



**The
Detail.**

Khalil Madovi
Guest Editor

ISSUE 004

ISSUE 004

4. BLACK *British*

COMMON SENSE

EDITOR: M.T. OMONIYI | WORDS: MARCEL BROWN | FEATURED: EMIKO, EMMANUEL ADEYEMO,
ADE OYEJOBI, MARK MACIVER, KHALIL MADOVI, BEN BAILEY SMITH, RICHARD AMOLE, RUKA AND
MORE...

PHOTO CREDITS: ZERO



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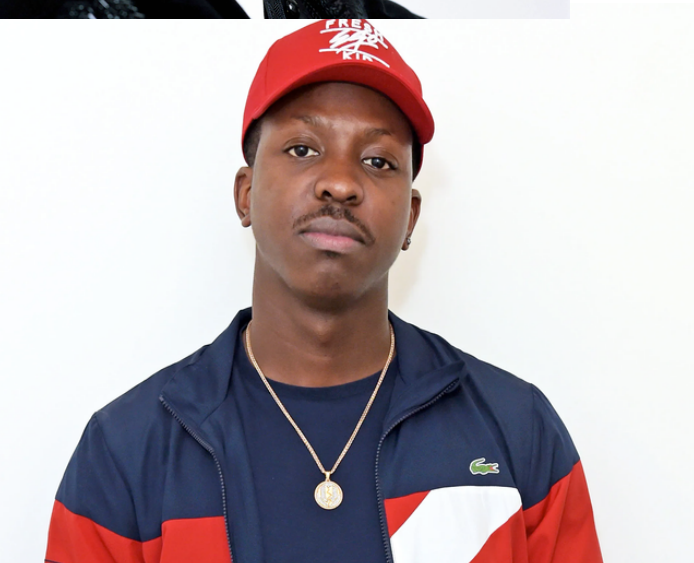
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A portrait of Khalil Madovi, a Black man with short grey hair, wearing dark sunglasses and a black blazer over a black turtleneck. He is looking slightly to the left. The background is a textured wall with warm, golden-brown and greenish tones.

GUEST EDITOR'S NOTE

@KHALILMADOVI

KHALIL MADOVI

Credits @zeroshub

No matter your politics, being Black is definitely a thing. A thing with its own experiences, expectations, tribulations and traumas. We could say the same about being British. Well, kind of. Regardless, there is a remarkably unique archetype at the intersection or the in-between of these two worlds. The Black British. What is it? How is it? Who is it? For me, the notion of Black Britishness is something that evokes mixed emotions. On the one hand, I absolutely love my experiences growing up as a Black body around British culture. From playing heads and volleys in my T90s on road to migraine skanking with my cousins, or watching Eastenders' Christmas special at my grandma's. There are even experiences I've had as a direct result of Britain's marginalisation and systemic racism, that through the lens of my Black Britishness, I hold close as fond memories and even routine practice today (chicken shop dinner, anyone?).

This brings me to my next point; being Black and British is very conflicting. I am regularly reminded in typical polite British fashion that I supposedly do not belong here, and frankly, when one takes a deep dive into Britain's illustriously criminal history, I'm not sure I would want to 'belong' here either.

Especially having the Jamaican and Zimbabwean heritage that I do. Yet the wild thing is, when I go back to those countries as someone born in south London, I can be made to feel like I don't belong there either. And so I find myself back in this in between. This polychromatic identity space in which so much is questioned, discovered, exchanged, redesigned, built, fought for, fought against, and so much more.

Here's The Detail.

DIANE ABBOTT, IN FULL DIANE JULIE ABBOTT, (BORN SEPTEMBER 27, 1953, LONDON, ENGLAND), BRITISH POLITICIAN WHO WAS THE FIRST WOMAN OF AFRICAN DESCENT ELECTED (1987) TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.



Letter to my younger self

Mark Maciver, aka SliderCuts



Mark Maciver, aka SliderCuts, has been cutting hair professionally since 2003. During that time, he has nurtured an impressive client list, which includes basketball player LeBron James, world heavyweight champion boxer Anthony Joshua, TV personality Reggie Yates and high-hitting UK rappers Stormzy and Tinie Tempah, amongst others.



Hey Mark,

I hope you're well.

I just want to let you know that the world is a lot bigger than what you can see right now.

There's so much more to the world than your community and the neighbourhood you live in. The road you're on, everything you're doing, your integrity, the morals you have, make sure you keep those things as they will be the key to your future success.

You won't be the most popular guy, you won't be the best at everything, and you won't be "the guy" as they say, but just know the values you have will be vital later on in all you do. So look past what is going on around you now and don't try to keep up with the other guys in your area. Instead, stay focused, be humble, loving and kind, and work hard and you'll see it pay off.

And most importantly, stay close and tight with God because He will keep you through the troubled times.

Peace and love.



MICHAELA EWURABA BOAKYE-COLLINSON (BORN 1 OCTOBER 1987), KNOWN PROFESSIONALLY AS MICHAELA COEL, IS A BRITISH SCREENWRITER AND ACTRESS

EMIKO

With a voice so timely yet so timeless West London's singer-songwriter Emiko is an exciting artist that exudes the kind of energy, soul and quality found in the timeless music from our past.

We sat down with Emiko to find out more about his music and how he thinks about BLACK Britishness.

What does being Black and British mean to you?

For me, I think it means navigating, all the influences that I've been fortunate enough to be exposed to growing up. I have my African Nigerian culture mixed with British culture which is mixed with the Black British experience.

It's like finding yourself within all these different forms of identification and it's nice because you get to have a mixture of all those types of cultures and it gives you a more well-rounded outlook on life. I see Black British as being well-rounded.

How does your music reflect the Black and British experience of growing up in the UK?

I'd say my music reflects the Black and British experience purely because I'm a Black artist making music, but also because of the genre of music. I make R&B music which is inherently an American genre. In the UK, we are still creating our version of R&B with a British or Black British spin.

It's quite an exciting time but obviously, we grew up listening to a lot of R&B from the states so it's nice that we get to define what we interpret as R&B in the UK whilst also having influences from the American culture. For me, it's just telling stories and having my story resonate with other Black people.





Who are the trailblazers who inspire you to create music?

I would say a lot of the time it's my peers, so people that I'm on the come up with. We see each other progress and see give each other advice.

"I love my peers in the creative scene and I love seeing other people succeed as well; its quite inspiring."

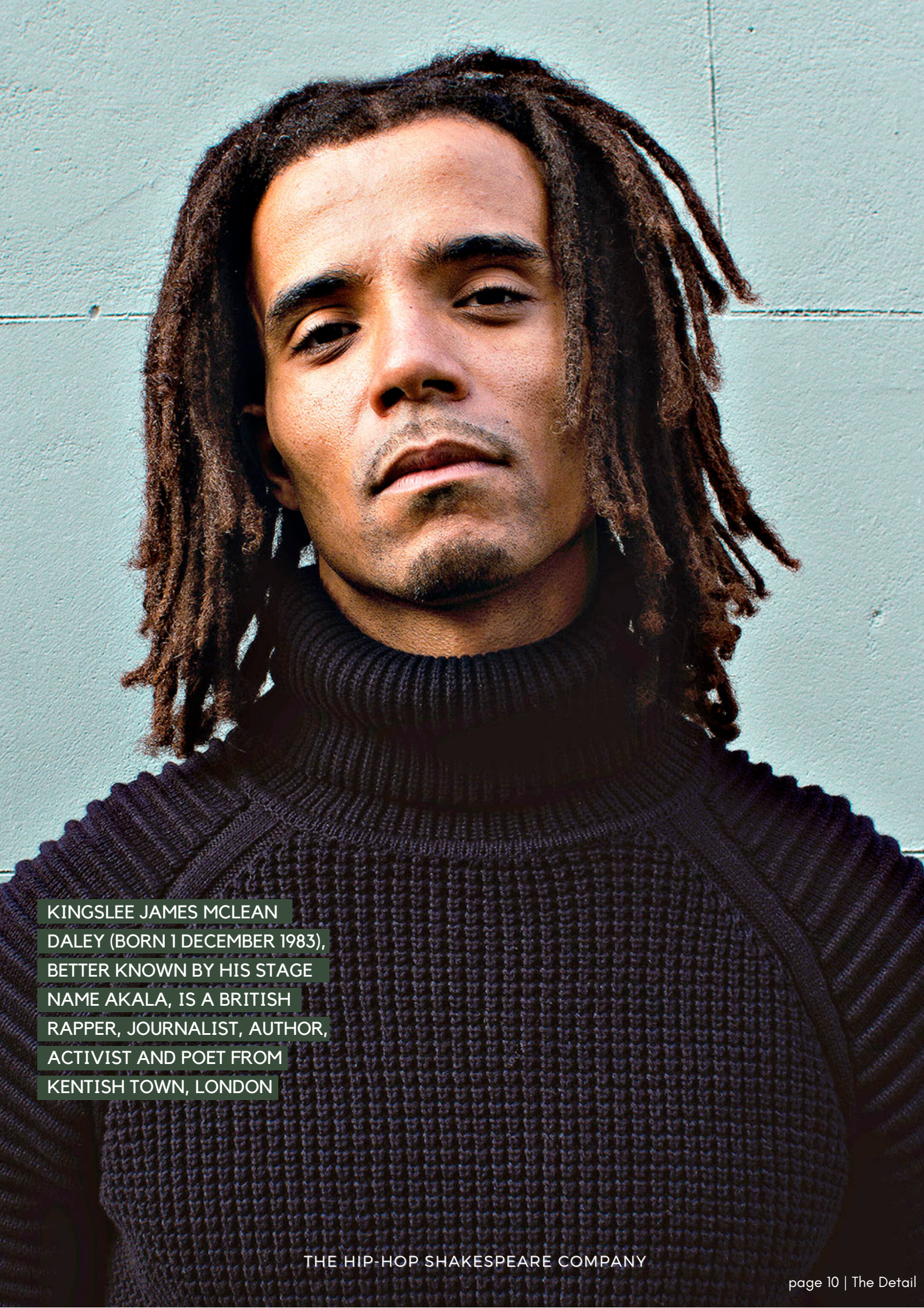
How does your music empower and represent the Black and British identity?

I think that it's so important that we tell our stories and my story is to do with being British, it is to do with being Black, my experiences, my pain, love, anguish, and mental health. All these things make me who I am and I put them all into my music.

I always want there to be some sort of message or substance to the music I create, whether that's through soulful sounds or kind of spoken word or even rapping. I also know that the fact I'm doing what I'm doing means that I'm inspiring other people and opening doors for Black creatives. They may say 'well if he can do it then I can do it.'

I love how my music can empower others and also how it can show that there are different types of Black British identity. I'm just one type being, you know, soulful sounds R&B that type of jazz genre but we have a multitude of genres of Black artists who are representing themselves in so many different ways so it's just letting people know that there's space for you regardless of your musical interest are.





KINGSLEE JAMES MCLEAN
DALEY (BORN 1 DECEMBER 1983),
BETTER KNOWN BY HIS STAGE
NAME AKALA, IS A BRITISH
RAPPER, JOURNALIST, AUTHOR,
ACTIVIST AND POET FROM
KENTISH TOWN, LONDON



CalledOut Music: British music producer, MOBO award winner, singer/songwriter and multi-instrumentalist from Hampshire

The Uk Gospel Scene Is Booming

BY EMMANUEL ADEYEMO

GOSPEL MUSIC IS NOT A SOUND; GOSPEL MUSIC IS A MESSAGE.

If there was ever a time to pay attention to the UK Gospel industry it would be yesterday and if you've missed some of the recent developments, the next best time would be now! Over the last few years, there has been an emergence of highly outstanding talent and music, from artists to collectives that are trailblazing in Gospel music hailing from the small but mighty island we all know and love, the United Kingdom.

Before we go on any further, I'd like to make a distinction in artistic styles and genres when referring to Gospel music, as this captures various soundscapes from traditional gospel music to R'n'B to Rap, Drill, Afrobeats, and more. To set the scene right let's establish the importance of gospel music in popular music today. Gospel music is the foundation of so many popular genres today, and the church has birthed some of the biggest names in music- Whitney Houston, Justin Timberlake, Ed Sheeran, Usher, Beyonce, and the list goes on.

Now, of course, the names I just mentioned; though they may have started their musical journeys in the church, and eventually pivoted to chase their passions in music, away from the church; many are still in the church, making music *for* or *from* the church and are doing it excellently well. We have the likes of Maverick City Music (a collective based in the USA) touring the world and selling out arenas with the likes of the legendary- Kirk Franklin; but when it comes to the UK, you're probably wondering, what is happening here? So I'll be using these next few lines to highlight talent, movements, organisations, and more bubbling up and making an impact in the UK.

Let's start with Premier Gospel, one of the leading organisations in Gospel music in the UK today. They have a renowned radio station and magazine publication that highlights traditional gospel music, to new styles such as Afrobeats, Rap, R'n'B, and more. Or AStepFWD which is a multimedia organisation that powers a monthly, independently run, national UK Christian Chart (think of the Billboards but for Christian music) ranging across genres in Gospel to Christian Rock, Indie Music, Hip Hop, and all of the contemporary music of today. AStepFWD hosts an annual award show which is reminiscent of the Dove and the Stellar Awards combined; so very big production value, nothing short of the glitz and glam, which draws out all the big-name artists and industry heads in the Gospel industry.

Another organisation to name would be GMIA (Gospel Music Industry Alliance). Other online platforms that are championing diversity in gospel music are Gospel Hydration, BLSSD Music, Amen Worldwide, She.H.H Podcast, Narrow Sounds, Mxrcy Playlist, RGS Podcast, AlignedVision, Reggae Gospel 360, UK Gospel, KCMix, Saint Radio LDN, and more.

We're getting closer to some of the artists to look into, but let's quickly highlight some collectives and groups. Day Three Music, Manor Collective (made up of Becca Folkes, CalledOut Music, Sarah Bird & more), V9 Collective, Goons4God, Condoseven (Rap Group), Salient Sound, Volney Morgan & New-Ye, ZAA Music and The CHH Collective (which house artists and creatives in the urban music, entertainment, and media industry lead by MannyAdé).



Muiyiwa Olarewaju OBE is a British Gospel singer and songwriter



Manor Collective is made up of Becca Folkes, CalledOut Music, Charlotte Kiwanuka, Elle Limebear, Féz, Jonny Bird, Junior Garr, Myles Dhillon, Sarah Bird & Tertia May.



The LONDON AFRICAN GOSPEL CHOIR was co-founded by Crystal Kassi to help London's African community to promote the gospel

Now for the icing on the cake, here is a list of some artists killing the game and raising the banner in UK Gospel (not exclusive to traditional Gospel music)

CalledOut Music, Reblah, Efua B, Limoblaze, Collistar, Konola, Grace Tena, Minister Taf, Sharyn, Elikem Kofi, Asha Elia, Guvna B, Musumba, Triple O, Becca Folkes, 678NATH, Maestro Bravest, DJ Shunz, Emmanuel Smith, R-Scar, Laura Ehio, Still Shadey, Latoyah Bless, Zelijah Tishbite, Stevie Valentine, Laura Ehio, Rev J, Naffy Mar, Ryan Holton, Duane Caleb, DaveCreates, Annatoria, Vonte Grace, TJ Cream, Jessica Akins, Tee Supreme and so many more.

As you can probably tell, there's so much out there, but the truth is there's so much more to do to see the UK Gospel industry attain its full potential. Proper infrastructure and funding are what is needed but there is hope and a bright future ahead; and with the likes of Apple Music x Platoon launching a cross-generational collaborative project for Gospel Heritage Month last month, how can we not be excited for all that's to come.



Isaac Borquaye, better known as Guvna B, is a rapper, author and broadcaster from Custom House,



Premier Gospel & AGMMA award winner Becca Folkes, is a singer/songwriter from Essex



London born and Essex raised, davecreates is creative with eclectic taste and versatile expression.

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DAVID OLUSOGA

BLACK HISTORY IS A SERIES OF
MISSING CHAPTERS FROM
BRITISH HISTORY. I'M TRYING TO
PUT THOSE BITS BACK IN.

British historian, writer, broadcaster

”



JOIN THE COMMON SENSE
NETWORK
THERE ARE TWO SIDES
TO EVERY STORY.

Goodman Factory

An interview with Co-founder Richard Amole



Why did you start Goodman Factory?

I started Goodman Factory because I was fresh out of University and I was at a point where I wanted to look good. I would look for products that could help and also help me grow a beard. I quickly realised that there were no products out there for us or people like myself. I was also inspired by hip-hop culture and how it made men look.

When I would go to sites like Boots, I would really only see white men and the occasional Asian man, but never really Black men. I didn't see people with big beards like me. I knew there was a need for a brand that speaks to people like myself and then I went on a journey of learning actually what's good for our hair and skin and that's what inspired me to launch Goodman Factory.

Goodman Factory is a community of Goodmen who embrace their identity.

They bring together people from all backgrounds & cultures who value purpose, share good moments, engage in healthy discussions, motivate one another, and most importantly practice self-care both physically and mentally. Become the change you want to see by joining the experience.

Why do you think Goodman's is important for the Black British experience?

I think it's a positive platform for the Black British experience because it voices real people within our community.

We tend to stay away from influencers and the big names and bring on real people that may not have the platform, we turn people that don't necessarily have an audience into inspirational figures that can connect with our community. I think we're a voice of the people, we have conversations that we won't necessarily see on the mainstream media platforms which I love, and were going to continue to bring people that we believe can have a positive impact on our community that won't necessarily get the platform and mainstream platforms as they are not known.

We have many examples of individuals like Aaron Dale from Raising Boys 2 Men, A-star, who has sickle cell and has spoken on our platform to speak their truth, they have been able to connect with hundreds of thousands of people through TikTok and YouTube. We're going to continue to do what we're doing because we're voicing unheard people.

Do you think self-care for Black British men is underrepresented and not spoken enough about within communities?

Most definitely self-care amongst Black men is not encouraged, on any mainstream platform black men are ignored in the mainstream media. Goodman Factory is a platform, that represents Black men, Asian men, Arab men, and everyone but we are very focused on representing Black men and we encourage self-care through our content and understand that we are communicating to a group of people that has been neglected, so we understand that there has to be an educational aspect.

That's why every month we release, through our mailing list, self-care tips, we make self-care videos and were just here to normalise men going out of their way to educate themselves, on how to take care of themselves, what to put in place to take care of themselves not only physically but most importantly mentally, so we're here to support the mental health of Black British men, I feel like it's something that is a phenom currently it was ignored before but now it's like, you can't ignore us anymore and we will continue to do so through platforms like TikTok and YouTube.

What do you want to achieve with Goodman Factory, how do you think your platform reflects the Black British experience?

A goal for Goodman Factory is to grow a platform and an ecosystem where we have mentors with our platform that can raise the next generation of men, with a focus on Black British men. We then want to empower people of colour globally because we do connect with people overseas a lot, right now our focus is on Black British men as we aim to give them the tools that are required for them to continue to heal the world essentially.

I just want representation, I want us to showcase who we truly are, and I want people to be able to do that through our platform. It's about building community and we want to continue to serve our community over the long run.





What does Black Britishness mean to Goodman's?

I would say Black Britishness is a community like any other, we are seen as a minority in the UK, and it is very important, we continue to showcase our creativity, our excellence, and the great things about the Black British experience, which isn't shown positively in mainstream media and for us we just want to be able to show our raw, true authentic selves to the rest of the world, to remove the stigmas that are attached to us, that are painted in the media so that is, to me is how we view the Black British experience.

How does your hair represent the Black British experience, what challenges have you faced?

I believe my hair represents the Black British experience because it's literally the hair that grows out of my scalp which I'm proud of, I don't feel the need to cut it to please anyone. I've been in environments where my hair has been seen as a threat or deemed unprofessional in working environments. I go back to one of my first jobs after finishing university working for a tech PR company where my manager said that I look more professional without my beard.

it made me question, is the growth of my hair intimidating and does it make me look unprofessional. That played a part in actually inspiring me to start Goodman Factory, I do think it represents the Black British experience, it's unapologetic, it will just continue to grow and I'll let it grow, unapologetically no matter how it makes someone feel.

When a Black man has a beard, We are visually perceived to have the image that reflects a 'gentleman.' That's why I wanted to use our brand to shape the narrative of hair and make people realise that your hair is your power, it's another part of you that you can embrace, and you don't have to get rid of it. When it comes to hair, I do see it as something spiritual, I do believe there's a reason why it grows towards the sun and I think like a plant it should be taken care of, the same way you should water it and give it the nutrients that it needs. It's something to take care of, not something to shave and cut away every week.





Ruka Is Taking over

The word Ruka means "doing hair" in Shona, and we mean it when we say it - we want to do hair as it has never been done before. Ruka is creating the definitive hair brand for Black women globally, by building an ecosystem of hair solutions which are ethical, sustainable, and truly work. Most importantly, we're taking the time to listen and learn from Black women who have experienced centuries of a hair industry dictated and driven by people who don't look like us or understand our needs.

A staggering multitude of Black women suffer hair loss, often driven by the use of harmful chemicals in hair extensions and hair care products, poor hair installation techniques, and an overall lack of education. Therefore, as a brand, we are as intentional about innovation within our products as we are about sharing our learnings with our community. Whether this is with live demos, or hair and scalp consultations at our pop-ups, our village is key.



What does the Black and British experience mean to Ruka?

We are founded and led by Black women. At our core, Ruka was birthed into a legacy of power and community, laced with a history of pain and struggle. This spans both the Black and British experience, as well as the experience of many Black people across the globe. Yet Ruka stands as the manifestation of the work that all the Black women did before us to keep the spirit and joy of our hair alive.

Similarly, the Black and British experience is rooted in a history that both challenged and, against all odds, celebrated our versatility and shape-shifting magic. Our experience is one that drives that forward - challenges the bounds of what the Black and British experience has historically been and champions the freedom to create an even more diverse future. Seeing our hair worn by our cocreators, village, Dina Asher-Smith, and Tems is an indication to us that we're doing just that!

How does the world of tech and beauty intertwine, and how is this tailored to the Black and British experience?

As of 2021, Black women spend 6x as much as their White counterparts on haircare products and services. Ruka is a solution to why this is not represented in what's marketed to us through 6x better quality, 6x more science-led, or even 6x more convenient. We started with real hair extensions, voted no.1 in the UK, and are raising to add world-class synthetic hair to the products we offer. Tech, innovation, and research are key to truly serving Black women, the often underserved consumer.

Our village includes over 500 co-creators, the majority of whom are based in the UK, whose feedback has been instrumental in creating hair solutions that are needed that work. We also boast a team in the UK that passionately works to bring the vision alive. You can see this in our award-winning Edge Slick, the ever-improving range of hair textures we offer designed by Black scientists, and our hair perfume and hydrating gels formulated by Black scientists.

How does Ruka represent the Black and British experience?

Since launching in the UK in Jan 2021, we've been voted the no.1 afro hair extensions brand, serving over 5,500 customers largely in the UK. The Black and British experience is interwoven into the fabric and history of Ruka. We know what it feels like to have to make do because it doesn't seem like what's out there is created for you. And that's exactly why we have decided to make the outsiders our insiders, by creating a company that truly puts Black women at the centre and innovates around their needs.

Our aim is world domination - put simply, this is representing and innovating around those needs in every arena where Black women exist. Being the first Black hair extension business in Westfield London was an extension of the work we do daily. We're raising the standard whilst normalising the joyful shopping experience that Black women across the globe deserve.



What's next for Ruka as they continue to grow and flourish?

From October 31st we'll have launched in Selfridges - a history-making partnership with Ruka being their first Black-owned hair extension concession. We'll also be launching our crowdfund to allow us to build a proprietary synthetic hair offering, deepen our ethics and sustainability focus within our supply chain and lay the groundwork for international expansion. These are just a few of the things we're looking forward to in our vision to serve Black women with the highest standards of hair solutions.



ADE OYEJOBI

Words Ade Oyejobi
Poetry by Ade Oyejobi
Edited M.T. Omoniyi

As a first-generation British-Nigerian, I have learned that hard work, perseverance, and dedication are foundations for respect in my culture; however, I have managed to use creativity to shine a light on not only my heritage, but the journey that I am still on as a Black British young man. Throughout my life, I've been made aware of how powerful my heritage is and what it means for me to be successful. Success to me is knowing that my name is the manifestation of kingship and enrichment, it is also making sure that everyone I meet knows it too.

How does your Artform reflect the Black and British experience of growing up in South London?

Being a Black British Medical Student from South London is like staring at the two sides of a coin that never stops spinning because I always have a story to tell, and I depict these stories through my poetry.

I started writing poetry as a form of therapy during lockdown. I saw it as a way out of my mind. Now, I use it as a way into the minds of those who aren't comfortable with their vulnerability. Through my art, I aim to break down emotional barriers and inspire others to use their passions for healing.



Photography by: April Alexander



Wait for me.

Original poetry by Ade Oyejobi (2 page spread)

My mother taught me how to pronounce
my last name.
My father taught me that my name
is the manifestation of kingship and enrichment.
How can a name have such meaning?

What you don't see is how I was raised.
I was raised in that West-African prominence.
Cocoa butter and plantain filled my nose on a rainy day.

I learned growth throughout
my sisters braids.
In times of doubt I was always encouraged
to pray.
I was never really congratulated
for my grades.
I was always told to keep dreaming.
Whether it was washing dishes or bathroom cleaning,
I was always told to keep my dreams as high as the ceiling.

If I don't then
"just like your favourite rapper speeding down the m-way"
I'll try to be something I'm not
Just like that my legacy
will be something that they forgot.

And that's why I'll never be able to equate
the love I have for my parents.
It's writing a 15,000-word essay due in for yesterday.

But I'll pick up my pen and keep writing
because that's what I was taught to do.

I was taught to shoot my shot
and make sure I always focus on that follow-through.

Wait for me (cont)

I was taught how to cut my hair.
I was taught how to never compare
the clothes I had with anybody else's.
I was taught that if someone hits you,
you hit them back
because you should always be in a position to defend yourself.
I was taught that I'm living and breathing
my ancestors spirits even when I'm not wearing native.
I was taught that 'a doctor, a lawyer,
an engineer or an accountant
will always be more stable than a creative'.

Sometimes it got a bit overwhelming
like when you're a little kid in the supermarket
Your mum disappears...
The cash lady is scanning those items fast.
You're really trying to hold back your tears.

All my mother said was 'wait for me'.
To this day my trust is still with my parents

My mother taught me how to pronounce
my last name.
My father taught me that my name
is the manifestation of kingship and enrichment.

I'm always look at my glass half full.
In fact more than half.
In this essay I continue to write
In this essay I continue to breath
because this essay is my very life.
My parents taught me how to write the paragraphs.





Cover for new EP 'Southside Eulogy' with Joshua-Alexander featuring Rhea Marcia

Who are the trailblazers that inspire you to keep curating your craft and more?

There are a multitude of icons, from George The Poet to Caleb Femi, that inspire me to keep on keeping on. However; the most genuine encouragement comes from the community of giants around me - whom I can call my friends. From Nubia Assata and Athian Akec, to Joshua-Alexander Williams and William Awomoyi. I have a community of poets, artists, authors, and political critiques who constantly challenge my way of thought and uplift my craft. Funny enough they all happen to be Black and British too!

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DAVID OLUSOGA

BLACK HISTORY IS A SERIES OF
MISSING CHAPTERS FROM
BRITISH HISTORY. I'M TRYING TO
PUT THOSE BITS BACK IN.

British historian, writer, broadcaster

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LETTER TO MY YOUNGER SELF

BY BEN BAILEY SMITH

I know. Trust me, I know.

You're only 6 years old and it seems overwhelming, but I know you're excited too. It's Christmas 1983, hard to reflect back on a year when you're so young, but what a year. You had one of your most profound experiences this summer – your first-ever visit to a cinema. Star Wars: Return of the Jedi too! Wow. Back in January, some old man shouted "Dirty little half-caste n**r!" at you in a North London park, now you're travelling through space at hyper speed, visiting different planets, watching an epic story unfold in a distant galaxy, right before your eyes. How long ago and far, far away that scary moment in January felt as your eyebrows raised at that screen.

And somehow, despite fearing that baddie in the park, you were strangely drawn to the baddie in the movie. The mysterious, faceless man in black with a little b and a deep, booming voice that sounded Black with a capital B

I know. I remember the astonishment, the bittersweet reveal of his face at the end. Bittersweet because he wasn't brown like you under that mask. But he also wasn't all bad. Even the worst people have a heart somewhere under all their hardened exteriors. Everybody deserved kindness, to feel joy... to be entertained, you concluded. And so your only wish from Santa that year was the Vader outfit, so you could stomp around to the Imperial March, mimicking that rich Black voice and the asthmatic wheeze, making your family and friends laugh. It felt good! Your mum had the foresight to send you to that free drama club on Kilburn High Road. That felt good too!

But I know.



Ben Bailey Smith appears as Empire villain Agent Blevin in the new series Star Wars: Andor on Disney+.

I know that in your teens you'll find out that Vader's voice really was Black - James Earl Jones, the voice of Mufasa, no less. And his mainstream side-lining will bizarrely coincide with your own self-side-lining, walking away from Performing Arts because you felt that dirty little half-caste n*****s from Kilburn just don't make it as actors. I have no practical guidance for you because I know you'll find yourself - it'll be another decade from your late teens but you'll find yourself - as we all do eventually. You'll even join Vader's side, for real.

However, I will say this: Nothing is ever purely black and white. Every mask we wear covers our grey areas - it's behind the mask that we find our complications, our duality, our idiosyncrasies, and hypocrisies. And all of them, yes all - even the very worst - are beautifully human. You are beautifully human. Keep celebrating it.

Khalil Madovi

A sit down with our Guest Editor



How does your music reflect the Black and British identity?

I am Black and British, therefore anything I do anything, anything I say is Black and British, it doesn't have to fit within the umbrella of what we are told Black Britishness is. My music reflects the experiences of my life and my story, the stories that I'll share through my music, I think powerful music has to come from a place of truth, this reflects my Black British experience. Whether that's party culture, whether that's love, whether that's you know self-awareness reflection existential issues. These types of questions can arise from the kinds of experiences in journeys that I've had as a Black Brit you know, this reflects my Black British identity.

My music reflects my identity in a few ways, . A huge part of Black Britishness is diaspora, it is the multifaceted nature of 'where we are from' and 'where we are really from', bringing those elements together I definitely draw from both my Jamaican and Zimbabwe heritage in my music as well as my London energy and also, I refer to my time in Manchester where I spent a lot of time growing up there when I was young. My music reflects my identity in a few ways, the experience is kind of an exclusive one and music reflects that experience.



Tell us about music and the Black British experience?

Music is a huge part of our culture, dance is a huge part of our culture. So naturally, being black has shown me that expression is a huge part of my identity, who I am, how I've learned to navigate the world, music as a form of expression, performative art as a form of expression, to see that they intertwine would imply that they were once separate. I think that imagery blends them together, it's more than just a collage of elements that has different colours within the same picture. I think that the Black British experience is expression, I think the Black British experience is music I think it is Art, I think it is dance as it's deeply ingrained in who we are.

Do you think Black British musicians are underrepresented?

I'd say they're not underrepresented because in the mainstream music scene in the UK there's a Black presence there, but the totality of what the Black presence symbolises isn't represented in the mainstream. If the world is an ocean and Black British musicians are like a huge iceberg, the mainstream would be the vantage point or the viewpoint or the perspective that we have from what we can see of everything above water.

Thankfully, we live in the Internet era, which means you could you can just be in your niche bag and let the world find you.



If the mainstream is only what you can see above water then you know that a lot is going off in the ocean below the water level but you can't see it because of what the mainstream perspective is.

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