ownership, scale and community wealth. Their value increases when customers use the directories repeatedly and when institutions move beyond symbolic

support into purchasing relationships.

A strong ecosystem needs four lanes working together. Founders need practical education and affordable capital. Customers need trusted discovery tools. Corporations and government need clear supplier pathways. Media needs to document the companies after the opening-day celebration. When those lanes connect, a marketplace becomes a pipeline.

The goal is not only more businesses starting. It is more businesses reaching stability, hiring locally and remaining owned by the people who created the value. Black Business Month can focus the spotlight. Year-round infrastructure determines what remains when the spotlight moves.

A MONTH CAN OPEN THE DOOR. INFRASTRUCTURE KEEPS IT OPEN.

SOURCES: Visit Milwaukee Black Business Month Marketplace; MKE Black business directory; MKE BOSS entrepreneurship programming.

THE MARKETPLACE

PUT YOUR BRAND IN THE CURRENT.

Reach readers following music, sports, beauty, entrepreneurship and street culture through a publication built for both print credibility and digital discovery.

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