



THE SELF PUBLICATION

STORIES FROM THE BLACK COMMUNITY.

Created by:
Nitashia Johnson

creative: nitashiajohnson.com
project: theselfpublication.com



Artist Bio - Nitashia Johnson

Hello, my name is Nitashia Johnson. I am a multimedia artist from Dallas, Texas who truly has a passion for creating. I attended Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts from 2004-2008 and went on to become an alum of Texas Woman's University in 2012 and the Rhode Island School of Design in 2015. I use my photography and design skills to make a difference in the world. I've even started experimenting with video by highlighting the earth and positive human interactions. **Life was very hard for me growing up with no parents and living in poverty, but the goodness of others helped me to thrive. Those who helped to save me also inspired my need to create in order to reveal the beauty in the world.**

For the past year, I have worked hard on The Smart Project, a creative after-school program structured for teens and aspiring mentors living in North Texas. Another of my greatest artistic accomplishments is the collection The Self Publication, a photographic book series created to dismantle the stereotypes placed on those in the Black community. What started off as casual photographs transformed into a book series showcasing the beauty of Black natives and their stories. I am working on the project alone to shine a light on community issues. As the work unfolds, I plan to film a short documentary series following five of the past participants. I really love to create. I want to continue growing as an artist with great leadership and thoughtful mentors.

My photographic work has recently been featured in The Dallas Morning News, D Magazine, and The New York Times.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

THE SELF PUBLICATION IS A PHOTOGRAPHIC BOOK SERIES FULL OF PERSONAL ESSAYS DESIGNED TO UPLIFT AND COMBAT THE HARSH STEREOTYPES ASSOCIATED WITH MEMBERS OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY. THE SOLO PROJECT WAS CREATED IN 2016.

AS A MULTIMEDIA ARTIST, I USED MY DESIGN AND PHOTOGRAPHY SKILLS TO BRING THIS PROJECT TO LIFE. TO COMPLEMENT THE PRINTED WORK, A FILMED VIDEO FOR THE PROJECT TITLED "LITTLE BLACK GIRL" AND OTHER VIDEOS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE.

I ALSO CREATED THE PROJECT TO ANALYZE THE ROLE OF MEDIA REPRESENTATION AND TO EXPOSE COLORISM. ACCORDING TO STUDIES, SOME STEREOTYPES HAVE BEEN ACTIVATED SO FREQUENTLY (FOR EXAMPLE, THROUGH MEDIA EXPOSURE) THAT ASSOCIATED RESPONSES CAN BEGIN TO OCCUR UNCONSCIOUSLY. REGARDLESS OF WHETHER INDIVIDUALS CHOOSE TO ACCEPT A STEREOTYPE, IF THEY SIMPLY DO NOT CONSCIOUSLY RECOGNIZE AND ANALYZE THE REPRESENTATIONS BEING OFFERED, THEN SUCH IMAGES CAN INFLUENCE THE WAYS THAT THEY PERCEIVE AND INTERACT WITH THE GROUPS BEING STEREOTYPED—FOR INSTANCE, AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN.

TAGLINE: SELF, WHAT LOVE STARTS WITH.

PROJECT EXAMPLES:



VOLUME 2, BOOK COVER.

Jax

"In all due respect, I sometimes want to let them know they can "kiss my ass" because I love my skin color. If I get darker in the summer, cool; if I get lighter in the winter, cool. This is MY skin. I love being black."

Colorism

I spent a majority of my childhood in East St Louis, IL. It was crime-infested and overrun with drugs and poverty, but still a somehow lively community during those years. I never once considered that I was seen to be different or "better" than my peers, who were all black, until a little girl approached me on my street wanting to fight. I didn't know what was happening. Why did she want to fight me? What had I done to her?

Around the age of 8, I began experiencing internal prejudice. I remember waking one morning to find my parents upset that our garage was defaced, with the words "honkey" spray painted on the door. It was like it just began to flood in after that. My brothers were jumped at school, my friends in our neighborhood became enemies, and our house became a target for destruction because of the tone of our skin. I remember being the target for hallying right before we moved to Texas when I was in the 7th grade. This girl, who was eventually joined by a group of girls, would bother me every single day. Stealing my books, my basketball uniform, my coat, kicking my chair during class, calling me "bitch." I was like "Yo, what

the hell, man?" It was all because I was light-skinned with long hair and supposedly thought I was all that. It got so bad that I quit going to class. I would only go to the classes she wasn't in until we moved (8 months later). I never told my family what was happening, although I knew it was wrong and I should have.

My friends and family joke about the brightness of my skin now that I'm older. While I know they aren't doing it in a malicious way, it begins to sting after a while. They say, "You look like a White Woman." "You wanna be black so bad." "You need to get a tan, you too bright." "I see you're wearing your winter white color" or just simply call me "whitey." In all due respect, I sometimes want to let them know they can "kiss my ass" because I love my skin color. If I get darker in the summer, cool; if I get lighter in the winter, cool. This is MY skin. I love being black. I admire the fact that we can come in ranges from the darkest onyx to beaming like a light dropped into a dark room. I have to love the skin I'm in because it's what God gave me, but I don't wear being light-skinned like a badge of honor. I wear being BLACK as a badge of honor.



"You will surely reap what you sow, so be good to those around you, and be good to yourself."

Black Women

In my humble opinion, Black Women are the epitome of beauty. Their full lips, the curves that are naturally elongated across their bodies, the gentle sway of their hips when they walk, looking as though they are commanding the universe with each stride. BLACK WOMEN, sigh. Have you ever seen the super choodisty sisters that have this skin that's totally free of any imperfections, I mean skin for the GAWDS? I'm assuming God just took a Hershey's dark chocolate bar and melted it with vitamin D from the sun and made this woman. She was rubbed in the finest of cocoa butters, shea butters, hell, Land O' Lakes butters to get her skin so smooth.

I love Black Women. Their confidence when all odds are against them, their endurance during hard times, their ability to make something out of nothing. I admire the Black Woman's desire to continue to love and seek love when she isn't loved in return. I admire her tenacity during adversity. Most of all, I admire the Black Woman's desire to reconnect to God. There is a strong spiritual sense amongst Black Women, a deep yearning and unyielding effort to be spiritually connected to God—and I believe we are. The thing about the Black community is that we set the tone for trends. What we do well and poorly, the world seems to follow—from how we dress, dance, walk, and talk, even down to our looks. If they weren't born with it, they will go to extremes to emulate our looks. I was listening to a radio interview about a year or so ago, though, and they were talking to a White Man

who grew up in the 70s and 80s in Brooklyn, NY. He said something that stuck with me: "Everybody I knew wanted to be black, because they demanded respect. Everyone knew not to mess with the Black Guys, and definitely not a sister. The Black Guys were the cool ones with all the swag. Now, nothing about a Black Man makes me want to be like him." What produced this drastic change, being once revered to being seen as a joke? We have made it okay for other races to disrespect us because we constantly disrespect ourselves. Right now, outside of our creativity, I can't really say there is too much I'm loving about our community. We are headed for self-destruction at a progressively faster pace, and I'm not sure we realize it, care to realize it, or even know what to do to stop it. We hold so much power as a people, yet we are the most divided. We are helping to produce our untimely demise.

At All Cost

Protect your energy at all costs. Be spiritually open to communicate with the God who dwells within. Listen to the universe. You're never too old to follow your destiny. Allow yourself to grow. Accept the new you and your desires. You will surely reap what you sow, so be good to those around you, and be good to yourself. "I am" are two of the most powerful words you can speak into the universe. Speak carefully.

Lenny

"As we began to exit the neighborhood, the elderly White Woman shouted, "AND STAY OUT, THAT'S WHY YOU PEOPLE DON'T BELONG HERE. YOU GUYS ARE ALWAYS SOMEWHERE WHERE YOU DON'T BELONG!"

Self-love

In my opinion, self-love is when you have extreme confidence in your appearance, and at the same time it is when you take action to manage your well-being. I didn't always have self-love. In the sixth grade, I remember a grown woman telling her little cousin from my school that I would be cute if my teeth weren't so messed up.

I felt like I could have just died right there. I never questioned why a grown thirty-something-year-old woman would judge an eleven-year-old boy by his looks. I was too concerned with the fact that someone thought I was ugly. From then on, I used to hate my teeth because they were spaced out.

I was mad at myself as well for damaging them. My teeth used to be perfectly straight until I gained the bad habit of biting my nails in elementary school. The words of that woman bothered me until I got my teeth fixed at the age of 21. After getting them fixed, I finally started to embrace my smile again, and I began walking around with much more confidence. As a community, if we all practice self-love when it comes to our outer and inner beauty, I believe this will be the first step that economically moves us up the ladder.

Racism

In the summer of 2015, I experienced a case of racism. (By the way, as a Black Man, I've dealt with many cases of racism. This is just one story; I could go on for years.) I was riding down to the southern part of Delaware to shoot a documentary about diversity and living a peaceful life. (How ironic, right?) When I pulled into the neighborhood where the person I was interviewing lived, I parked my car in a big parking lot surrounded by beach houses while waiting for the person to arrive. Keep in my mind my 18-year-old brother was in the car with me at the time, and to the racist eye, we were two thugs sitting in a car about to start some trouble.

Moments later, an elderly White Woman walked her little dog in front of my parked car and began to stare at me. I smiled and waved at the woman to assure her that everything was okay, but she just ignored my gesture and walked away. Seconds after that, the woman took out her flip phone and called the beach security on my brother and me. (Who knew beach security took care of these situations as well?) She proceeded to lie by telling the man that my brother and I had spent the night illegally in that parking spot. (Which was far from the truth. We had just arrived there five minutes prior to her calling



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The Self Publication Volume 2



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The Self Publication Volume 2



security on us. AND SHE KNEW THAT!) On top of that, the person who was supposed to be meeting me for the interview wasn't home and was running late. The security guy asked us what we were doing there, and we explained to him our intent. He understood but he said we had to go because it was a "private neighborhood." I remained calm, not wanting to start a crazy confrontation to the point where my brother and I could have gotten arrested or possibly shot (it was had enough we were already surrounded by a bunch of homes with confederate flags), so we ended up leaving.

As we began to exit the neighborhood, the elderly White woman shouted, "AND STAY OUT, THAT'S WHY YOU PEOPLE DON'T BELONG HERE. YOU GUYS ARE ALWAYS SOMEWHERE WHERE YOU DON'T BELONG!" Now the anger in me wanted to turn my car around to push her and her damn dog into the ocean, but the good side of me just told her to have a blessed day.

Mental Disorders

Mental disorders and depression are most often disregarded in the Black Community because for a lot of us, these conditions are extremely hard and embarrassing to talk about. I've dealt with a slight form of depression before, but I've never told anyone about it (until now, I

guess). I didn't consider my situation that big of a deal because I was just frustrated that at the age of 22 I wasn't living up to my potential. I kept seeing young teens go viral by doing something stupid on social media and getting rich from it. It made me question my career path of being an author and filmmaker. I wanted my finances and success to take off just like those crazy social media kids. For weeks and weeks, I felt like nothing.

I overcame that slight depression by realizing that the hype around those people eventually dies down, and then they get depressed because the attention is no longer on them and the money dissipates. At the same time, I realized that I've been progressing by working on my craft every day and becoming a better person overall.

To highlight the mental disorder and depression issue in the Black Community, I honestly believe that our people have become embarrassed about facing problems like this because of our history. Our ancestors overcame so much that we just end up looking ourselves in the mirror and thinking this depression and mental disorder thing should be a piece of cake to deal with. That's all I have to say about that. I know it's a much deeper issue, but I've never been suicidal before, and to the best of my knowledge, none of my Black friends have been, so this is kind of uncharted territory for me.

2018

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VOLUME 2, SPREAD EXAMPLE.

Déjà

"I hadn't heard my own voice yet. I was still allowing my boyfriend (whichever one it was at the time) to dictate my worth. I was still letting friends govern my personal development and letting employers confine my mentality inside the margins."

The Clearance Rack

I looked in the mirror one night and realized I had placed myself on a clearance rack. You know, that section of the store everyone parades through first in the hopes of stumbling across a bomb-ass product at a much cheaper price than they'd usually catch it. Yeah, that one. I allowed men to "love" me the way they felt I deserved to be loved. I allowed my friends to control the dynamics of our relationships. I allowed employers and coworkers to carry on with micro-aggressive behaviors and comments. But why? Who would knowingly subject themselves to such harmful interpersonal relationships? The problem was, I didn't know.

Hell, I thought I had a good grasp on life. I thought I was doing pretty well compared to other women, with not one but two kids out of wedlock by different men. I mean, I started my career in broadcast media at just nineteen, working in radio, where I talked and listened to hundreds and thousands of people through a single microphone.

I pledged into the best sorority ever to exist (OO-GOP). I earned a bachelor's degree in journalism, which led to a career move into television news, where I was seen in the homes of nearly a hundred thousand people every night. If you asked me, I was doing pretty damn well! The truth is, I wasn't.

Don't get me wrong, all those accolades were great for professional development or whatever. I spent so much time holding onto the affirmations and shallow compliments of people who heard me on the radio or saw me on TV that I never stopped to listen to myself. I never stopped to analyze who I was or where I wanted to go. I was simply existing with my list of accomplishments, without giving any thought to who I was without them. I didn't know me. I hadn't heard my own voice yet. I was still allowing my boyfriend (whichever one it was at the time) to dictate my worth. I was still letting friends govern my personal development and letting employers confine



"I told myself to cut the bullshit. That I knew better than to rationalize emotionally abusive behaviors from men, hold onto toxic friendships, or accept passive-aggressive treatment from employers."

my mentality inside the margins. I had put myself on the clearance rack. I allowed anyone who wanted to come into my life, pick me up for a few seconds, compare me to nearby alternatives, and treat me as they saw fit. That is, until I heard my own voice for the first time.

I told myself to cut the bullshit. That I knew better than to rationalize emotionally abusive behaviors from men, hold onto toxic friendships, or accept passive-aggressive treatment from employers. I talked a big game about how I "wouldn't put up with" this or that, but it was just that - all talk. So I started loving myself, and it felt good - so good that I no longer needed the validation of others, no longer relied on someone else's physical or emotional presence to make me feel valuable.

To begin this process, I stopped obscuring my brain with what other people expected or thought of me.

I addressed my concerns with people head-on, no longer allowing them to fester in my psyche for days, weeks, or months. I would stand in the mirror naked and gaze slowly over my body in its rawest form, accepting every little stretch mark, scar, or "imperfection" society places on the female subject. I stopped allowing the media to tell me who I am or should be - especially as a Black woman.

I stopped valuing my accolades more than my life experiences, which speaks far more about the woman I am today. I started listening to myself, valuing my own voice in a world of so many. And as soon as I started embracing and treasuring who I really was, others did too. I started loving myself first, and because of this you'll no longer find me displaced on the clearance rack.

**SO FAR I'VE WORKED WITH OVER 28
PEOPLE FOR THIS PROJECT. IT IS VERY
CHALLENGING WORKING ON IT ALL
ALONE BUT I LOVE MY COMMUNITY.**

I LOVE US.

NITASHIA JOHNSON

PROJECT IMAGES:

THESE IMAGES ARE USED IN EACH OF THE PUBLICATIONS I'VE
DESIGNED. THEY ARE MEANT TO HELP THE PUBLIC SYMPATHIZE
AND RELATE TO THE PARTICIPANTS.









STORY EXAMPLES

Tylah

MY NAME IS TYLAH and I live in Dallas, Texas. On July 22, 2016, I married my wonderful husband DeMarcus. He really makes happy, he's my best friend and soulmate.

Not Your Average

I don't believe in the stereotypes placed on Black Women. I am not the stereotypical woman of color the world makes me out to be. There are so many different kinds of Black Women in the world; we aren't all the same. We are strong and unique so I can't relate to the false assumptions about us. Stereotypical remarks about Black Women are just mainstream opinions to me. I am who I am, and the shade of my skin does not affect the way I feel about myself or anyone else for that matter. I can't say I've experienced colorism; if I have, I wasn't aware of it. There was a work situation concerning my hair, however, that made me feel uncomfortable.

My Experience

While working as a leasing consultant in 2015, I decided to wear my hair curly since I was transitioning*, so I put my hair in a roller set Sunday night to prepare for work on Monday. When Monday morning came and I took the rollers out, it looked great. I finished my morning routine and started my day. I only had to wear this style a few days which was just days before I was scheduled to get a hair-install* Thursday. My birthday was that Friday and I wanted to prepare for it the day before. At the time I was working with two other women in the office.

One was a Caucasian woman who worked as my property manager. The other was a bi-racial Caucasian and African American woman who worked as the assistant manager. When I walked into the office on Monday I was greeted by both of my co-workers with compliments on the outcome of my hair roller set. I said thank you and went on to perform my



“ON WEDNESDAY MORNING, I WASN'T GREETED BY MY CO-WORKERS. INSTEAD, I WAS CALLED INTO A STAFF MEETING. I HAD NO IDEA WHAT WAS GOING ON, BUT I SOON REALIZED THE TWO WOMEN WERE SITTING IN FRONT OF ME TO DISCUSS THE COMPANY'S “POLICY ON GROOMING.”

**TYLAH
VOLUME 1, THE SELF PUBLICATION**

Robbie

I MUST SAY, I love being a woman. I love being a Black woman. I've often said, "If I woke up tomorrow another color, I would be devastated!"

Growing up in the 60s and 70s, hearing "I'm Black and I'm Proud" by James Brown, witnessing The Black Power Movement*, and all the guidance I got from my parents has shaped my positive self-identity. My parents did everything they could to shield my sister and I from the effects of racism, but we still saw imagery and heard conversations that disturbed us. Still, my parents instilled a quiet confidence in us both that has stood the test of time.

My Experience

In the sixth grade, our class had a White Lady as a long-term substitute. Now you know how it is with

children and substitutes—some of the students weren't on their best behaviour. So one day she kept our whole class a few minutes after school for a "discussion."

She started by asking this: "Do you know why you are all not as smart as White People?" No one said a word. She continued, "It's not your fault. Your ancestors lived in Africa." Then she showed us on the pull-down map where Africa was and told us why it was so hot there. She said, "The sun baked their brains, and that was passed down through the generations to you." As the White Lady spoke, what she was saying did not ring true. I had grown up listening to my parents talk and read to us about schools of learning in Africa, especially in mathematics, and about all the Black inventors

Self



“SHE STARTED BY ASKING THIS: “DO YOU KNOW WHY YOU ARE ALL NOT AS SMART AS WHITE PEOPLE?” NO ONE SAID A WORD. SHE CONTINUED, “IT’S NOT YOUR FAULT. YOUR ANCESTORS LIVED IN AFRICA.” THEN SHE SHOWED US ON THE PULL-DOWN MAP WHERE AFRICA WAS AND TOLD US WHY IT WAS SO HOT THERE. SHE SAID, “THE SUN-BAKED THEIR BRAINS, AND THAT WAS PASSED DOWN THROUGH THE GENERATIONS TO YOU.”

ROBBIE

VOLUME 1, THE SELF PUBLICATION

Bibi

"After having my first child, I went into postpartum depression. I couldn't believe my stomach had stretch marks and I weighed almost two hundred pounds. No one had told me my body would change this much."

Facets of Self-Love

Having love for yourself isn't easy, especially when society is telling you that who and what you are isn't good enough. I remember how around the age of 9, I realized I wasn't just black, I was dark-skinned, with a large nose and kinky hair, and that wasn't the most favorable thing to be at the time. Or any time, for that matter. The most disheartening part of my realization is that it came from people in my family. I wish I could say they were distant relatives, but they weren't. My father comes from an interracial background, so his side of the family looks "mixed," and they were the ones who pointed out my difference.

A Unique Experience

In addition to being a Black Woman, I'm also a Muslim, and that makes the journey to self-love much more complicated. Just as in any organized religion, little

Muslim girls grow into adulthood being taught to completely ignore our sexuality. Keep it a secret, as if it doesn't exist. We're encouraged to stay quiet about it, and it remains taboo until marriage. Sometimes even after. I took it upon myself to learn about my body, its functions, and how that relates to femininity. I feel this conversation should start long before marriage, to encourage self-awareness and help one move into those beginning stages of loving oneself.

Having to hush parts of yourself can create shame, insecurity, and dissolution of confidence. It doesn't matter if the feelings come from societal pressures, the media's beauty standards, social constructs, religion, or family—the feeling of not measuring up, accompanied by being discouraged from expressing femininity and self-awareness, makes the path to self-love more complex than it needs to be.



"AFTER HAVING MY FIRST CHILD, I WENT INTO POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION. I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY STOMACH HAD STRETCH MARKS AND I WEIGHED ALMOST TWO HUNDRED POUNDS. NO ONE HAD TOLD ME MY BODY WOULD CHANGE THIS MUCH."

BIBI
VOLUME 2, THE SELF PUBLICATION

Adebukola

"Well, that's what my momma believes – that my image as a Black woman in America has only been tainted further because my skin, my clothes, my demeanor, and now my hair doesn't fit the mold for white corporate America."

Loc It!

During my junior year of high school (2011), I decided to start my locs*. Locs are strands of hair that interlock with other strands of hair, forming a unit of many strands that are tightly coiled around each other like a DNA helix. I was done with using chemicals (a.k.a. the creamy crack) to make my naturally curly hair straight. I was fed up with using synthetic hair whenever the chemicals made my hair fall out. I decided it was time to embrace who I believed I truly was.

Unfortunately, locs are not accepted in my mother's Nigerian* culture. Only men and women who are associated with witchcraft have them. My mother grew up in a community where dreadlocks were frowned upon, and she often ran when she saw a "dada"* passing by, as she would call them. One day I was lying on my bed, writing in my journal about my desire for dreadlocks. I was also scanning a picture album that I compiled of people with this natural hairstyle – The Fugees, Busta Rhymes, and others. Suddenly, my mother walked in took the writing and pictures, ripped them to pieces, and walked out of

the room. There was nothing else to be said. It was clear to me that there was no room for negotiation or trying to persuade my mother. Silently, as my face stung with anger, I picked up the shreds of the writing and pictures and taped them back together. Despite my mother's opposition, I was determined to get this hairstyle.

Without a word, I left my house that same day and went to see a locician*, who started the process. My locician was my former middle-school teacher and mentor. As she divided my hair into parts and began twisting the hair into coils, she told me that I was becoming a "New Being."

"You've started on this beautiful journey," she said. "Never again should you call them dreadlocks." From then on, I called my hair my Nubian locs. This name refers to the people of Nubia in Egypt, but it's also a melding of the words "new" and "being." The name also captures the fact that people with locs have shed society's expectations of what their hair should look like and have embraced what their hair wants to do.

Starting my locs taught me three things. First, it taught



"WELL, THAT'S WHAT MY MOMMA BELIEVES – THAT MY IMAGE AS A BLACK WOMAN IN AMERICA HAS ONLY BEEN TAINTED FURTHER BECAUSE MY SKIN, MY CLOTHES, MY DEMEANOR, AND NOW MY HAIR DOESN'T FIT THE MOLD FOR WHITE CORPORATE AMERICA."

**ADEBUKOLA
VOLUME 2, THE SELF PUBLICATION**

Upcoming



"Knowing where we come from and how we got here is fundamental for our existence. Breaking the chains and curses this world has put upon us will guide us to truth and the light of understanding true wisdom in this world."

Dylan for volume 3, The Self Publication

Upcoming



"My mother was sent home from the hospital ill. We later found out she had fluid in one of her legs which resulted in her death. She passed away right in her apartment. To be honest her death gave me the hardest time because it could have been avoided. I knew right then that "they" didn't give a fuck about us."

Derrick for volume 3, The Self Publication

SOCIAL MEDIA



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The Self Publication
The photographic book series created to analyze stereotypes & uplift the Black Community- Vol 1 & 2 available over at theselfpublication.com.
theselfpublication.com



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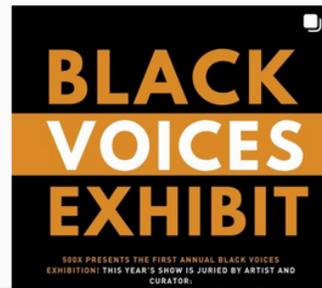
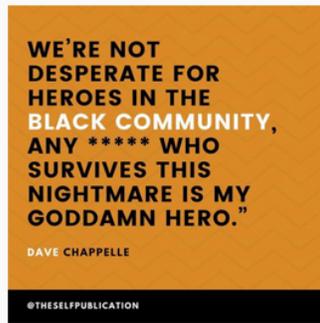
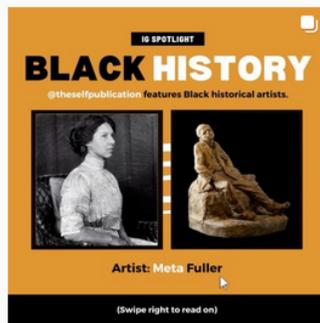


Artist



Book Signi...

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PLAYLIST

The Self Publication

The Self Publication—a collection of photography and personal essays designed to uplift women and men of color and combat the harsh stereotypes associated with the Black Community. Follow...

Created by nitashiajohnson • 162 songs, 11 hr 39 min

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TITLE	ARTIST	ALBUM		
Let Me In	H.E.R.	G010003824914RG0...	2018-05-26	4:57
You	Raheem DeVaughn	The Love Experience	2018-05-26	5:02
With Me	EXPLICIT dvsn	SEPT 5TH	2018-05-26	7:00
Hallucinations	dvsn	SEPT 5TH	2018-05-26	4:06
sobeautiful	Musiq Soulchild	onmyradio	2018-05-26	4:51
Next Lifetime	Erykah Badu	Baduizm	2018-05-26	6:27
EYESDONTLIE	EXPLICIT Adrian Marcel	GMFU	2018-05-26	3:17
Best Part (feat. Daniel Caesar)	H.E.R., Daniel Caesar	G010003824914RG0...	2018-05-26	3:29
Crush	Yuna, Usher	Chapters (Deluxe)	2018-05-26	4:03
Naked	EXPLICIT Ella Mai	Naked	2018-05-26	3:17



MUSIC INSPIRED BY BLACK STORIES

The Self Publication is a photographic book series created to uplift the Black Community and replace harsh media representations with positive images and stories. The playlist was inspired by the essence of who we are.

PLAYLIST NAME: THE SELF PUBLICATION

THESELPUBLICATION.COM

theselfpublication

theselfpublication Music eases the soul. Check out a few songs featured on the playlist by selecting the highlight link! All funds from purchases are donated towards the construction of the next publication and project operations conducted by the artist. Publications can be found here at theselfpublication.com

#blackgirlmagic #blacklivesmatter #blackisbeautiful #blackbusiness #supportblackbusiness #blackwomen #melaninpoppin #blackmen #blackstoriesmatter #brownskin #blackmen #blackwomen #blackskin @blackculturenews_

21w

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PROJECT WEBSITE



THE CREATIVE PHOTO BOOK SERIES BY NITASHIA JOHNSON

The Self Publication

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The Self Publication—a collection of photography and personal essays designed to uplift and combat the harsh stereotypes associated with men and women in the Black Community.

The project was also created to analyze the role of media representations. According to studies, some stereotypes have been activated so frequently (*for example, through media exposure*) that associated responses can begin to occur unconsciously. Regardless of whether individuals choose to accept a stereotype, if they simply do not consciously recognize and analyze the representations being offered, then such images can influence the ways that they perceive and interact with the groups being stereotyped—for instance, African American women.

PHOTOGRAPHIC BOOK PUBLICATIONS



EXHIBIT IMAGES





PRINTED BOOKS



daily duties. For the following day, I'll admit, I didn't set my hair the night before but the curls were well intact. Again, I was greeted with compliments on my hair. That evening, I went home and reset my curls. On Wednesday morning, I wasn't greeted by my co-workers. Instead, I was called into a staff meeting. I had no idea what was going on, but I soon realized the two women were sitting in front of me to discuss the company's "POLICY ON GROOMING".

My property manager started the conversation by asking what happened to my hair. She went on by saying: "Your hair was so pretty yesterday, and today it looks like you rolled out of bed and just came in to work". I looked towards my bi-racial assistant manager, and she was just sitting there, staring. I tried to defend myself by saying: "I literally just took the last roller out before I left my house", but that was no help. They told me that I would have to look well-groomed and that I should consider looking for a different style. I almost cried when I left that meeting. I decided to leave work that day. I couldn't stand looking at them any longer.

That was the worst experience I have ever had from others' judgments and opinions about my body, with criticism about my natural hair. That Tuesday when I got back from my birthday weekend they praised my

long weave and never spoke on "grooming policies" again. Two months later I quit to become a P.E. Teacher and middle school girls sports coach.

Despite that encounter, I absolutely love my natural hair. I started transitioning in 2015 and finally cut my permed ends off August 19, 2016. My hair has been through so much in the past. I've had many different styles. I've even felt the harsh effects of chemical damages*. That's why it is so exciting to see my hair growing healthy and strong now.

My Message

It is so important to spread positive vibes to everyone around you. You never know, there might be a person around you in need of some positive energy or encouragement. Also, remember your current situation is not your final destination. The best is yet to come. Thinking this way has helped me during tough times. Through any problems I've had with family, relationships or school, I remained positive even if it felt like I had hit rock bottom.

Last but not least, Black Women shouldn't be ashamed of ourselves. We should stand tall and unite. We should be proud of our culture. It is beautiful, you are beautiful, and no one can take that away.

Hair-install (sew-in): the process of installing or securing false hair extensions into one's natural hair in order to alter its original length, volume, or style.

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