

TWENTY4SEVEN

ENTERTAINMENT EVERLASTING

MAGAZINE

ISSUE #42
2018



BACKBONE

+

*Michelle Lukes. Peche. Cash Clay Beats.
#BlackPanther. Don Mega.*

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2018 has been going pretty well so far and we've been super busy, which can be both good and bad, depending on how you look at it. The good thing is that we have plenty of dope stuff in store for later in the year. The bad thing is that this issue is a little late. Shout out to "Black History Month" and all but we're black, "Twenty4Seven". Much love to all of my people. Keep pushing, stay inspired and support black businesses. I can't stress that enough.

Lastly, be on the lookout for our first full length film project (currently untitled) that will cover our highlights from 2009-Present from concerts, never before seen video footage and interviews, events, etc. (See screenshots below) In the meantime, check us out at www.twenty4sevenmagazine.com. Subscribe, follow us on social media, etc. Thanks in advance.

Tyrone Davis



TWENTY4SEVEN
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MAGAZINE

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PHOTO BY:
ANDREKZA VASQUEZ
(LOTUS VISUAL ARTS)

REINALDO ZAVARCE AKA PECHE

Q&A BY:
TYRONE DAVIS *Fool*

Tell us about your childhood?

I spent my whole childhood in Venezuela where I grew up. It was a fun one for sure. I was surrounded by music and a ton of ways to be artistic since I was born and my mother always encouraged me to be a part of those things. Besides that, I also watched TV and played outside!

Were you a fan of Nickelodeon growing up? If so, which shows did you like?

Yeah! I loved it! "Kenan and Kel" and "Drake and Josh" were my favorites.

Tell us about your role as "Alex" in Nickelodeon's, "ISA TKM"?

Alex was a high school kid who dreamt of being a rock star. It was easy to relate to the role, haha.

What made you decide to depart from "ISA TKM" and how do you feel about your new solo project? Any pressure?

Not really. The show ended. We had two great seasons and we toured for a while but at some point everybody wanted to continue growing and so did I. I had my own rock band called, "Panorama Express" and toured with it in Brasil. It was fun and I loved that time in my life. Then, I dedicated my full attention to acting in Los Angeles while I was developing my music project undercover until it was ready and BOOM!....

Tell us about your single, "Fool".

"Fool" is the song I selected as my first single because it is a mix of styles I love and also the perfect transition from the old me to who I am now. It marks the beginning of my solo career and expresses many real situations I was living not so long ago.

Is being multi-talented in today's industry important?

I think the industry in general is changing so fast and the more tools you have, the more changes you have to succeed. I act, sing, write, produce, direct, edit and I even cook, haha. What I'm saying is that I wouldn't be here if I hadn't had those talents.

I wrote, directed and edited my own music video and I will do the same for those in the future. I also think it's important to collaborate and be part of bigger things. So, it is important to have multiple talents but it's also important to surround yourself with multi-talented people who you can trust and build with. That's when things blow up!

How do you prepare for an acting role?

The first thing I do is read the whole project. The synopsis, the script and then the characters. I ask questions. Why is this character in these situations? Where does he come from? How was his childhood and what type of family did

he come from? That tells me who my character is in the "present" or in the story.

I also go deeper to see what kind of music my character listens to, along with other parts of his personality and it usually takes a few days to a week to prepare, unless the character is more complex or has an accent I have to work on. That makes it take a little longer.

What has been your best acting experience so far?

I have a couple. I loved my role of Miguel on Netflix's, "Don Quixote - The Ingenious Gentleman of La Mancha". It was smart, fun and the film was a period piece. So...perfect! The other was a short film I did called, "Dear Mama". It was an extremely fulfilling experience to play an ex inmate that falls back into the crime life because of the precarious rehabilitation system we have. The film was a critique on the system and we actually won best film at the "Big Heart Small Film" Film Festival in Pasadena, CA. Two of the judges were Steven Spielberg and Billy Zane

Who inspires you musically and as an actor?

Living memorably! I always create memorable moments in my life and the people around me that I will recall in the future and breath in and out thinking about.

How do you feel about the #metoo campaign?

I love it. There are many layers to this question but my short answer is that we are part of a generation of change. The #metoo campaign, along with the rest of the campaigns to raise awareness to our problems as a society are key for future generations to grow. They are seeing all of this and will eventually transform humanity towards a more socially conscious global community.

Historically, the different societies in the world have been dominated by few and in the globalized future, I know that there will be more than a few dominating and eventually an equal place, world and universe where opportunities are so equal that anyone, no matter sex, race or culture can succeed from 0 to the top and be treated the same as anybody else. We just have to keep spreading good culture.

Tell us something about yourself that most don't know.

I think it's hard to hide things now with so much social media but I would say that I'm a dork and a nerd, haha! Also, I love learning things, especially about our planet and universe and the rest of the universe that's out there to explore.

What's next for Peche?

I have a new song coming out February 23rd and you're the first to know it. It's called, "xq callas" and it's a Trap/R&B song in Spanish! For updates, follow me on Twitter and IG: @Peche.

CASH CLAY BEATS: STREET CERTIFIED

Take a moment and read up on Grammy Nominated producer Cash Clay Beats as he shares the "ins and outs" of the music business. Learn about his claim to fame and the importance of valuing your craft as a producer.

Interview By Tyrone Davis + Kevin "Blue" Jones

Tell us about how you grew up.

I grew up in St. Louis, MO (northside) in a household that consisted of my mother, grandparents and 4 uncles. It was 9 people in one house and it was great. Having all of my family around gave me confidence, I played most sports, but I took to basketball the most. The area was gang infested and there were shootings in the neighborhood daily but my family attended church often and it kept me from being in the streets so much. St. Louis definitely taught me how to survive in life.

What made you relocate to Atlanta and how was it the first year you got there?

I moved to Atlanta to go to Morehouse College. It was shocking to find out Morehouse was in the hood. I was trying to get away from the hood all my life and drove 8 hrs to another hood. I was like, "I can't get out the hood". But, I was cool for the most part. Being that I was use to being in this type of area I adapted quickly. I met a lot of good friends and I liked the fact that I was on my own at a young age. The first year was spent on campus. I loved Atlanta because there was so much talent and competition there. I also saw a lot of successful black people there working for themselves which I had not seen in St. Louis.

In the music business, there are a lot of avenues one could pursue. What made you choose being a producer/beatmaker over a rapper?

Actually, I use to rap, but I wasn't paying the bills. I use to make my own beats and that's what lead me to producing for others, especially when I found out that a producer could get \$5k for one beat. I was all in.

Do you consider yourself a "producer" or a "beat maker"? What is the difference?

A "producer" actually can help with the creation of the song. They know how a melody should go, where to place the hook/bridge and they assist with ad-libs and stacks to help with the final product. A "beat-maker" is a person that just made a beat and someone else produces it. Also, a producer is not necessarily the person that makes the beat.

How did you land your first major placement?

My first big local placement was in 2009 with Rich Kidz song, "Friends With Benefits". I was working with producer Deraj Global, who was doing a session with them. He played some of my beats for them and they picked one and recorded the song on the spot.

Do you make beats with a specific artist in mind or do you just make a bunch of them to pitch to whomever?

Both. It depends on who is working and what connections I have at the time the artists are working. I've had situations where I was making beats for artist specifically and a lot of the times I just make beats in general.

Do you prefer working with an artist in person or creating them and sending them online?

I like working by myself first then going to the studio with some ideas laid out. I can be more creative helping with melodies and arranging the song instead of trying to

make a beat on the spot. I don't really like to email beats unless that's my only choice because you really don't get to build a relationship with the artist that way. If I already know them then it's cool.

Do you ever get "producer's block"? What do you do to ensure all of your beats don't sound the same?

I get "producer's block" from time to time because producing is mental. If things around me are not going right, it can interfere with creating music. I try to listen to different genres of music and go to clubs where music is loud. Trying to re-create other people's beats and getting new sounds help too.

Recently, a few known producers have come out and said they aren't getting paid by the major labels for their beats because a lot of their records going on projects that are considered "mixtapes". Can you elaborate?

That happens all the time. Some artist will pay for the production though. The independent artist are more likely to pay the more known artist. But on the flip side of that, if the song you produced becomes a single or makes the album they would have to do paperwork. I register all my songs with my PRO so even though they did not pay up front, I still can collect off of streaming and other publishing.

For artists purchasing beats from producers via outlets like Soundclick, can you offer some clarity here? What is the difference between a lease, an "unlimited" lease and an exclusive?

Leasing the rights means a music artist buys your beat but they do not own the track exclusively. The beat is usually lower in price because it will be sold multiple times to multiple music artists. Exclusive rights means the track will only be sold once to a single music artist and cannot be re-sold to another artist.

A lot of artists have this "unlimited" lease option that says after purchase, you can use the record on all digital platforms, radio, sale an unlimited amount of copies and it's all "royalty free". How is it possible for an artist to do all of that if they don't own the beat?

In my opinion, it doesn't really make sense to do "unlimited" leases, so I don't. I think some producers put titles on things to make it sound good to the buyers so they can get more money for the same thing. I give the artist the option to lease. If the song is doing well and they want to purchase the track exclusively they can, IF the track is still available. I will deduct the leased amount from the exclusive amount.

Do you think "unknown" producers are shooting themselves in the foot by selling their product for cheap instead of releasing records the right way?

I think it's a good idea to lease your beats because as producers, we have a lot of beats sitting on our computers, taking up space that could be making money for us. Now I wouldn't recommend selling them for dirt cheap on the exclusive side, but as far as leasing it's ok to sell for lower amounts because you can keep reselling the same beat over and over.



MAJOR CREDITS:

MIGOS FT. YOUNG THUG - COCAINA
MIGOS FT. TRAVIS SCOTT - KELLY PRICE
K CAMP FT. MONEYBAGG YO - RACKS LIKE THIS
WON G FT. RICK ROSS - RICH TOGETHER
YFN LUCCI FT. TROUBLE - FUCKIN WITCHU

Explain "Publishing".

"Music Publishing is the owning and exploiting of songs in the form of musical copyrights" - Randall Wixen (The Plain and Simple Guide to music Publishing). If you have written or composed an original piece of music, you own the copyright to that piece of work. In the event that the composition created is used in a way that generates money...at that point the copyright owner or owners are entitled to the publishing in the form of mechanical royalties, performance royalties, licenses for synchronization, licenses for sampling and more. So pretty much, music publishing is the cornerstone of a musicians income. It can be passed down from generation to generation as long as that composition is still making money.

Do you give free beats to certain artists? What determines if you'll let one hop on your production for free?

I send beats out all the time. I don't consider them free, but I want the artist to record it first before we agree that "this is the one". That's mainly with major artists. When we come to an agreement, we do paperwork and then go from there. I've had some independent artists that I've looked out for from time to time before my Grammy nomination and Platinum Plaque.

How does it feel to be Grammy Nominated?

I feel like I won the Championship. It's a great feeling to have that title. It wasn't easy at all and kind of gives me a pat on the back for all of the hard work I've put in all these years. It also comes with much responsibility. I feel a little more pressure than before to deliver more and take my music to the next level.

Do your credits help you be able to negotiate how much you make off each song? How do you go about negotiating your cut of a record?

My credits definitely help. Before all of my credits, the labels and managers always wanted to know who I worked with to justify paying me a certain amount. Now my credits are all over the place, so it's not a problem for me to get the amount I deserve.

What advice would you give up and coming producers

who are trying to get major placements?

Network with as many people as you can like engineers, friends of artists, artists themselves, AnR's, etc. Pretty much anyone that you think that can help you get to the artists that you are trying to get the placements with. Use social media to your advantage. Sometimes they will have email addresses on their pages and will post about the different events they will be attending. Stay solid because the industry is very small and if you get a bad reputation, the word could travel fast. Learn your DAW (Digital Audio Workstation) and perfect your craft. Be ready at any given time because when it happens, it happens and time does not wait. Trust me. Get a lawyer to help with your contracts and sometimes they are connected with artists too. Stay working as learning much as you can. That part will never change, even for me.

What's next for Cash Clay Beats?

We are currently launching our merchandise, "Street Certified" (Beat Cartel) which is also a production company where we have producers and songwriters. I'm scheduled to be in 2 documentaries this year titled, "Turnt" and "The Rise of The Atlanta Producer". I'm also scheduled to be on "The Drop" which is a TV show that will appear on Comcast. I have more production on the way with "Think Its A Game" Records and much more. I am also part of a partnership with Atlanta Public Schools. The best talent of each school (out of 11 schools) will have a chance to work with a major producer. Additional partners for the contest include: RadioOne, Hot107.9 and some of Atlanta's most sought after producers including: Zaytoven Beats, Kenny Barto, JUSTICE League (with Faz Syed), Elliott Carter, Grand Hustle Records, Paul Diaz, Treesound Studios, Timothy "Bolo Da Producer" Mingo, Scott Keiklak, AIMM, Kennard Garrett, Quantum SteadyState, and LLC and Jafari "Farro Jarro" Jeter.

Any last words?

Thank you for taking out the time for this interview. Anyone looking to follow me, can do so at Cashclaybeats.com and @cashclaybeats on all social sites. For media contact @tiaculver. Thanks again!



PHOTOS BY
TYRONE DAVIS

DUNGEON FAMILY'S OWN

BACKBONE

STILL BUCKIN'

WORDS + INTERVIEW BY: TYRONE DAVIS

ASSISTANT: CANDY FIELDS

"I am Backbone aka "Dr. Bartholomew Funk". I am Dungeon Family: First Generation." - Backbone

I met Backbone for the first time in 2011 when my team and I were in Atlanta to network during the weekend of the BET Hip Hop Awards. At some point, we ended up stopping at a random hotel to meet up with someone and ran into former No Limit artist, Fiend and after a quick video interview, he said he had a recording session the next day at Stankonia Recording Studios and invited us. While at the studio, we ran into Killer Mike and Backbone and were told Chamillionaire was in a session as well, though we never caught up with him.

I've always had a deep respect for anyone in the entertainment business who has both entertained and made an impact on my life at any point, regardless of the magnitude. I grew up in the 90's and I was big on supporting the crews of major acts because if they were dope and they co-signed their homies, I rocked with them as well. No Limit Records, the Dungeon Family, Death Row and Bone Thugs-N-Harmony's "Mo Thugs" were a few of my favorite camps. So, being that I had met Fiend, Killer Mike and Backbone all in the same weekend was a big thing. You never know who you'll run into which is why networking and putting your feet on the pavement is important.

Backbone and I kept in touch over the years, speaking every now and then and I've interviewed him 3 times on film. The latest time (2016), he reached out to me to let me know that the Dungeon Family and Organized Noize would be performing together with all of the members present at the ONE Musicfest, which Backbone thanked Jason Carter, Orlando McGhee, and Moetown Lee for making happen. I didn't make the show, but caught up with him some time later for a follow up interview.

The following is a few points from the interview, which will be released on video in full for the first time along with an upcoming film (untitled at the moment) we will be releasing later this year. The film will feature highlights of concerts and never before seen footage and interviews, events, etc. One of my resolutions for 2018 is to purge all of my unseen work by releasing it to the public. I think I'm doing both myself and the people a disservice by letting it collect dust on multiple hard drives. Plus, I actually had one crash last year and lost a gang of content I'll never get back. That hurt. With that be-

ing said, I'd like to take this time to show my appreciation for Backbone and his contribution to the game by letting people know that he's "Still Buckin".

How he joined the Dungeon Family:

We were put together, devinely. I knew Cee-Lo Green when we were kids. He was 8 years old. I'm a couple of years older than him. Long story short, I met Kudjo Goodie in high school and the rest is history. There was a lot in between that, but that's how it all started. We never came together just to say we were going to do music one day. We never knew that. We just met as homies and things transpired over the years.

On his health related IG posts:

Around 2012, I was told that I had diabetes. I didn't believe it but it showed up. I'm not the type to take medicine so I sought out a naturopathic doctor and he put me on a vegan diet. I ain't vegan no more, I eat chicken wings. Let me make that clear, lol. I'm back on the meat a little bit but it's not as intense as it was. My diet was CRAZY back then but I sought his help, he put me on a vegan diet about 90 days, I went back to the mainstream doctor and everything was all clear. I no longer have diabetes. I maintained the weight loss and I'm here now.

I will be a registered dietitian in about a year and a half. I've been in (school) since 2013 because once I found that out, I wanted to let people know that there are no incurable diseases. All diseases are curable, HIV or whatever. You have to clean your insides out though. It can't live in an alkaline state.

On the current state of our music:

The plan that the enemy wanted to implement years ago has finally come to surface. It's now a psychological warfare. From the music to the food to everyday living conditions. When people succumb to some things, it manifests and they've been building this forever but the energy is shifting. The music will return to its essence. Not to discredit any of the music that's out but that's just the environment. That's what was rooted. That's what grew but it's up to us OG's to replant these seeds. We have to start over and that's what I'm doing with my record label. I'm grooming a roster of artists that are going to make a difference out here.



On Killer Mike:

Killer Mike is a rebel for the right cause. He's an entrepreneur now. I'm proud of my little brother. He's done a lot and he's MADE his way in the industry. Of course, he was one of Outkast's first signees, him and Slim Calhoun but after it slowed down, he reinvented himself with the "Run the Jewels" and you know what he's doing now.

Ways we can turn the state of our people around:

We have to get better food networks in the community. We have to start gardening. There are a lot of community gardens sprouting up in Atlanta. People are buying food closer to home and we have to understand which foods are better for us. If it's \$5 and it's quick, it can't be that good so I'd rather take my time and let something cultivate and grow and then we'd "Farm the Table".

Also, you have to research. You have to read. You have to know where you come from. A lot of people think our history started on those boats. We come from a lineage of Kings and Queens. We are powerful. We are the bloodline. When you touch yourself, you're touching people from hundreds of years ago. We're touching our ancestors so now we have to give that thought back. One day, we'll be in the ancestral realm and we will have to leave a message for somebody but what are we going to leave them? I'm going to take responsibility to write my chapter in the book of life and I just wish others would do the same. I push for it so I surround myself with those types of individuals.

On the shift in Atlanta culture and new artists:

Atlanta has always been a party city. We just took the party to TV. When we became OG's, a lot of the younger cats wanted to already be in the party. They didn't understand the grind. They didn't understand the come up. They didn't understand the hustle. They got YouTube and all these social media platforms where they can put out a song tonight and be sleeping on the floor and tomorrow, it got 3 million views

and everybody wants to know who this kid is and money is just flowing. We have implemented that hustle again so they know that this is a business. It's not just overnight success even though it happens for some of them like that but you have to grind. I was with the Dungeon since I was 19. My first album didn't come out until I was 27. Goodie Mob had 2 albums out. Outkast had about 3. I still hadn't come out yet. I was the last of the first generation so all of that grind is education.

On his creative process:

I try to pick the timeless tracks that I know might not come out right away. I don't have that machine or some of the spotlight like some of these guys have but I'm appreciated in my own right. I try to find songs and tracks that will stick around for years. I got a track that I've been sitting on since like 2000 and it's never come out at all but when I put it out it's going to feel just as relevant. The message is still clear and the track is tight.

On ADHD (Question asked by Candy Fields):

I used to date a young lady and her son...he was cool, but then they started giving him those shots and it triggered it. I know through diet, all that can be reversed. We can help that young man by feeding him "life food" instead of their food. Quit eating out of boxes. Those boxes are designed to keep you boxed in. I'm not the best at eating right now because I can't cook a hot dog, but I try to find the best resources. I'm about to go pick up some Sweet Potato Cookies and Kale Wraps from my chef. I try to surround myself with things like that but definitely, diet will cure a lot of diseases.

The full video interview will be available soon. In the meantime, follow Backbone on Twitter @Backbone_DF1G and on Instagram @Backbone_Dungeon_Family. Check out his clothing at www.thebackbonestore.bigcartel.com as well.

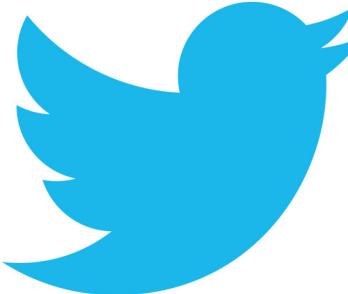


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TWEET DAT!

@MichaelEDyson: My daddy was a strong Black man who raised me to understand the value of hard work and determination. He is -to me- the epitome of #blackexcellence and I hope that I have become the man he hoped I'd be. #myblackhistory

@FINALLEVEL (ICE T): I'm 60 yrs old today! Win. Since I was not supposed to make it outta my 20s..

@Royceda59: What is this "The teachers should be armed" nonsense I keep reading? That's a fuckin horrible idea

@MoreAndAgain: I really wish people would stop using "we" so liberally.

@ShellE719: #Fergie managed to do the impossible....Black, white, young and old. No matter what your background is, or your religious beliefs. Democrats and Republicans. We were all one. UNITED in the belief that she sang the worst version of the #NationalAnthem we have ever heard.

@XanozIchimonji: For as perfect as a lot of you make Beyonce out to be. Jay Z still cheated on her. David Otunga was with Jennifer Hudson through all of her body dysmorphia shit and supported her, she cheated on him. The fuck is this world?

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#BLACKPANTHER

@theikawong: #BlackPanther is honestly goals, a movie where, women of colour strengths are not portrayed as bullying, smarts are not portrayed as sass, wits are not portrayed as intimidation, and our presence are not portrayed as a angry, aggressive and a bad attitude.

@amandaseals: I saw #Blackpanther today and it filled me all the way up with so much joy to see such unadulterated blackness in full glory on screen. Honestly, The film requires a series of essays to truly capture how its nuances illuminate the black diaspora community experience.

@TimothyDeLaG: Ahhh maaaan #BlackPanther... SO fuckin dope. Michael B Jordan might be the best Marvel villain ever.

@TarkorZehn: Also, CHADWICK BOSEMAN DID THAT!! His faux African accent was on point! It reminded me of a young Nelson Mandela #BlackPanther

@Kincolie: #BlackPanther strikes a great balance between having content that is deep and timely and having content that is accessible and fun.

@CJTheArchitect: #BlackPanther was even better the second time around. Think might have gone dead from the thunderous applause at the end though. Lol

@pmaeson24: Any movie that opens with music by Too Short is a certified classic. #BlackPanther

FLINT LIVES MATTER WE HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN

INDECLINE | GREETINGS FROM FLINT MURAL - FLINT, MICHIGAN



HARD WORK. HUMILITY. BALANCE.: THE INNER WORKINGS OF

MICHELLE LUKES

WORDS + INTERVIEW BY: KRISTAL LUSTER

PHOTOS BY
GABRIEL BIENZYCKI



Award winner, food lover, Christmas enthusiast, nomad. These are just some ways to describe Michelle Lukes. In this interview she sheds light on her versatile acting career, Hollywood controversy, the time she stepped into another reality and much more.

What was your upbringing like?

I had a very nomadic upbringing as my father was in the Army. We only really settled when I was 16 and by then I was already out of the family home. Years later I bought a flat in South East London and that became home until I moved to the United States.

Can you tell us about the Newton Bick Award that you won in 2007? You also won the Maverick Award last year, correct?

I trained at the Bristol Old Vic, a British institution. Fellow alumni includes Daniel Day Lewis, Jeremy Irons, Naomi Harris and Laura Carmichael (who was in my year). On graduating, the Newton Bick Award is presented to the actor or actress who shows the most versatility.

The Maverick Award is presented at the Action on Film International Film Festival to an individual who has made a significant contribution in their field. I received the award for my body of work as an actress.

What would you say is the biggest difference between stage acting and acting on television? Is there one you prefer over the other? Why?

There are so many differences between acting for stage and screen and I love both. However, theater is possibly the most rewarding from a creative perspective. There is more time, you get the luxury of rehearsal and ultimately you have the most control over your performance. In television, I've seen performances that weren't there on the day miraculously transform in the edit suite. This can work out in your favor or not.

In the BBC soap opera, Doctors (2009-2011), you played Lisa Torres. Was it difficult adjusting to the ups and downs of this character's story?

Lisa Torres was a gift of a role. Although I was a relatively experienced actress at the time, I hadn't done much television at all. The days were fast and the storylines were epic. I fondly refer to my time on the show as my "baptism of fire". I really learned a lot on that job and thankfully my co-stars (and crew) were incredibly forgiving! In terms of the material, I approached each storyline with enthusiasm and gusto knowing that I was just going to give everything my best shot. Actors can go a whole career without getting the chance to play a role with such emotional diversity and I knew that.

Tell us about Cinemax's "Strike Back" (2011-2015).

"Strike Back" launched Cinemax's original programming in 2011 and ran for four dynamic seasons. It's an action show starring Sullivan Stapleton and Philip Winchester and I played regular Julian Richmond alongside the boys for the entire run. Richmond started out as the Chief Communications Officer, which essentially means being desk bound but acting as the eyes and ears of the field operatives. However, by the end of season one she was wielding an M4 in "The Crib" and by season two she was out with boys kicking ass. When the show ended it was so sorely missed that HBO/Cinemax have recently rebooted the franchise with a new team.

Was this the original character that you auditioned for?

Julia is the role I originally auditioned for but the character transformed with me over the years into something quite different from what was originally intended. I'm incredibly lucky to have been part of a collaborative team who trusted me enough to take the lead.

Tell us about "The Lost Legion" (2017) and your character in the film?

"The Lost Legion" was a trip. I made the movie in Prague whilst on hiatus from filming Strike Back, and I really didn't know what I was getting myself into. At this point I'd been playing Richmond for several years and jumped at the chance to take on a different role. I expected it to be a kooky little movie that no one saw but it turned out to be much more visible than anyone had anticipated. Think "The Room" but on a smaller scale. It's set in Ancient Rome and I play the villain which was a welcome change to the work I was doing for Cinemax. I really had a lot of fun with it!

You have lent your vocal talents to Microsoft's "Halo 5: Guardians" (2015), Sony's Playstation 4's "Masquerada: Songs and Shadows" (2016), and Google's "Daydream, a virtual reality platform for their game "Fire Escape" (2017). Have you played any of these video games?

I'm actually not a gamer at all. In fact, I can barely send an email so I'm completely bewildered by the sophisticated technology that surrounds these games. I did try a couple of VR goggles (are they even called that?) last year and that rocked my world! I had no idea what I was doing but found myself mesmerized by the detail. VR really does transport you to a different time and place.

What do your musical talents consist of?

My musical talents are modest and have become more so over time. Like everything, if you don't practice you get rusty! I am naturally musical though and played the cello and the piano growing up. I also sing. The first half of my career was spent in London's West End (England's Broadway) doing musical theater, so it was always more than just a hobby.

Which musical did you enjoy acting in the most?

I loved my time as a singer/dancer. There really is nothing that comes close to the exhilaration of nailing complex choreography whilst singing with a live orchestra to thousands of people staring back at you. CATS was my first job and an amazing experience. The choreography is still some of the most challenging out there and well, you get to pretend to be a cat. I'm also obsessed with Bob Fosse so working with Ann Reinking on Chicago and Fosse was life changing.

What are your thoughts on the sexual assault allegations spreading in Hollywood?

This is an incredibly sensitive subject and one that I feel fiercely about. I'm not referring to sexual assault within the confines of Hollywood, I'm talking about sexual assault period. I feel incredibly sad that until recently, women felt powerless to ask for help because we as a community first ask, "Do you think she's telling the truth?" This is not ok and I firmly believe that "facilitators" should be held equally accountable for these atrocities. Yes, there will always be a few who "cry wolf" but this is not the majority. We should absolutely be working together to foster a safe and supportive space for victims of abuse to find solace without fear of being condemned.

If you had 3 wishes, excluding being able to wish for more wishes, what would you wish for?

This one is a tough one. I would wish for more time. There are so many things I want to do in this life and the quickening of time has put an end to certain possibilities. Extra time would also give me more days, minutes and even seconds to spend with the people I love. My second wish would be to travel more. These experiences feed my soul and I'm feeling starved. My final wish would be contentment. We're so conditioned to be constantly seeking what's next instead of being at peace with where we are and what we have. It's exhausting.

Tell us somewhere you would love to travel to if you could drop everything and go.

What is your favorite home-cooked meal? Are you the cook

in the family?

I LOVE my food and although I'm a pretty decent cook it always tastes better when someone else has made it, right?! My mum is Chinese and her soy sauce chicken is pretty bomb, but you also can't beat an English roast dinner. My specialty at the moment is Moussaka.

What project are you most excited about for 2018?

I have several features in pre-production for 2018 but there's one particular script that was written for me and I play the title role. This is a first for me and I look forward to the challenge that comes with this responsibility.

Contact Michelle Lukes on Twitter + IG @shellylukes.

CHECK ME OUT

DON MEGA AKA "COACH PATTERSON"



Don Mega recently changed his direction from music producer to a coach. His new-found title as Coach Patterson came after he launched his nonprofit, The Mega Foundation, with a special branch of it specifically for children called, Mega Kidz. His objective for forming Mega Kidz was to establish a nurturing environment for our young kids where they could grow and develop as our future leaders. At Mega Kidz, he decided to create his own sports academy dedicated to providing stu-



CIDDY
ASK ME IF I CARE (EP)
WARREN, MI

VARIOUS ARTISTS
BLACK PANTHER SDTK
WAKANDA, AFRICA

PARRIS LADAME
HANG UP (SINGLE)
INDIANAPOLIS, IN

dent athletes with the opportunity to participate, play, and have superb instruction in the sport of their choosing, even at the highest level.

"We are trying to position ourselves as the new leaders in the South Florida area offering year-round professional instruction to athletes of all ages."

After an analysis of youth today and working with different kids, particularly those in inner cities, he realized that many kids would like a chance to be able to participate in a fun sports program, make their school team, or even be able to take their skills up to the professional level, but don't have an outlet to do so.

"Most schools are not offering any type of sports program of this type that we can offer."

An important blend of strategic instruction, guidance, and personal development will be at the foundation of Mega Sports. Players will be able to attain the skills and knowledge to compete at the highest level athletically, but their academic excellence is equally or even more important. The program offers certified teachers that could work with their athletes as tutors to help with anything from homework to SAT/ACT preparation.

About Don Mega:

Don Mega is CEO and super-producer of DBlock Mega Muzik and Vice President of Production at BSM 1017. Kartel record labels has produced for some of the biggest names in Hip Hop including Jadakiss, Styles P, Sheek (all of D-Block Records), Gucci Mane (Brick Squad Mafia 1017) Walk Flocka (Brick Squad Monopoly), and Lil Boosie and Webbie (Trill Entertainment) to name a few. Both DBlock Mega Muzik and BrickSquad Mafia 1017 Kartel operate and function as separate entities, but act as subsidiary labels. DBlock Mega Muzik / 1017 Kartel Records began in the 90's when Don Mega stepped in the New York Hip Hop scene and began working with the legendary label D-Block Records. Producing with this label for many years, Don Mega mastered his craft and in Fall 2011 branched out on his own to open DBlock Mega Muzik Records. This newly formed independent label was launched in Miami Florida with the blessing of his label mates Jadakiss, Styles P & Sheek Louch, and has since been building and expanding at a rapid pace.

For more information, please contact Jae Monique on behalf of Lions Vision, LLC. Phone: 321-215-1050. Email: Lionsvisionllc@gmail.com

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