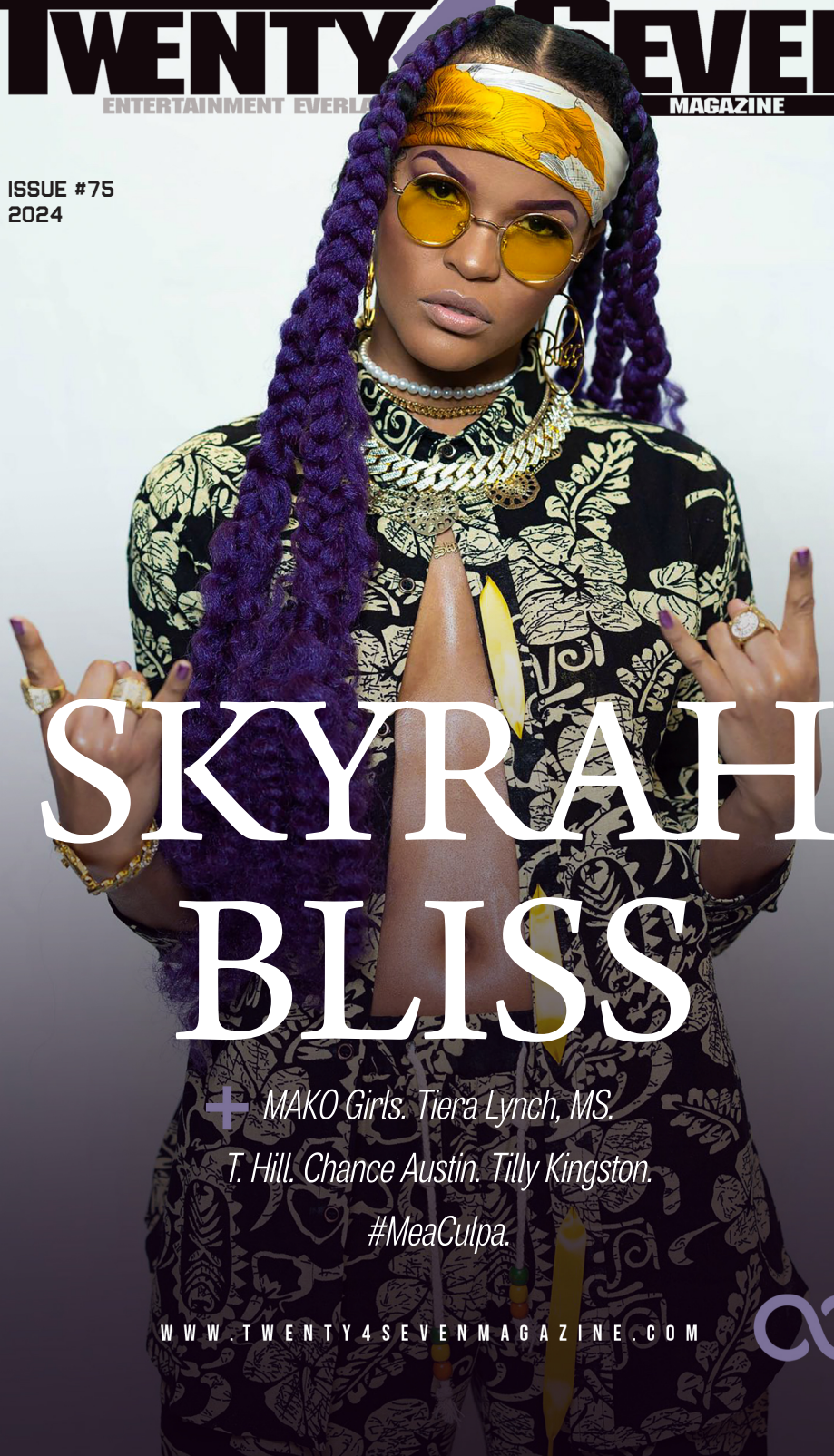


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SKYRAH BLISS

+ *MAKO Girls. Tiera Lynch, MS.*

T. Hill. Chance Austin. Tilly Kingston.

#MeaCulpa.



COVER STORY



PHOTOS: @STEVESTYLESPHOTO
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SKYRAH BLISS

THE COLOR PURPLE

Words + Interview By Lucky Smith

We met Skyrrah Bliss for the first time during L.O.U.D. Muzik's Radio & Press Junket in Houston, Texas, circa 2020. She caught our attention immediately because she had her hair in purple afro, lol. 4 years later, we caught up with the Houston native to discuss her humble beginnings in sports, the state of the entertainment industry, mental health, the importance of staying in one's lane and more. This young lady is a star. Pay attention.

Tell us about yourself.

I'm from Houston, Texas, where legends are made baby, you know what I'm saying. Lol? I actually grew up playing sports, but I've always wanted to do music. When I was like 5 or 6 years old, I would hide in my closet and write songs and then became brave enough to share my songs when I was a teenager in high school.

Tell us a little bit about your sports background.

When I was a little leaguer (2nd and 3rd grade), I played baseball and then in middle and high school, I played volleyball, basketball, track and softball.

Were you a letterman in any of those sports?

Oh yeah. I only played softball one year because during Freshman year, we had to choose between softball or track and I chose track. So, I only lettered in volleyball, basketball, and track.

When did you decide to make a career out of music?

I was in a group in high school and I loved the girls to death, but I seemed to be the only one that was really serious about everything. Lol, I was definitely Galleria from *The Cheetah Girls*, always getting us to rehearse, writing the music, getting us to the studio etc. and was very serious about it.

Whenever we would have our studio sessions and we would work with other producers and songwriters, they would be like, "Wow, she is your songwriter right there". That is when I knew I had something because of course you're going to think you are good but when other people start telling you that you're good, that means something.

When did you get your "big break"?

I think my big break was when I was working with Brian Angel (of Day26) when I was younger. He was just coming off of the *Making The Band* show and he let me know that I was a really good songwriter and if I kept working at it, I could be one of the best in the business, which is my goal.

Also, from a business standpoint, joining L.O.U.D. Muzik has been the best decision of my career. I am the type of artist that can do everything and sometimes it can be a little overwhelming to people who want to become fans because I do all types of music. I want to do rock, and I can do R&B, and Pop, and Country. I can do everything. L.O.U.D. will bring me in and tell me to just give them a little bit at a time because it is confusing.

We have heard a lot of your music and it is very versatile. What do you think has been your best record thus far?

I think I have gotten the best reception from, *Hype Me Up* but my favorite record I've ever done so far was before L.O.U.D. and was

called, "I I I". I just really love that song because I was in a headspace of just creating freely and I'm most connected to it on an emotional level rather than how it is being received by the public.

You write, sing, perform, etc. Which of those is your favorite?

Performing is my favorite. I absolutely love the opportunity to transcend the audience to a higher frequency with me. I always have this really cleansing prayer or mantra (however anybody wants to say it), but I always pray that my mind, body, soul, and spirit is cleansed because music is very transferrable.

I am I'm a firm believer that one should watch what they listen to because it transcends into your body. So, I always want to make sure that everyone comes to the higher frequency of being in a better place, mentally, physically, and emotionally with me. If it is a song that is emotional that I am singing, we are going to get through this pain together. So, performing is my favorite and I'm also a little Diva on stage too, honey. I need my fans just like Beyoncé, OK!? Lol.

I have noticed that you are very colorful and your wardrobe selection is unique. Tell us about your look.

The truth is that it is so simple. I just want to look like the cover of a magazine. I want to look so cool, like a walking art piece. Sometimes, it is really hard to find what I am looking for and what is in my head, but I just try to find really cool patterns. I mix and match color and am really big on colors because during photoshoots, it pops really well. At the same time, I also love a really cool all black outfit too because I am a little rock star in my head, sometimes.

When I mention the color purple, what does that mean to you?

To me it means happiness. Lol, it genuinely makes me happy. I grew up with an older brother and just like any young girl who has an older brother, you want to be just like them growing up. So, everything that he liked, I liked. We even had matching Allen Iverson braids, the same clothes, shoes, etc. and so whenever I started liking purple, I became my own person.

So to me, the color purple is happiness and individuality but when you dig deeper into it, it means royalty. It is the color of your blood before it touches oxygen. It is the color of your head chakra as well. Mm-Hmm, Lol.

"Hoodrat St" is my favorite record of yours. What are your "Top 5" records that you have done?**

*Hype Me Up, I I I. Natural, Hoodrat S**t*.....um, I have only mentioned the songs that are out but I perform records that are unreleased too like, *Pretty Girl Problem*. Everyone really likes when I perform that. I also have a record called, *Make It Out Alive*.

That one is all about mental health. I wrote that about having an episode and praying that you make it out of that alive. So, it has a deeper meaning to it. It is kind of like Andre 3000's, *Hey Ya*. A lot of people don't know that *Hey Ya* is actually a sad song. That is why he says, "Y'all don't hear me, y'all just wanna dance", lol. So, I have favorite songs that aren't out that I consider really great as well....Mm-Hmm.

I'm glad you brought up mental health because I was actually going to touch on that because there is a lot of pressure on people nowadays. How do you cope?

I had to do a lot of soul searching because in the beginning of my career, I was told that I would never be good enough to do it (just like everybody else, of course, lol). I used to over-rehearse, over-perform, I would pick the hardest songs to learn from the hardest artists, and I would rehearse for like 8-10 hours at a time. So, by the time the show came, I was singing and performing so hard, but looking back on it now as I have been on my mental health journey, I know that I was doing that for the wrong reasons. I wasn't rehearsing because I loved it. I was rehearsing to prove people wrong. I was singing that high note that Whitney (Houston) does to prove people wrong and that is a very unhealthy way to live your life.

Now, I do it because it is my passion and I love it. If I write a song and nobody on my team loves it but I do, it doesn't bring me down. I don't care because I'm not doing it for the approval of others anymore. Who cares what they think? It's all about what you think, lol.

The entertainment industry is in disarray right now. Artists are beefing with the DJs, DJs are beefing with the artists, artists are beefing with media and even the film industry is going through it. What is your take on that?

It is crazy because I see both sides of it. I think that everyone should pick whatever they are best at, do that and stay in their lane. Of course, you can cross over here and there to help others in the lane that you're not necessarily like the best in, but pick what your superpower is and do that. You know what I mean?

Every Ninja Turtle has a different set of skills, lol. So, I feel like everybody wanting to do everything is watering down the quality of things. I'm all about quality over quantity, any day. The artists that I fell in love with that inspired me were quality. They could sing, they could dance, they could perform, and they had style. That is what the industry is missing and the fans are feeling it now too. It is all over social media. What is going on with the music industry? What is going on with the music? There is no feeling anymore and everything sounds the same.

Speaking of industry woes. How do you navigate the entertainment businesses as a woman?

When you are a woman in any industry, you are definitely going to be challenged. But, you have to make sure that you are strong enough mentally to handle it and speak up whenever you need to speak up because it happens to us all.

Outside of music, what are some of the things that you like to do and are involved in?

I absolutely still love to play volleyball and basketball with my best friend. I love fashion as well so that is definitely an industry that I want to get into. I love to spend time with my God babies. They are my heart and soul. I like to eat and go out to eat. Seafood is my favorite. Mm-Hmm....and shopping. I love a good shopping spree, and shoes, lol.

Name a few of your influences.

My biggest influences are Michael and Janet Jackson, Whitney Houston, and Beyoncé. I also absolutely love Brandy. I love Jasmine Sullivan. There are so many people. I am inspired by Missy Elliot. I don't necessarily

consider myself a rapper, but whenever one of my rap records needs kind of like a rap flow, I definitely pull from Missy Elliot a lot, lol. Pharrell, Timbaland, Ludacris.... game changers. I love people who come into the game and shake things up.

That is what I want to do. When people hear my music, I want them to be like, "Who is that!?" I really want to make an impression because I don't want to sound like anybody else at all. Tina Turner too. Love her.

How would you describe yourself to someone who doesn't know you and how would you like to be remembered?

I would describe myself as energetic, fun, a mental vacation. That is what I am aiming for when I am creating music. I just want people to be free. I would like to be remembered as a breath of fresh air. I am light, I am loving. I am kind,

gentle and encouraging.

Last question: What can we expect from you, careerwise over the next few years?

You can expect me to be at the Grammys next year because I'm not playing with nobody no more. I am writing these songs and I am writing the hell out of them. Can I say that? I'm sorry. I am trying not to curse, lol. I am writing the stuff out of them and everyone is really excited. I feel like I have grown into a seasoned artist. I know I am still a new artist to a lot of people, which is fine. I am always going to be a new artist to somebody, but I feel like I am going to be at the Grammys next year for sure with the new music I am writing and the people I am collaborating with now.

Any final words?

Yes, a shameless plug. I would like people to download my latest single, *Hype Me Up*. It is an HBCU inspired song. I am really excited about it. Add it to your playlist and please follow me on Spotify and check out linktr.ee/SkyrahBliss as well.

