

THE CURRENT

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

ISSUE 011

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BEHIND THE GAME

CURRENT BEAUTY

MODELS MAKING MOVES

STREET STORIES

WHAT THEY MISSED

BOSS MOVES /
HUSTLE TO BUSINESS

CHARLESTON WHITE

THE NEW KING
OF CONTROVERSY



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Controversy, ownership and the systems moving culture

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**"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 Barrell

THE 12 LAWS OF STREET TEAM MARKETING

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

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

THE CURRENT POSITION

ATTENTION IS NOT THE SAME AS AUTHORITY

Charleston White forces a hard conversation about influence, responsibility and the price of always being heard.

HE BUILT HIS OWN MICROPHONE

Charleston White did not wait for television, radio or a major network to approve his voice. He used interviews, livestreams and public appearances to create direct access to an audience that wanted unfiltered conversation.

CONTROVERSY CAN OPEN THE DOOR

Provocation creates attention, but attention alone is not leadership. The real measure is whether that visibility produces honest dialogue, stronger communities, responsible action and opportunities that remain after the argument ends.

WORDS STILL CARRY CONSEQUENCES

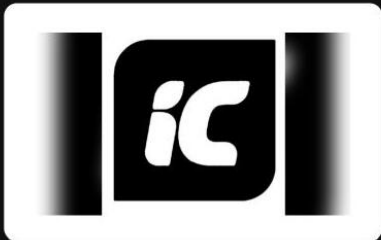
Speaking without fear can challenge hypocrisy and force difficult subjects into the open. It can also cause harm when shock becomes more important than truth. Influence requires the discipline to know the difference.

THE AUDIENCE MUST JUDGE THE WORK

No personality should be reduced to one clip, and no public figure should be protected from accountability by popularity. Listen closely, verify the record and decide whether the message builds understanding or simply keeps the room divided.



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A LOUD VOICE CAN START THE CONVERSATION. STRUCTURE DECIDES WHO CONTROLS IT.

COVER STORY

ATTENTION - PROVOCATION - POWER

THE OUTRAGE IS THE PRODUCT

Charleston White built a national audience by understanding that the argument travels farther than the introduction.



HE DOES NOT WAIT TO BE INVITED

Charleston White entered digital media as a speaker willing to say what polished interviews often avoid. His delivery is confrontational, comic and deliberately uncomfortable. That friction creates clips, reaction videos and secondhand debate - a distribution system powered by people who agree, disagree or simply cannot look away.

THE PERSONA IS BUILT FOR THE FEED

A long interview becomes dozens of short moments. Each statement can circulate without the full conversation, which gives White reach while also separating his words from context. The same system that makes him visible can flatten a complicated argument into one combustible sentence.

CONTROVERSY IS NOT RANDOM

The repetition matters. White returns to crime, accountability, celebrity worship, street culture and the responsibilities of adults around young people. His conclusions can be harsh and his language intentionally provocative, but the subject matter creates a recognizable editorial lane.

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CONTROVERSY IS NOT RANDOM - THE STORY CONTINUES AFTER THE HEADLINE.

COVER STORY

BUSINESS - ACCOUNTABILITY - CONSEQUENCE

WHEN CONTROVERSY BECOMES A BUSINESS MODEL

The real story is not whether every statement is defensible. It is how a public persona becomes a durable media operation.



THE AUDIENCE IS THE ASSET

White can move between podcast appearances, live events, speaking engagements and his own channels because attention follows the persona. The platform may change, but the audience already understands the promise: the conversation will be direct, unpredictable and difficult to ignore.

THE PUBLIC WORK COMPLICATES THE CHARACTER

Profiles of White also point to youth outreach through Helping Young People Excel. That work does not erase the impact of inflammatory statements, and the statements do not make the outreach irrelevant. A responsible profile has to hold both facts at once instead of reducing the subject to a hero or a villain.

POWER REQUIRES ACCOUNTABILITY

Owning the audience creates leverage, but it also increases responsibility. A provocative voice can force conversations into the open; it can also make other people the raw material for a viral moment. The standard cannot be attention alone. The real measure is what the platform builds, who it helps and what consequences it accepts.

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POWER REQUIRES ACCOUNTABILITY - THE STORY CONTINUES AFTER THE HEADLINE.

THE TEA

RETURN - COLLABORATION - INDEPENDENCE

BADU AND ALCHEMIST MOVE ON THEIR OWN CLOCK

Before the World Blows joins two artists whose influence grew because neither mistook speed for relevance.



ELEVEN YEARS DID NOT ERASE THE AUDIENCE

Before the World Blows is Erykah Badu's first full-length project since 2015. The gap is part of the story: her catalog remained active in the culture while the industry trained itself to treat constant output as survival.

THE PAIRING MAKES SENSE IN THE MUSIC

The Alchemist built a second peak by serving artists who value texture, patience and complete bodies of work. Badu brings the same resistance to easy categories. Their collaboration connects soul, street rap and experimental jazz without sanding down either identity.

THE RELEASE REWARDS CONTROL

A return works when the artist arrives with a point of view, not merely a schedule. The album turns absence into anticipation and proves that staying current can mean protecting the pace required to make the work feel necessary.

**"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 Barrell*

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THE RELEASE REWARDS CONTROL - THE STORY CONTINUES AFTER THE HEADLINE.

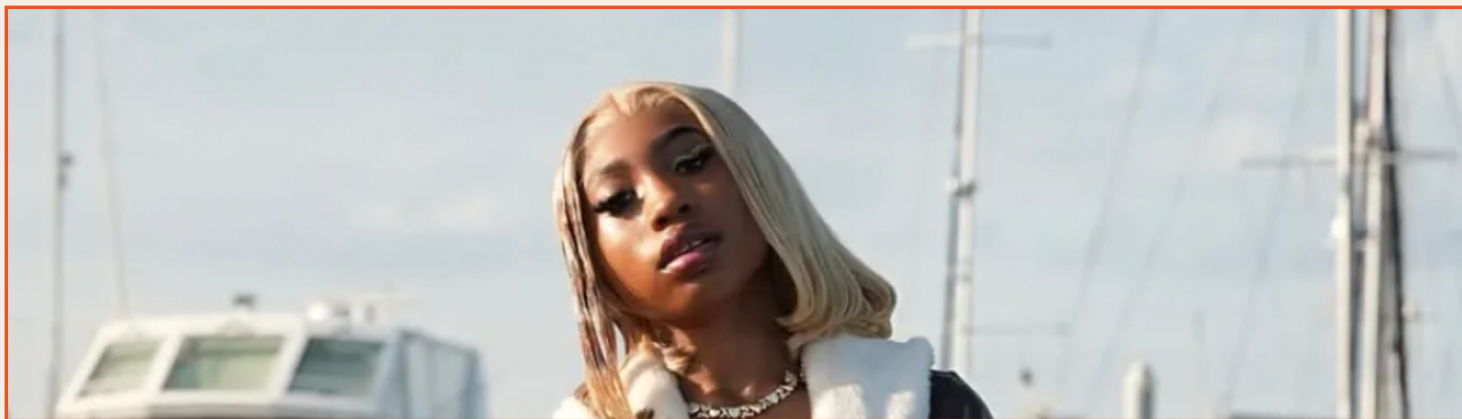
Source: Apple Music; The Guardian, Aug. 28, 2026; Pitchfork, Aug. 28, 2026.

WHO'S TRENDING

VIRAL MOMENT - REGIONAL VOICE - FOLLOW-THROUGH

TRIM TURNS ONE RECORD INTO A REAL RUNWAY

The South Carolina rapper behind BOAT is learning how to make momentum last beyond the first clip.



THE RECORD ARRIVED WITH A CHARACTER

Trim's BOAT connected because the voice, phrasing and visual attitude felt specific. The record did not sound focus-grouped for every market; it carried Charleston energy into a format the internet could repeat immediately.

REMIXES EXPANDED THE ROOM

Collaborations and remixes widened the audience while preserving the original record as the center of gravity. That is the useful version of a viral moment: each new appearance points listeners back to a catalog that can keep growing.

THE NEXT SONG IS THE REAL TEST

Trending status is rented. Career position has to be built with records, performances, a recognizable point of view and a team capable of converting attention into repeat listeners. Trim has the opening; the work now is to make the lane bigger than one title.

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THE NEXT SONG IS THE REAL TEST - THE STORY CONTINUES AFTER THE HEADLINE.

CURRENT SPORTS

OWNERSHIP - STEWARDSHIP - SCALE

KWANZA JONES ENTERS THE OWNERSHIP BOX

The Padres sale places an entrepreneur and investor inside one of American sports' most protected rooms.



THE APPROVAL CHANGED THE SCOREBOARD

Major League Baseball owners unanimously approved a new Padres ownership group led by Kwanza Jones and Jose E. Feliciano. The reported \$3.9 billion valuation set an MLB record and made the transaction larger than a roster move.

REPRESENTATION HAS TO REACH CONTROL

Visibility around the ballpark matters, but ownership determines budgets, long-term strategy, community relationships and the culture of the organization. Jones enters the conversation as a co-leading principal, not as a ceremonial face.

THE PROMISE WILL BE MEASURED IN YEARS

The new group says it wants sustained championship contention and deeper community impact. The serious test is whether capital, governance and baseball operations turn that ambition into an institution San Diego can trust.

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THE PROMISE WILL BE MEASURED IN YEARS - THE STORY CONTINUES AFTER THE HEADLINE.

BEHIND THE GAME

INDEPENDENCE - DISTRIBUTION - INFRASTRUCTURE

REACH RECORDS SCALES WITHOUT SURRENDERING CONTROL

A new global partnership shows how an independent label can add capacity while keeping its identity intact.



THE DEAL ADDS REACH TO REACH

Exceleration Music and Redeye Worldwide will provide global physical and digital distribution, marketing services, flexible capital and operational support for Reach Records releases beginning in 2026.

THE LABEL KEEPS THE WHEEL

Reach says its ownership, leadership and creative control remain in place. That distinction separates infrastructure from absorption. The point is to expand what the label can execute without replacing the people who understand its artists and audience.

A GENRE BUILT ITS OWN INSTITUTION

Christian hip-hop spent years being treated as a side category. Reach built brand trust, artist development and a direct community strong enough to negotiate from position. The partnership is evidence that cultural specificity can become leverage when the business underneath it is disciplined.

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A GENRE BUILT ITS OWN INSTITUTION - THE STORY CONTINUES AFTER THE HEADLINE.

CURRENT BEAUTY

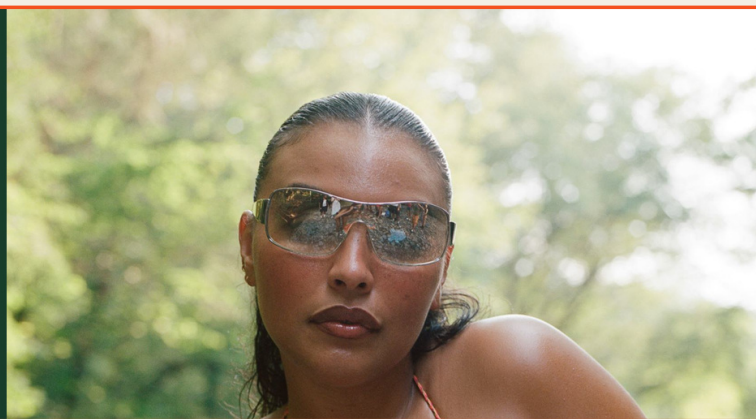
BODY - RITUAL - OWNERSHIP

PALOMA ELSESSER BUILDS BODY CARE ON HER OWN TERMS

The model is moving from representing beauty brands to developing a science-backed body-care venture of her own.

PALOMA
ELSESSER

BODY CARE / OWNERSHIP



THE MODEL UNDERSTANDS THE GAP

Paloma Elsesser built her career inside an industry that often discusses inclusion while keeping product standards narrow. Her experience in front of the camera gives her direct knowledge of what bodies are celebrated, accommodated or ignored.

THE NEXT ACT IS A PRODUCT SYSTEM

Elsesser has described a premium, science-backed and ritual-focused body-care concept. The move turns representation into authorship: she is not only the face explaining someone else's promise, but a founder deciding what the product should do and how it should feel.

OWNERSHIP CHANGES THE FRAME

A campaign can create visibility. A company can create intellectual property, customer relationships and long-term leverage. Current beauty is strongest when the person in the image controls more than the image.



OWNERSHIP CHANGES THE FRAME - THE STORY CONTINUES AFTER THE HEADLINE.

MODELS MAKING MOVES**CAMPAIGN - PRESENCE - POSITION**

ALUEL MAKUACH STEPS INTO THE TOM FORD FRAME

The South Sudanese model brings a precise, commanding presence to a Fall/Winter 2026 campaign built around modern glamour.

ALUEL MAKUACH

TOM FORD / FALL 2026

**THE IMAGE IS CONTROLLED - NOT QUIET**

Aluel Makuach does not disappear inside the clothes. Her direct gaze, clean lines and stillness give the campaign tension. The photograph reads as luxury because the model supplies authority, not because the frame is overloaded.

THE CAMPAIGN EXPANDS THE RUNWAY

A global fashion image moves farther than one show. It enters stores, advertising, editorial pages and social feeds, giving a developing model repeated visibility across markets and introducing her face to clients who may never attend fashion week.

PRESENCE BECOMES POSITION

One campaign does not complete a career, but it can clarify the lane: modern tailoring, strong beauty, controlled performance and an image that survives close inspection. The move matters because recognition begins to attach to the model, not only the label.

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PRESENCE BECOMES POSITION - THE STORY CONTINUES AFTER THE HEADLINE.

STREET STORIES

THERAPY - EDUCATION - CULTURAL LANGUAGE

THE STUDIO BECOMES A SAFE ROOM

Hip-hop therapy meets young people inside a language they already use for grief, identity and survival.



THE METHOD STARTS WITH RECOGNITION

Programs in the Bronx and Roxbury use lyric analysis, songwriting, beat-making and recording to help young people discuss experiences that may stay closed inside a conventional counseling room.

CULTURAL FLUENCY BUILDS TRUST

Hip-hop is not decoration added after the lesson. Its history of naming oppression, loss, ambition and neighborhood reality gives facilitators a framework students already understand. That familiarity can lower the first barrier to honest participation.

THE OUTCOME IS BIGGER THAN A SONG

The goal is not to manufacture artists. It is to create expression, reflection, peer support and a safer relationship to difficult emotions. When the studio is structured by trained professionals, culture becomes part of the care instead of something young people must leave outside the door.

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THE OUTCOME IS BIGGER THAN A SONG - THE STORY CONTINUES AFTER THE HEADLINE.

WHAT THEY MISSED

PRODUCTION - AUTHORSHIP - SOLO VOICE

DAHI STEPS OUT FROM BEHIND THE CREDITS

After helping shape records for Kendrick Lamar, SZA and others, the producer places his own name at the center.



THE SOUND WAS ALREADY IN THE ROOM

Dahi's credits sit inside some of the most influential rap and R&B; of the last decade. Producers can define the emotional architecture of a record while the audience remembers only the voice on top.

BLACK BOY ALTERNATIVE CHANGES THE BILLING

His solo debut pulls guitar, West African rhythm, alternative rock and hip-hop into one personal statement. The collaborators are substantial, but the album's importance comes from finally hearing the producer as the organizing artist.

CREDIT IS CULTURAL MEMORY

What they missed is not talent; the industry documented the placements. It missed the full authorship behind the placement. A solo record restores the person behind the sonic decisions and gives listeners a map back through the work they already know.

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CREDIT IS CULTURAL MEMORY - THE STORY CONTINUES AFTER THE HEADLINE.

BOSS MOVES / HUSTLE TO BUSINESS

VENTURE CAPITAL - EARLY ACCESS - EQUITY

KEVIN DURANT TURNS EARLY ACCESS INTO EQUITY

A reported Hugging Face return shows why athlete wealth changes when endorsement money becomes ownership.

**THE INVESTMENT STARTED BEFORE THE HEADLINE**

Reports say Kevin Durant and Rich Kleiman invested a combined \$250,000 in Hugging Face across early fundraising rounds. A reported Nvidia acquisition at \$12.9 billion could make that stake worth more than \$60 million.

THE NETWORK IS PART OF THE ASSET

Early-stage investing depends on access to founders, technical judgment, patient capital and the ability to accept risk. Thirty Five Ventures gives Durant a structure for making repeated bets instead of treating one check as a lucky side move.

THE LESSON IS OWNERSHIP - NOT IMITATION

The takeaway is not that every athlete should chase the newest technology company. It is that income and equity behave differently. A disciplined portfolio can create value that is not tied to minutes played, contract years or one public endorsement.

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THE LESSON IS OWNERSHIP - NOT IMITATION - THE STORY CONTINUES AFTER THE HEADLINE.

RICARDA AMOR TEQUILA



"JUST A BETTER
TASTE OF LIFE"

**REMEMBER TO
DRINK LIKE A BOSS**





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