

THE CURRENT

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

ISSUE 009

THE TEA

WHO'S TRENDING

CURRENT SPORTS

BEHIND THE GAME

CURRENT BEAUTY

MODELS MAKING MOVES

STREET STORIES

WHAT THEY MISSED

BOSS MOVES /
HUSTLE TO BUSINESS



MILWAUKEE'S OWN
DNA BUMP
BACK HOME
& CUTTIN' UP

INSIDE ISSUE

Milwaukee voices, national movement and the business behind culture

BACK HOME & CUTTIN' UP

04**COVER STORY**

DNA Bump turns local recognition into an owned platform

06**THE TEA**

Who gets to control the aux?

07**WHO'S TRENDING**

Myaap knows what makes the city move

08**CURRENT SPORTS**

The Brewers are not waiting for October

09**BEHIND THE GAME**

David Ali: the manager is part of the music

10**CURRENT BEAUTY**

Beauty does not expire at fifty

11**MODELS MAKING MOVES**

Anok Yai takes the throne

12**STREET STORIES**

Black culture took the ballpark

13**WHAT THEY MISSED**

When rap decided to sound bigger

14**BOSS MOVES**

Theophilus takes its view to the big floor

15**THE CURRENT MERCH**

Wear the culture

16**SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT**

Ricarda Amor Tequila



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FROM THE PUBLISHER

KB THEPLAYMAKER BARRELL

THE PLATFORM HAS TO OUTLIVE THE MOMENT

Attention opens the door. Structure, ownership and consistency keep it open.

JEWELS & GEMS FROM THE PUBLISHER

I have watched talented people catch a moment, command a room and make the whole city pay attention. I have also watched that attention disappear because nobody built the structure needed to hold it. The lesson has never changed: getting noticed is only the beginning.

DNA Bump represents a kind of local recognition that cannot be manufactured in a conference room. The audience knows the voice, the timing and the personality because the material feels connected to everyday Milwaukee. But a familiar face becomes a lasting platform only when the work is organized.

THE WORK STARTS AFTER THE ATTENTION

A strong identity opens the door. Consistency keeps it open. Distribution puts the work in front of people, relationships move it through the streets and ownership makes sure the creator still benefits after the moment passes.

This issue looks at people turning visibility into position. Some are artists, some are executives, some are athletes and some are founders. The industries change, but the principle remains the same: build something the moment cannot take away.

STAY INFORMED. STAY IN THE MIX. STAY CURRENT.

**"Anybody can make noise.
Very few can make it move."**
— KB Barrell, ThePlaymaker

THE 12 LAWS OF STREET TEAM MARKETING.

FROM THE MAN WHO BROUGHT
STREET TEAM WORK BACK
TO THE MUSIC INDUSTRY!

**STREET TEAM WORK,
MAKES THE DREAM WORK** *KB ThePlaymaker*

THE 12 LAWS OF STREET TEAM MARKETING

1. NEVER CONFUSE MOTION WITH MARKETING Motion feels busy. Marketing moves product.	7. CONSISTENCY WINS Daily presence beats random hype.
2. DISTRIBUTION BEATS TALENT The best product loses without reach.	8. SYSTEMS BEAT MOMENTS Structure scales. Excitement fades.
3. OWNERSHIP IS THE ENDGAME If you don't own it, you don't control it.	9. FANS OVER FOLLOWERS Loyalty pays longer than likes.
4. RELATIONSHIPS BEAT ALGORITHMS People convert. Platforms fluctuate.	10. CULTURE OVER CLOUT Hype fades. Community lasts.
5. TOUCH THE PAVEMENT The streets validate what the internet amplifies.	11. CONTROL THE NARRATIVE If you don't tell your story, someone else will.
6. VISIBILITY IS CURRENCY If they don't see you, you don't exist.	12. EXECUTE RELENTLESSLY Ideas don't win. Execution does.

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THE MOMENT CREATES ATTENTION. OWNERSHIP CREATES THE NEXT OPTION.

COVER STORY

DNA Bump builds from Milwaukee recognition

BACK HOME & CUTTIN' UP

DNA Bump turns direct-to-camera comedy, local language and audience familiarity into a growing public platform.



THE AUDIENCE KNOWS THE SIGNAL

DNA Bump's public identity is built around recognition. The glasses, quick delivery and Milwaukee point of view make a clip understandable before the setup is finished. That familiarity matters in a crowded feed because viewers do not have to learn a new character every time. They already know the energy and wait for the next turn.

LOCAL DETAIL MAKES THE FORMAT TRAVEL

The strongest street comedy feels specific enough to belong somewhere and clear enough to be understood everywhere. DNA Bump works inside ordinary locations and everyday exchanges, then heightens them through timing, repetition and a direct relationship with the camera. Milwaukee supplies the texture; the performance gives the moment a wider route.

That approach turns the audience into part of the distribution. People recognize a situation, tag somebody who would understand it and carry the phrase into a different conversation. The clip moves because it feels shared rather than manufactured.

THE PERSONA NEEDS A HOME

A recognizable personality is an asset only when the audience can reliably find the next piece. Public profile information reviewed for this issue identifies the platform as Milwaukee Bump, presents D.N.A. as the movement and gives a direct booking contact. Those elements begin to connect content, identity and opportunity.

The next level is organization: a consistent release rhythm, searchable titles, clear booking information and a catalog that does not disappear when a platform changes its feed. The joke earns attention. The system determines whether that attention becomes a career.

NPI MARKETING & PROMOTIONS

ARTIST DEVELOPMENT - BRAND STRATEGY



VISIBILITY BECOMES POSITION

ATTENTION MAKES THE LANGUAGE TRAVEL. OWNERSHIP MAKES THE VALUE RETURN.

COVER STORY

DNA Bump builds from Milwaukee recognition

FROM LOCAL LORE TO OWNED LANGUAGE

A repeated phrase can become culture. A protected platform makes sure the value returns to the creator.



REPETITION BUILDS RECOGNITION

A phrase begins as language, but repetition can turn it into a signature. Viewers start anticipating it, repeating it and attaching it to the person who made it land. That is more than a viral effect. It is the early stage of intellectual property: a recognizable expression connected to a recognizable performer.

THE PLATFORM IS LARGER THAN ONE CLIP

DNA Bump's opportunity reaches beyond short-form comedy. Live hosting, appearances, promotional work and longer conversations can give the audience different reasons to stay connected. Each format should feel like another room inside the same house, not a separate account asking the audience to start over.

That structure also protects momentum. A creator who owns the audience path can direct attention toward tickets, merchandise, partnerships or a complete video instead of depending on one platform to keep showing yesterday's hit.

OWNERSHIP MAKES THE VALUE RETURN

Names, signature phrases, visual marks and recorded material should be treated like business assets. Registration, written agreements and consistent credits help establish who created the work and how it can be used. None of that replaces creativity; it keeps the creativity from becoming somebody else's product.

The long game is a catalog with enough range to survive the first wave of attention. If DNA Bump keeps the identity clear, the release schedule dependable and the business easy to reach, local loyalty can grow into a platform without losing the Milwaukee voice that made people pay attention.

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ATTENTION MAKES THE LANGUAGE TRAVEL. OWNERSHIP MAKES THE VALUE RETURN.

THE TEA

Culture, access and accountability

WHO GETS TO CONTROL THE AUX?

A reported no-play list at a Brady Street bar turned one DJ directive into a larger Milwaukee argument about whose music is welcome.



THE LIST CHANGED THE CONVERSATION

TMJ4 reported on Aug. 25 that text messages attributed to an alleged manager instructed DJs to stop playing 41 named rap and hip-hop artists and separately stated 'NO MILWAUKEE RAP.' The station also showed a matching laminated list at the DJ table and reported that noncompliance could cost DJs their work.

THE EXPLANATION DID NOT END IT

The Garage said ownership had not approved the list and described the intention as removing music that referenced guns or violence. Local artists questioned both the method and the contradiction of welcoming Milwaukee customers while rejecting Milwaukee music. The reaction was not only about a playlist. It was about the message a venue sends when an entire local sound becomes shorthand for risk.

A STANDARD HAS TO APPLY EVENLY

A business can set an atmosphere, but a content rule should be clear, consistent and connected to an actual safety plan. If violent content is the concern, the standard has to reach every genre and every performer. A list aimed at Black artists cannot carry the full weight of a venue's responsibility for staffing, security and conduct.

The public record supports the existence of the reported documents and the resulting response. It does not settle every question about who created the list or how long it was used. Ownership now has the simplest path forward: identify the decision chain, publish the current policy and explain how local artists and DJs will be treated.



SOURCE: TMJ4 LIGHTHOUSE REPORTING, AUG. 25, 2026.

WHO'S TRENDING

Milwaukee lowend becomes a wider language

MYAAP KNOWS WHAT MAKES THE CITY MOVE

Dancer instincts, sharp hooks and an unapologetically local sound give Myaap a platform built for motion.



MOVEMENT WAS THERE FIRST

Before touring and viral records, Myaap was a dancer. That history still shapes the music: heavy claps, lowend bass and hooks designed for the body to understand immediately. In a May interview with No Bells, she connected that instinct directly to growing up around dance and learning what makes a crowd move.

FAIRY OPENED THE NEXT WORLD

Myaap explained that the Pixie Dust concept grew from 'Fairy.' The single supplied a self-contained character and visual language, while the project gave that attention a larger home. The tape also let her center her own voice without leaning on features, turning a viral entry point into proof that she could carry a complete idea.

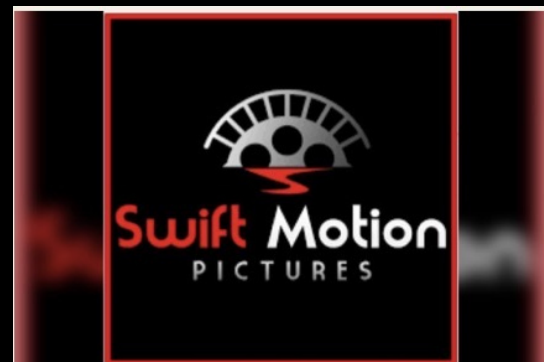
THE HOOK IS A DISTRIBUTION TOOL

Catchiness is not an accident in her process. Myaap described beginning with the hook and building the details afterward. That method fits the way music now travels through short video, but it also reflects a traditional performance instinct: give the room something it can remember and repeat.

She resists being reduced to the single face of Milwaukee rap, preferring to be 'in the mix.' That leaves room for the city's variety while proving that local originality can travel without being cleaned up for outside approval. The next chapter is not abandoning lowend. It is showing how many worlds that foundation can support.

SWIFT MOTION PICTURES

FILM - VIDEO - CREATIVE PRODUCTION



STORIES BUILT TO MOVE

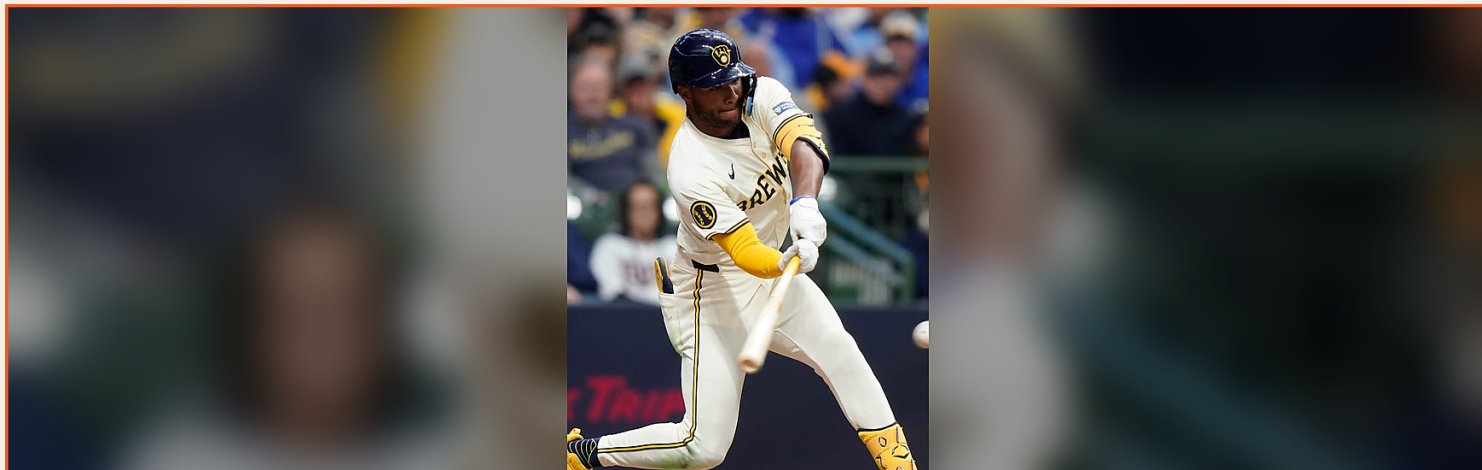
SOURCE: NO BELLS INTERVIEW WITH MYAAP, MAY 4, 2026.

CURRENT SPORTS

Young power and connected innings create pressure

THE BREWERS ARE NOT WAITING FOR OCTOBER

Milwaukee's late-summer run shows what happens when development, pitching and role clarity reinforce one another.



THE PRESSURE STARTS EARLY

Milwaukee beat Texas 5-3 on Aug. 30 behind early home runs from Jackson Chourio and William Contreras, a strong start from Shane Drohan and Trevor Megill's 25th save. Reuters reported the result as the Brewers' fourth consecutive win, another example of the club creating an advantage before the final innings.

DEPTH CHANGES THE SHAPE OF A SERIES

The next day brought a 7-4 loss, a reminder that momentum in baseball is never permanent. What matters is whether the structure survives a setback. Milwaukee's lineup can create pressure in several ways, the rotation has supplied meaningful length and the bullpen enters with defined responsibilities rather than a nightly search for answers.

DEVELOPMENT IS THE COMPETITIVE EDGE

Small-market teams cannot solve every weakness by buying the most expensive replacement. They have to identify, teach and trust talent before the rest of the league assigns full value. Chourio's power and the club's steady pipeline make development visible on the scoreboard.

October will demand health, execution and the ability to adjust when every opponent has studied the same tendencies. The regular season has already provided the larger receipt: Milwaukee has a repeatable way to win. A streak can disappear in a week. A connected organization can create another one.

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SOURCES: REUTERS GAME REPORTING, AUG. 30-31 AND SEPT. 3, 2026; MILWAUKEE BREWERS.

BEHIND THE GAME

Management turns motion into a durable career

THE MANAGER IS PART OF THE MUSIC

David Ali's 2026 recognition puts a spotlight on the patient decisions that happen before the public breakthrough.

**THE WORK STARTS BEFORE THE ANNOUNCEMENT**

Billboard named Above Ground Entertainment founder and CEO David Ali its 2026 R&B;/Hip-Hop Power Players Executive of the Year. The recognition arrived after major milestones for Kehlani and highlighted a management operation connected to artists including Destin Conrad, Larry June and Tee Grizzley.

ATTENTION IS NOT THE WHOLE BUSINESS

A manager helps decide which opportunity strengthens the long plan and which one only makes the week look busy. That means protecting time, reading contracts, choosing partners, building a team and understanding when a fast offer could narrow the artist's future. The public sees the release. Management sees the chain of decisions beneath it.

THE ROSTER IS A RESPONSIBILITY

Different artists need different systems. One may require touring structure, another brand development and another a release plan capable of turning a loyal niche into a wider business. The manager's value is not making every career look identical; it is making sure every artist can identify the next useful move.

Ali built Above Ground from event promotion into full-service management. That background matters because ticket buyers, touring markets and artist development reveal what a streaming total can hide. Relationships create access, but judgment determines whether access becomes longevity.

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SOURCES: BILLBOARD, AUG. 20, 2026; IMPACT MENTORSHIP PROFILE OF DAVID ALI.

CURRENT BEAUTY

Age, care and visibility belong in the same frame

BEAUTY DOES NOT EXPIRE AT FIFTY

ESSENCE's Beauty After 50 category makes room for mature skin, changing needs and women too often edited out of the market.

NATIONAL
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THE CATEGORY NEEDED TO GROW UP

ESSENCE made Beauty After 50 the specialty category in its 2026 Best in Black Beauty Awards. The decision recognizes mature Black consumers whose needs have always been present in stores and salons even when campaigns, product testing and trend coverage behaved as if beauty stopped at youth.

CHANGE IS NOT DISAPPEARANCE

Skin may become drier or more sensitive. Hair texture, density and moisture needs can change. Makeup may sit differently. Those shifts do not reduce beauty; they require formulas, tools and techniques designed for the person who is actually using them. Honest performance is more respectful than a promise to erase time.

REPRESENTATION IMPROVES THE PRODUCT

When mature women appear only in a token campaign, companies miss the practical knowledge that should shape development. Customers can explain how packaging feels in the hand, which textures remain comfortable and what shades or finishes perform in changing light. That information is market intelligence, not a courtesy.

The strongest brands will treat older customers as full participants with style, purchasing power and individual taste. Silver hair, visible texture and a lived-in face do not need to be hidden before a product can be sold. Current beauty means being fully present at every age.

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SOURCE: ESSENCE BEST IN BLACK BEAUTY AWARDS 2026 - BEAUTY AFTER 50.

MODELS MAKING MOVES

Fashion turns archive, sculpture and presence into one frame

ANOK YAI TAKES THE THRONE

Ferragamo's Fall/Winter 2026 campaign places Anok Yai inside a conversation about shoes, art, labor and desire.



THE CAMPAIGN BUILT A WORLD

Ferragamo's Fall/Winter 2026 campaign revisits the house's long fascination with shoes. The official campaign credits creative director Maximilian Davis, photographer Johnny Dufort and stylist Lotta Volkova, then brings the archive into dialogue with contemporary art instead of treating heritage like a closed display case.

THE THRONE CARRIES HISTORY

Anok Yai appears with Willie Cole's 1994 sculpture *Made in the Philippines IV*, an object assembled from worn footwear. Accumulated shoes, luxury clothing and Yai's controlled posture create a layered image about status, labor and the way an ordinary object can carry memory before it becomes fashion.

THE MODEL MAKES THE IDEA LEGIBLE

Yai does more than display the clothes. Her presence connects design, photography, styling and sculpture. The frame works because she understands how stillness, angle and expression can hold competing ideas without flattening them into a product shot.

That is the larger move for a model with cultural authority. Campaign selection, creative input and public interpretation can build value beyond a single booking. The strongest model is not decoration inside the concept. She helps decide what the concept means when the image leaves the set.

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SOURCE: FERRAGAMO OFFICIAL FALL/WINTER 2026 CAMPAIGN MATERIALS.

STREET STORIES

The stadium becomes a marketplace and meeting place

BLACK CULTURE TOOK THE BALLPARK

Milwaukee's Black Culture Fest used baseball as the field, then filled it with music, makers and community memory.



THE BALLPARK BECAME A PLATFORM

The Brewers' official Community Nights program describes Black Culture Fest as a celebration of contributions that shaped both baseball and the local community. The event brought ceremonial participation, local marching bands and a curated marketplace into American Family Field, treating culture as part of the game-day experience rather than a decoration around it.

THE MARKETPLACE SHOWED AN ECOSYSTEM

Local makers change the meaning of a large venue. Clothing, books, art, food and community organizations allow fans to meet the people building culture between major events. A purchase can become discovery, and discovery can become a relationship that continues after the final inning.

BASEBALL CARRIES A LONGER RECORD

Black history in baseball reaches from the Negro Leagues and the integration era to the continuing work of creating access for young players, coaches and executives. A celebration becomes stronger when it connects entertainment to that record and gives the next generation a visible place inside it.

The event did not bring culture to Milwaukee. It gave Milwaukee's existing culture a larger room and a home-field audience. The lasting measure will be how many vendors, performers and community partners leave with new customers, new contacts and another invitation.

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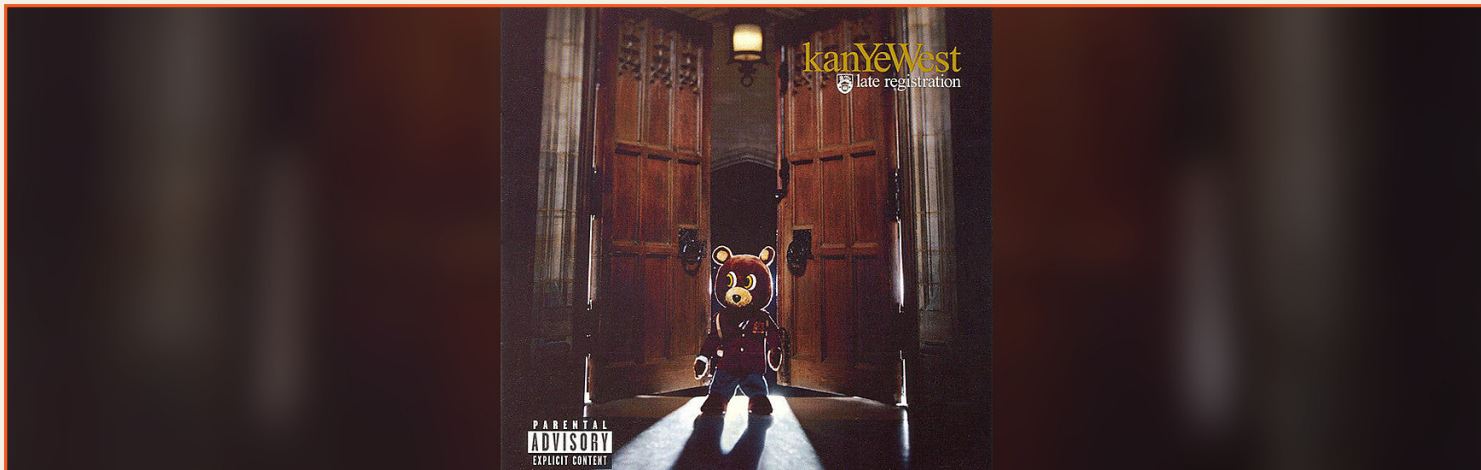
SOURCE: MILWAUKEE BREWERS OFFICIAL COMMUNITY NIGHTS MATERIALS, 2026.

WHAT THEY MISSED

An anniversary returns attention to arrangement and ambition

WHEN RAP DECIDED TO SOUND BIGGER

Twenty-one years after Late Registration, its live instrumentation and widescreen construction still challenge artists to make growth audible.



THE SEQUEL REFUSED TO REPEAT

Late Registration arrived on Aug. 30, 2005, when Kanye West could have repeated the palette of The College Dropout. Instead, the album expanded soul sampling and hard drums with composer Jon Brion's orchestral instincts. Strings, horns and detailed arrangements made the project feel larger without removing the personal writing at its center.

THE SCALE SERVED THE STORY

'Heard 'Em Say' carries quiet unease. 'Touch the Sky' converts celebration into lift. 'Roses' makes a hospital room intimate and cinematic. 'Gold Digger' became the major hit, but the album's deeper achievement was allowing vulnerability, humor, pop reach and compositional detail to share one project.

A COMPLETE ALBUM CREATES ITS OWN WEATHER

The songs do not feel identical, yet the sequencing and sonic detail make them belong to the same environment. That is difficult to achieve in a market built around individual uploads. A complete album asks every record to carry its own weight while also strengthening the records around it.

The lesson is not that every rap project needs strings. It is that growth should be audible. Late Registration remains influential because it treated ambition as craft: more musicians, more arrangement and more emotional range, all organized around a point of view listeners could recognize.

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SOURCE: APPLE MUSIC ALBUM NOTES AND RELEASE INFORMATION FOR LATE REGISTRATION.

BOSS MOVES / HUSTLE TO BUSINESS

Design, distribution and access meet on a larger floor

THEOPHILIO TAKES ITS VIEW TO THE BIG FLOOR

Edvin Thompson's Macy's capsule shows how independent design language can reach a national customer without surrendering its roots.



THE NEXT LEVEL IS CONTROLLED SCALE

Macy's announced a Sept. 8 launch for limited-edition capsule collections from American designers including Theophilio, Michael Kors, Tommy Hilfiger, Donna Karan, Jonathan Cohen and LAPOINTE. The lineup places Edvin Thompson's younger label beside established national names while giving it access to a much wider retail floor.

THE POINT OF VIEW STILL HAS TO TRAVEL

Thompson described the collection through color, movement and freedom, with Jamaican heritage and New York experience remaining inside the design language. That continuity matters. A partnership creates value because the larger company is reaching a point of view that already means something, not because the independent brand agrees to become generic.

DISTRIBUTION CHANGES THE BUSINESS

A national retailer introduces production schedules, inventory expectations, price architecture and customers who may be meeting the label for the first time. The creative has to remain clear while the operation becomes more disciplined. Delivery, quality and restocking are now part of the brand story.

The boss move is not access alone. It is converting access into durable demand and using the partnership to strengthen what the brand owns after the capsule ends. Scale works when more people can reach the vision and the vision remains recognizable when it arrives.

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SOURCE: PEOPLE, MACY'S DESIGNER CAPSULE ANNOUNCEMENT, AUG. 25, 2026.

THE CURRENT MERCH



THE CURRENT MERCH



RICARDA AMOR TEQUILA



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