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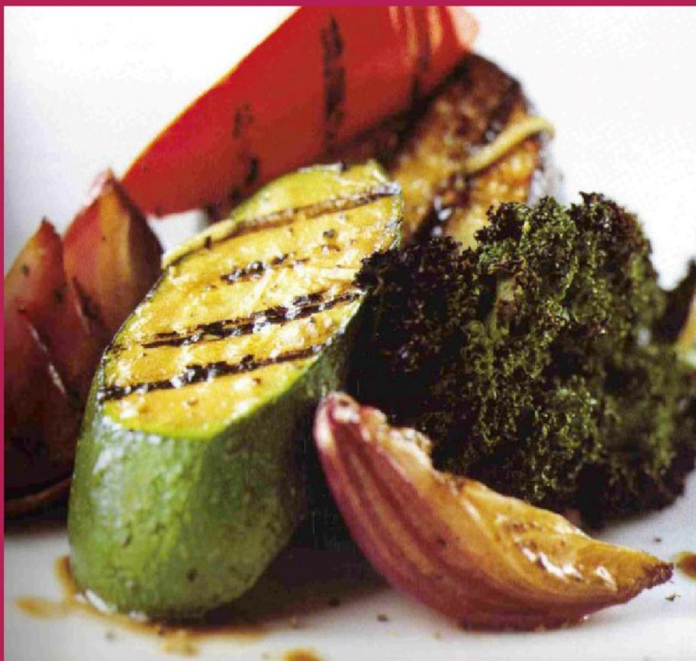


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# SOLD-OUT DREXEL FASHION SHOW DAZZLES WITH PRATUMBRAND DESIGNS



The 2024 Drexel Fashion Show was a resounding success, with tickets completely sold out. Attendees were treated to an array of innovative designs, but one of the standout moments was model Isaiah Cheatham donning a stunning ensemble by Pratumbrand.

The Drexel Fashion Show once again showcased the incredible talent and creativity of its designers, leaving the audience eagerly anticipating next year's event.

#drexelfashion  
#drexelfashiondesign  
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Cheatham's Look Five featured an overcoat made from wet-felting undyed mohair roving, adorned with a shearling collar from Mongolian sheep hide. The gown, crafted from donated silk wool yarns and knit on the Shima knitting machine, added elegance to the look. The ensemble was completed with a distinctive collar made from silk, leather, and porcupine quills, which were humanely sourced from veterinary procedures.

Photo-credit: @drhodesphotos

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Do you want to speak but you're scared? Do you dream of starting a podcast but keep waiting for the perfect day? Has procrastination gotten the best of you? It's time to do something different. Let me share my story and how things changed when I said "Yes" to God and "No" to the enemy, which is the fear that held me back for so long. I recently signed up for a speaker challenge. My first instinct was to say no, to ignore it. But instead, I said yes. It was scary because I'm new to speaking. Speaking has nothing to do with interviews and TV; it's totally different and requires a distinct skill set. Although I am a paid keynote speaker, I spent years afraid to get on

stage, afraid to be seen. I stayed in the background, passing up opportunity after opportunity to host or speak at events. It didn't hit me until I needed to generate an income, and I was asked to host. I needed the money, so I said yes. Fast forward, and I've been doing prayer sessions on Instagram Live for over 476 days. When God said to do it, I responded with, "But God, I'm not a prayer warrior, I'm not a preacher, I'm not..." The list went on and on. I called up a few pastors and asked if they could do it, but they were unavailable. So, I did it. And God showed me, and keeps showing me, why saying yes and crushing fear is what we are supposed to do.

Fear is a powerful enemy, but faith is stronger. Here are some lessons and scriptures that have helped me overcome fear and procrastination:

1. Embrace Your Calling  
**Lesson:** Your calling is unique. Embrace it, even if it scares you. God doesn't call the equipped; He equips the called.  
**Scripture:** "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV)
2. Say Yes to Opportunities  
**Lesson:** Saying yes to opportunities, even when they scare you, opens doors to growth and success. Trust that God will provide the strength and skills you need.  
**Scripture:** "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'" (Isaiah 6:8, NIV)
3. Take Action Against Fear  
**Lesson:** Fear is natural, but it should not control your actions. Take steps forward in faith, knowing that God is with you.  
**Scripture:** "For God has not given us a spirit of fear,

- but of power and of love and of a sound mind." (2 Timothy 1:7, NKJV)
4. Be Consistent and Persistent  
**Lesson:** Consistency is key. Whether it's speaking, praying, or any other endeavor, persistence leads to mastery and confidence.  
**Scripture:** "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." (Galatians 6:9, NIV)
  5. Trust in God's Guidance  
**Lesson:** Trust that God will guide you through every challenge. He will place you where you need to be and equip you with what you need.  
**Scripture:** "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." (Proverbs 3:5-6, NIV)
- What's the one thing you've been afraid to do?
- Share with me via DM on Instagram @shellyshellwilliams  
Doing something different, stepping out in faith, and saying yes to God can transform your life. It's not al-

ways easy, but it's always worth it. Remember, God has a plan for you that is far greater than you can imagine. Don't let fear and procrastination hold you back. Say yes to the opportunities before you and watch as God works wonders in your life.  
Humbly Submitted,  
  
Shelly Shell Williams,  
Philly's O.P.R.A.H.  
Monetization Coach & Doctoral Candidate

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## STEPHEN BOYD'S WONDER IN MY SOUL CLIMBING CHARTS!



Stephen Boyd, a multi-talented songwriter, singer, author, speaker, and preacher, hails from the quaint country town of Girdletree, Maryland, just outside Salisbury. He first captured our attention during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic with his hit single, "Heal the Land." Now, he's celebrating the release of his latest single, "Wonder in My Soul." In our conversation with this gifted artist, he shared insights into his background, influences, and his message of hope.  
Sherri: Please give us some background information and how it has shaped your personality over the years.

Stephen: I was born in a small-town country town in Girdletree Maryland (You read that right, Girdletree! lol). Initially, I used to be ashamed of my small country upbringing. However, as I've grown to see how mean and cruel the world can be, I'm thankful for how I was raised. Now, I do my best to teach the generation behind me some of the values I was taught.  
Sherri: Describe the roles your parents have played in your life as it relates to Gospel music?  
Stephen: On my mother's

side of the family, they were very musical. My grandparents had 12 children that formed the Wilson family singers. In those days, family groups used to go to different churches and sing for choir anniversaries. When I came along most of my aunts and uncles were grown and starting their families, but between my mom and dad and my three of my aunts who formed a group called the B.C.D ensemble, we traveled EVERYWHERE to sing or play. For several years, I was classically trained under a woman by the name of Ms. Jackson. She was old school! She would take a



small paddle and 'tap' your fingers if you played wrong notes! lol! I played for church services, revivals, and traveled with a workshop choir called the inter-denominational Mass choir--lead by a fiery choir director by the name of Dennis Stanley. My parents faithfully made sure every month we were at EVERY rehearsal

Sherri: When did you realize that you had a gift that should be shared with others?

Stephen: Probably since age 5. However, mostly, I had no choice! When you're raised in a musical family, you're either asked to sing or play! So, you are constantly sharing your gift with others!

Sherri: When did you realize you had a gift that you wanted to share with others, why did you want to begin to explore it nationally?

Stephen: I've always wanted to share my gifts with the world. But as with everything, you must wait for God's timing.

Sherri: You have other disciplines under your belt and are very well-versed. You are an educator, speaker, author, songwriter, singer, and more. How do you manage the various interests and the demand that each put on you?

Stephen: Lots of prayer, meditation, and a to do list! lol Honestly, many of these accomplishments have happened over time. I'm grateful for God's favor.

Sherri: You're married and have a daughter. Tell us a little about your personal life and how it influences your music ministry. Has your wife or daughter had suggestions for your songs? If so, please share.

Stephen: First, I'd like to congratulate my daughter for graduating from Wor-Wic Community College with an Associate's degree in early childhood! I've been with my wife for nearly 25

years. From time to time, we collaborate on musical concepts. However, the way my brain works, once I have a concept, it's full steam ahead!

Sherri: You have a brand-new single entitled "Wonder In My Soul." This upbeat churchy song grabs the listener's attention right away. What was your thought process when making this song and how did it differ from other songs you have done?

Stephen: I wanted to write a song that celebrates my small Pentecostal country roots! Whether people want to admit it, small black country churches are truly the impetus the proliferation of Black Gospel music! Had it not been for the Great Migration of Black country people leaving the South to travel North for a better life, the music we celebrate today would spread through the world--just at a much slower pace! In my latest single, you'll hear a myriad of styles from Pentecostal, Quartet, Broadway, New Orleans March, and Jazz. All these styles influenced my upbringing. This song is my gift to my parents, grandparents, and great grandparents' generation. It's a reminder to this current generation to not forget the musical bridge that brought us over.

Sherri: What is your goal for this song and for you this year?

Stephen: My goal for this song is that it would chart on Billboard's Top Gospel 30. Afterwards, I'd outline a show called The Country Church Experience! In it, I'd cast various characters that would represent old preachers, deacons, and church mothers, reminiscing out the old time and singing old hymns, gospel songs, congregations' songs, and spirituals. My goal is to embark on a 10-15 city tour sharing the music and its core message to never forget the music bridge that brought you over!

Sherri: You have traveled extensively since being first

introduced to us with your hit single "Heal the Land" during the height of the COVID pandemic. Share with our readers some of the platforms on which you've been fortunate to be featured.

Stephen: Merge Music Group's Virtual Music concert with Ben Tankard, Tamika Patton, Tracy Morgan, and Jerad Woods. Bobby Jones Presents, Lady Bell's Indie Artist Now-Chicago. RevNation's Hope Tour-Atlanta Georgie. God Radio Now with Dr. LT and Robert Earl Dean, No More Dirty Entertainment's Comedy Show, Huntsville Alabama, The Motown Show with Denise Tichenor-Davis. Host of Heal the Land Xperience Radio Show on KSDE Radio, Envision Magazine Sunday Sit Down with Auntie G, WBTC Radio, WDIH Radio with Bishop George, and Pastor Mandel Copeland, the Heal the Land Experience Concert in Bellevue, Ill.

Sherri: What has been the most challenging part of producing this particular single and why? By contrast what has been the most rewarding?

Stephen: The most challenging part of producing this single has to do with time and scheduling. I have a pretty busy schedule, which means I have to rely on oth-

er partners to help me get things done. At times, schedules don't mesh--or there is a rescheduling of something, which pushes deadlines back. However, I've learned to be patient and trust the process!

Sherri: What is one word you can give us that encapsulates your journey thus far?

Stephen: Favor

Sherri: Who are some people with whom you'd like to collaborate and in what way?

Stephen: I would love to produce a song with Kurt Carr. I love his writing style, the theology of his lyrics, and musical approach and interpretation to convey the over musical idea. Additionally, I would love to collaborate with Shirley Ceasar, Hezekiah Walker, Paulette Wright, and John P. Kee Maurette Brown-Clark, Bishop T.D. Jakes (just to name a few).

Sherri: Finally, how has your music matured since "Heal the Land" to now?

Stephen: Since the release of Heal the Land in 2020, I've written a book entitled, Heal the Land: A Blue for Spiritual Restoration. The music and the book are perfect companions to understanding the essential message God is sending us in

the world today. That is, if we humble ourselves, pray, seek his face, and turn from our wicked ways, we WILL see God HEAL THE LAND!

Sherri: It has been a pleasure speaking with you again. Please give us your social media handles and booking information.

Stephen: Visit my website at: <http://www.iamstephenboyd.com> | Facebook & IG: @Iamstephenboyd YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/@Iamstephenboydnow> | Email: info@iamstephenboyd.com.

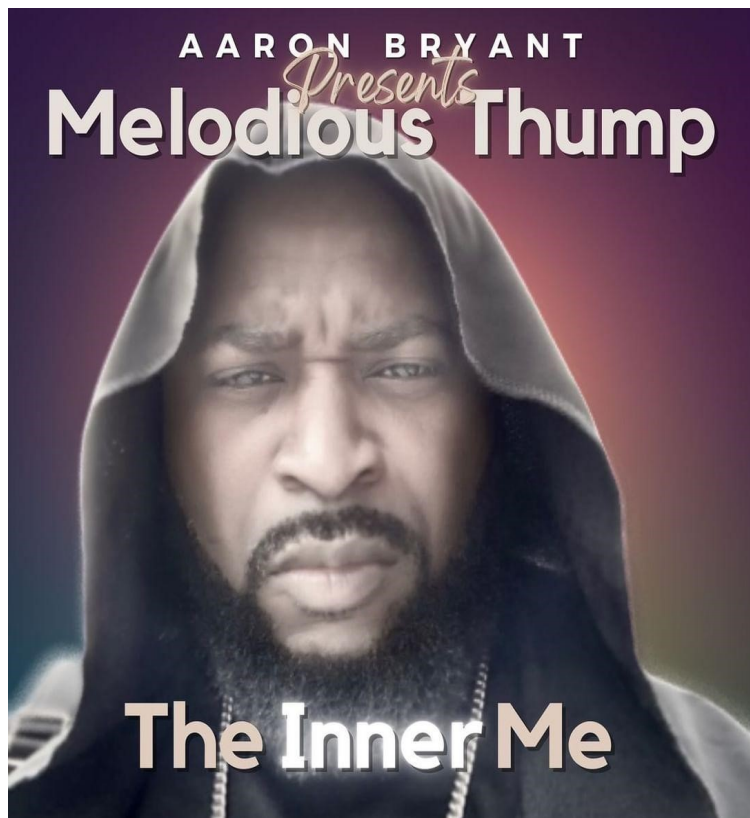
Booking: Contact Bruce Knight at: 313-207- 5786. Or email at pushitmarketingandpromotions@gmail.com.

We wish Stephen Boyd the very best. Download "Wonder in My Soul" today and watch how your entire persona begins to change for the better. Connect with us on social media. Facebook: Supreme Gospel Ent. | Sherri Y. Johnson | Tik-Tok/Instagram: @sherrisupremegospel – until the next column, remain encouraged.





# AB FOUNDING MEMBER OF DA FAT CAT CLIQUE TO MELODIOUS THUMP - NOW CANCER-FREE HIS TRACKS NOW FLOWING FOR JESUS



by Shelly Shell Williams

I've known AB for years, and I can attest to the depth and evolution of his musical journey. From his early days as AB, performing with the Fat Cat Clique with the videos on Urban X-pressions, to his current transition as Melodious Thump, his story is one of transformation, resilience, and unwavering faith. His latest project, "The Inner Me," offers an intimate glimpse into his personal struggles and triumphs, reflecting a journey that is as much about self-discovery as it is about musical innovation. Now, as his tracks flow for Jesus, Melodious Thump shares how he has faced throat cancer and other serious health challenges, finding new ways to express himself and connect with his audience. In this cover story, we delve into the essence of Melodious Thump, exploring the inspirations behind his music, the impact of his health challenges, and the unwavering faith that has guided him through it all.

**Shelly Shell: The Story Behind the Name:** From AB to Melodious Thump, what's the story behind the name?

Melodious Thump: I was looking for a change as I transitioned to more of a producer. Melodious Thump explains my style of production, Melodic music with beats that Thump. And I also love the play on words with Thelonious Monk.

**Shelly Shell: The Journey of "The Inner Me":** Your latest project, "The Inner Me," feels intensely personal. Could you share what inspired this project and what message you hope it conveys to your listeners?

Melodious Thump: It was an honest look at my inner struggle. I had to take a serious look at myself and face my shortcomings, and at the same time, allow God to deal with me about them.

**Resilience in Face of Adversity:** Having faced throat

cancer and other serious health challenges, how has your relationship with music and creativity changed? Is there a particular song or lyric from the new project that encapsulates this transformation?

Melodious Thump: Yes, it has changed. I can't use my voice at this current time. It hurts to even talk. I started making Chill Hop records some time ago, so not even knowing it, I was being prepared for a time such as this. I have an album out called Dusk To Dawn under Melodious Thump that I did a couple of years ago. A song on this new project that captures everything is a song called I'm Ready. It's a song about both my wife's and my health situations. Basically saying to God that I'm Ready for this fight.

**Spiritual Sustenance:** Throughout your trials, you've maintained a strong faith. How has your relationship with God influenced your approach to music and life in these challenging times?

Melodious Thump: My mission is to make Him known. Music is the vehicle that I use because He gifted me with it. As a believer, people need to see a transparent walk. Even when it's pouring rain. We can all talk a good game, but when it comes to it, can we walk that walk? It's difficult because human emotions comes into play. Asking God the hard questions. He has final say in all matters, so I trust Him even when it hurts.

**Voice Beyond the Voice:** With the uncertainty about your future in music due to

your health, how are you exploring new ways to express yourself and connect with your audience?

Melodious Thump: Well, we are praying for healing. Imagine the songs that can come from this journey! Chill Hop again is my other vehicle. Tapping in emotionally through beats is something I love. It's like speaking without words. Continuing to tell my story is of importance.

**Legacy and Influence:** As a founding member of Da Fat Cat Clique and a champion of healthy marriages and family values, what do you consider your most important contribution to both your listeners and your family?

Melodious Thump: My family is my base. Everything that comes from me stems from a husband/father/grandfather that fell in love with Jesus that has a story to tell. Jesus is really all we have when it's all said and done and only what we do for Him will last.

**The Role of Pain:** You've mentioned that despite the pain, there's a lesson to be learned. Could you share a specific moment or incident during your illness that led to a significant insight or shift in your perspective?

Melodious Thump: My case isn't normal. This is my second bout with Cancer in a two-year span (which isn't normal), so I had to look for God in it. What's the mission? Man up because we don't have a choice in this matter. When I was a soldier, we were constantly being prepared for war. Same thing here. I am a sol-

dier for The Lord, and I can't tell Him what missions I want or don't want. I have to deal with them as they come. What I've come to realize is that in life, we are all going to go through something. The question is, how are you going to go through it? Your true belief system is on display as you walk it out. Do you really believe all that stuff you've been preaching about for years, or is it all talk?

**Support Systems:** How have your brother, Pastor Larry Anderson, Your Wife and Kids and other close family and friends supported you through your music career and your health struggles? How important has their support been in your recovery and creative processes?

Melodious Thump: It is very important to have a solid base and foundation. Having your brother as your pastor isn't a bad thing at all lol. My wife is the best teammate I've ever had. She is the motor on a lot of our days. Days when I'm too weak to even pray, she's right there interceding on my behalf. My children are my inspiration for living and fighting. Their importance can't be measured. There is no me without them. And through this journey, so much was revealed, like who's really there for you. I've lost people through this journey. People I thought was really there for me. When the kitchen got hot, they faded away in the background and it stings a bit. Then there are some unexpected people that stepped up and filled in spaces. I'm grateful for them.



**Artistic Evolution:** From rapping for the world to rapping for the Lord, how would you describe the evolution of your music and message over the years?

Melodious Thump: It's simply the growth of a man. Once Jesus got a hold of my life, there was no turning back. As far as the music, I believe I've gotten better. My subjects are more direct and clearly understood. Whether you agree with them or not is something

you have to take up and answer to God about, but my part is done.

**The Next Chapter:** Facing such profound health challenges, how do you envision your future in music and life? Are there other passions or projects you are exploring?

Melodious Thump: At this point, we will continue to pray. No one knows what God is going to do. I have to have myself in the proper

place when He decides. I am focusing on my health right now because I have a long ways to go. It hurts to talk, it hurts to swallow food, it hurts to drink water. So only God can fix that. The doctors have tried everything and they are stumped. I am cancer free (Praise God!). I am dealing with the after effects of Radiation Therapy Treatment. I would like to do another project really getting into the details of this journey, but for now, I am unable to do it.

**Message to the Fans:** What message do you want to leave for your fans who have been with you through the highs and the lows of your career and personal life?

Thank you to everyone who's been praying for me. Everyone who's ever supported me in this long career. I only wanted to bring you some enjoyment as I lived out my life in front of you. Along that journey, I met a man who changed

everything about me and y'all got a chance to witness it in living color.

You can follow me on social media networks FB, IG, X, Tiktok: Melodious Thump and Facebook Aaron AB Bryant

## A VIVID CELEBRATION OF MUSIC: ACX1 MUSIC'S MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND LAUNCH EVENT



by Shelly Shell Williams

As an executive producer and author who thrives on the pulse of the music and entertainment world, I had the distinct pleasure of covering ACX1 Music's free launch event this past Memorial Day Weekend. This spectacular gathering, set against the iconic backdrop of the Atlantic City Boardwalk, was a joyous blend of music, comedy, and community spirit, hosted at the vibrant ACX1 Studios.

The event was a nostalgic trip down memory lane, featuring performances from some of the most iconic names in the industry. Rob

Schwartz, the visionary Co-Founder and Chief Music Officer of ACX1 Studios, was the driving force behind this event, emphasizing his mission to bring essential resources and opportunities to Atlantic City's rich musical landscape.

I found myself reminiscing as I mingled with some familiar faces from my Urban X-pressions days. It felt like a mini-reunion with Monie on da Scene, Supreme, and Romona. The energy was palpable as we reminisced and connected with other legends like DJ Jay Ski.

One of the evening's stand-

out moments was catching up with my dear friend Fawzyia, who introduced us to the gracious Carol Wells, the Royal Grand Lady in waiting. The event truly had a family reunion vibe, filled with warmth and camaraderie.

The official announcement introduced us to Chief Nana Kabina Assante II, and the stellar lineup of 40 artists who lit up the stage was nothing short of extraordinary. Performances from Pretty Poison ("Catch Me I'm Falling"), Chill Rob G ("I Got The Power"), and Gina Thompson ("The Things That You Do") had the crowd on their feet. Dinco D from Leaders of the New School brought back memories with "Scenario," while Fantom of the Beat, Mikey D, and MC Delite took us through hip-hop history. Kenny Whitehead, Sasha Anne, RiverX Music, Ny' Aira, Jerkmoney Stacks, Melissa Bonilla, Camille K, and many others rounded out an impressive roster.

Comedian Petey Rancel and DJ One Spinn kept the energy high throughout the event. Rob Schwartz's excitement was contagious as he shared his vision for ACX1 Studios. "We're thrilled to help bring the music industry to Atlantic City," he said. "By provid-

ing the essential elements that artists need to succeed in entertainment to a city rich in musical culture, we aim to bring change not only to Atlantic City but to the industry as a whole."

The launch of Splash 98.5, currently online and preparing for its FM debut, was a highlight. Managed by Dan Mathews and Henry Vargas, this station promises to be a cornerstone of the ACX1 project, along with the upcoming music studio, sync licensing/music supervision department, and ACX1 Music Distribution. Schwartz emphasized the importance of ACX101 weekly seminar/panels featuring industry leaders, which will be pivotal for artist development.

The event was generously supported by sponsors like The MLC, DPA Microphones, The Hype Magazine, eSports Innovation Center, DJX, DJ Life Magazine, The Simpson Restaurant & Bar, Pepsi of Hudson Valley, Laff House AC, Goodtunes, MusicSupps.com, Opulent Studios, and the Artist Playground. ACX1 Music label sponsors included FantoMusic, Tasmania Records, RiverX Music, Royal Court Records, and Jerk Money Music. Legendary DJs like DJ Jay-Ski, DJ Bad Boy

Richie Rich, The Untouchable DJs (with Grammy-winning BabyPaul), and local AC DJs Weekday Underground Artists added to the festive atmosphere.

Performances by FantoMusic (Katherine Swain, Scritchmatic, & Young Soulo), Sarah Gao, Judah Priest, OthaWorld Muzik Group, Serene Salinas, RHYM-RCKA, RayZa, Vaultt Music, DaNya the OG, Fire Nation Flamez, Neda Zehra, Suprem Da Rezarekta', J Hop, Shimmer Johnson, Melody Rose, Callum, Danny McKendrick, Brady Astorga, Frankie Tucci, and The 80's Crush Band showcased the diversity and talent ACX1 aims to support.

As I reflect on this incredible event, I'm filled with optimism for what ACX1 Studios will bring to Atlantic City and beyond. Rob Schwartz's dedication to creating a nurturing environment for artists is evident, and this launch event was a perfect introduction to the vibrant community ACX1 Studios aims to foster. Here's to many more events that celebrate music, creativity, and community!



# THE 2ND ANNUAL LOVING MY HEALTH EXPO



things that are fun, people would start falling in love with their health and working out.”

The event wasn’t just for adults seeking to learn more about their health, get valuable information to start or aid in their own fitness regimens, or hear from knowledgeable experts on the topic of holistic wellness, there were also plenty of activities for youth as well. We had a dance performance by “Grand Girls” Amaiya Williams, Makayla Thompson & Mekenzi Carter.

“There was a game truck for children and we also had a fashion show by Philly Fabulosity Models and Roxi Foxi Boutique,” she said.

“My overall suggestion was for people to take better care of our mental health and well-being,” said Coach Kia, a fitness coach and presenter at the Expo.

“I want people to focus on getting more rest and relaxation, meditation and activity,” she said.

Coach Kia says that she was inspired to begin her fitness journey after a relative committed suicide. She was also moved by the suicides of others in the community.

Also on the Women’s Health Panel was author Victoria Nelson, speaker, and host of the ‘Coffee Cake and Conversation Community.

“Loving My Health was phenomenal. It was great and I enjoyed everything from beginning to the end, the exercises self-defense [demonstration],” said Nelson

“I think Shelly outdid herself and I’m looking forward to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Loving Your Health Expo.”

A mobile Game truck pro-

vided entertainment and fun for the younger ones and, if that wasn’t enough, there was rope jumping and other activities designed for those not inclined to hang out with the adults.

“Loving Your Health was phenomenal. It was great. I enjoyed everything from the beginning to the end, the exercises, the self-defense [demonstration], and the Men’s Panel was off-the-chain.” said Nelson.

Jon McKay, President of ‘Life Outside the Streets’ whose mission is to treat trauma through arts, education, and information, raised awareness about mental health during his presentation as a panelist on the men’s panel.

“The most important thing that I appreciate about working with Shelly Shell [Williams] is the good vibes and energy,” said McKay, a mental health specialist.

“There’s no shortage of people hosting events and things and being on point but when it comes to integrity and quality people, that’s one of the biggest things I got from today.”

“There were people from all different walks of life but the energy and integrity of all those involved is what I appreciated the most,” he said.

Nothing challenged the health and well-being of Americans, in fact, the world than the Covid-19 pandemic. With over a million people dead as a result of the virus and millions more sickened throughout the nation, the disease has had a crippling effect on the nation, and the world.

Although the country is gradually returning to normal, the virus is still out there and that’s where *Booth Truth*, a *WHYY* public awareness campaign,

*comes in. Philadelphia Department of Public Health was on hand at the Loving My Health Expo, offering free COVID tests. Roberta of Artblog distributed COVID awareness posters designed by our comics artist, Derick Jones, reminding the public that, although in retreat, the virus is not yet defeated, so vigilance is still necessary. Also, thank you to Nice Partner Revive P.O.C. for providing assistance with handouts as well.*

“I would like to thank *Booth Truth WHYY, N.I.C.E.* one of our main partners and the message we wanted to get across is that COVID is not gone and we still have to maintain some of the practices that were put in place because it’s still here,” said Williams.

“Masking up, hand sanitizer, washing your hands because COVID isn’t gone and vaccinations, for those that want them, are still available,” she said.

The entire event was filmed for broadcast to be aired on Phillycam. Thank you to Chris Abbott and Fresh Eyez Entertainment for the video and photography. For more information, visit Instagram @shellyshellwilliams

The Loving Your Health Expo was sponsored by The Germantown Church of the Brethren, Carnival 300+, The Uptown Standard Newspaper, Sherri Y. Johnson of Supreme Gospel Entertainment, WHYY, N.I.C.E. #BoostTruth, and Urban X-pressions News-Mag.

by Nathaniel Lee

Urban Xpressions News Magazine Contributor

Braving the heat, people from across the city and beyond gathered at the Germantown Church of The Brethren, 6611 Germantown Avenue, to participate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Loving My Health event hosted by Shelly Shell Williams and GCOB Carnival 300+. A pre-event to GCOB 300+ Festivities. To beat the heat, guests received free water and snacks provided by ShopRite and PJP Marketplace.

They danced, stretched, hopped, and, yes, sweated during the daylong event organized to get participants to move their bodies and focus on their overall health. Thank you to Soles 4 Souls for providing free new brand-name sneakers and socks to the participants,” said Sherri Johnson, event organizer/sponsor.

“Loving My Health is a fitness expo where I brought together fitness, Zumba/ A.I.M. To Move by Lashawn Elise, and Calisthenic type exercises by Bruce Davis and Coach Dar,

along with different people doing different types of exercises such as Martial Arts, Grandmaster William, Double Dutch with Philly Girls Jump, as well as a men’s panel and a women’s panel,” said Williams.

The men’s health panel, on Father’s Day weekend, featured Dr. Paul Hopkins, Commissioner Omar Sabir, Mike Davis, Bruce Davis, Jon McKay, Chris L. Abbott, and event sponsor James Williams.

Her purpose for bringing so many fitness experts and members of the community together was simple:

“I want people to be healthy, and I want to be healthy,” she said.

“This is my second annual Loving My Health Expo and the original thought behind it was the understanding that I know that fitness and working out can be daunting and sometimes people don’t want to do it,” said Williams.

Williams said she discovered that engaging in fitness activities that were actually fun to do, motivated her to keep doing them.

“So, if I combined all the







# A BLESSED MILESTONE: CELEBRATING WONDER BUTTER'S 2ND ANNIVERSARY



felt moments, thanks to the incredible efforts of @mylinqevents, who stuck with the vision from start to finish. Lisa Edmonds Jones, CEO of Wonder Butter, expressed her immense gratitude for their unwavering support, saying, "Thank you @mylinqevents for sticking with me and carrying the vision out until the end. I love you for that." All glory to God for blessing this journey and making the event a resounding success. One of the highlights of the evening was a heartfelt song dedication by Lisa's son, Master Jones (@masterjonesiv). His performance left the audience, including his proud mother, speechless and deeply

moved. Lisa shared, "Thank you, Master Jones, my one and only son, for the song dedication; it blew me away."

The celebration also marked the launch of two exciting new products from Wonder Butters: the Wonder Hair Butter and Body Oil. As Lisa proudly announced, these products are a testament to the brand's mission to create healthy skincare solutions for the entire family. Made from all-natural ingredients, Wonder Butter products are designed to nourish the skin, keeping it moisturized, healthy, and glowing.

For more information about these fantastic products, vis-

it <https://www.wonderbutter.com/Magazinephotobooth28> beautifully captured the event, ensuring that the memories of this blessed evening will be cherished for years to come. Lisa also honored organizations Give Me My Roses - Cynthaya Jonhson, Motivated By Music - LaShinda Byrd, GEGISOM - Joyce Drayton, each given a \$500 donation. Here's to many more years of Wonder Butter and the continued journey of providing natural skincare solutions for all.

By Shelly Shell Williams I had the privilege of vending at Wonder Butter's second-year anniversary. She treated each vendor as an honored guest. I had a chance to dine with my prayer family, Glow with Vick and Will or Fresh Eyez Entertainment.

bration of "Wonder Butter's 2-Year Anniversary" event held at The Alloy King of Prussia in King of Prussia, PA, was an experience filled with joy and celebration. It was a privilege to witness and document such a significant milestone for this amazing brand.

Congratulations to Lisa Edmonds Jones for the cele-

The event was a beautiful blend of elegance and heart-

# PHILADELPHIA COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND THE BELMONT MODEL



Nathaniel Lee  
Urban X-pressions News  
Mag Contributor

In keeping with the vision of Philadelphia's mayor, Chelle Parker to make the city "safer, greener and cleaner," Parker recently announced plans to tackle one of Philadelphia's most crime-ridden, drug-infested neighborhoods, Kensington in the Northeast section of the city.

Kensington has gained the attention of the world because of its outright lawless-

ness and drug activity. It has become a symbol of everything that could go wrong when drugs and crime are allowed to spiral out of control.

Police Commissioner Kevin Bethel is on the case and announced his plans to target illegal drug activity in the area as part of the clean-up.

"We are going down there and start to address what has been manifested from the issues down there, the level of open-air drugs, the violence that occurs there, and all the things that have kept

that community, pretty much imprisoned for a long time," said Bethel.

Perhaps they should seek the advice from one local organization that has had significant success ending long-standing drug activities and the crime that often follows them.

*Philadelphia Community Outreach, a grassroots organization in West Philadelphia, has tackled the area's most problematic communities and succeeded!*

"The organization's mission is to rid the community of open-air drug operations by working with community stakeholders, elected officials, the police department, and the district attorney," said Ishaq Samai, founder of the Philadelphia Community Outreach.

"We serve the Philadelphia community at large because we are all affected by crime and gun violence," said Samai.

This model of working with

members of the community, law enforcement, and elected officials to clean up and establish community organizations and collaboratives to maintain a presence in the communities on an ongoing basis was given the name "The Belmont Safety Model" and, according to members of the Philadelphia Community Outreach, has had remarkable success everywhere the model was implemented.

Pete Wilson, Co-founder of Philadelphia Community Outreach says that the success of the 'Belmont Model' is the result of collaboration.

"The Belmont Model means that the Philadelphia Community Outreach cannot extend itself without all of Philadelphia just like the Philadelphia police cannot arrest itself out of this situation because it's too big," said Wilson.

"If you collectively address it, you can nail it."

Wilson says that local po-

lice officials, members of the community, and participating elected officials all attest to the success of Philadelphia Community Outreach's Belmont Safety Model but notes that that success is only possible because of the involvement of various segments of the community working together to both create and subsequently maintain the changes desired.

That's where the members of the Philadelphia Community Outreach succeeded where others were unable to do so, they united these groups, organizations, and agencies and established a united front to do what no one entity could.

And this made all of the difference.





## URBAN XPRESSIONS: ON DECK

Three years ago, Jazmyne “Jaz Imani” and Tab Edwards had a brief small-talk conversation. Neither of them knew that a few years later, they would be working on a new project together.

A couple of months back, while working with the gospel group The Hayman Singers, member Brenda Grinnage mentioned a singer in the group who wasn't shy and “can and will sing!” The singer was Jaz. Not long after, according to Jaz, “Tab reached out to me, and we got the opportunity to speak about my work and my music interests. He mentioned his interest in recording a specific song, and I was more than happy to collaborate.”

The song Tab has wanted to remake for many years is the Parlet classic “Don't Ever Stop,” which was released in 1979. Jaz, who has been singing since age five and started writing songs by age ten, is so young that, as she described, “I had never heard the song prior to this collaboration. However, I've always had a love for '70s music, specifically funk, soul, and R&B.”

His challenge was that he could not find a singer with “the right voice.” But upon hearing Jaz during an informal Zoom audition, he thought he might have found the voice he was seeking. Currently, the song will be an unreleased demo. But if it turns out dope, then Tab and Jaz—who is not signed to Kixx Records—will discuss releasing it. Or, as Tab says, “We'll see how it goes.”

**Jaz:** “I hope you guys enjoy the track and future songs will be in the making. Be sure to follow me on Instagram @jazzij\_ and soundcloud @JazzijXO.”

*Giving breath  
to a forgotten 70s  
P-Funk classic*

# INTRODUCING

# JAZ IMANNI

The talented young Delaware singer is collabing with Kixx Records chief Tab Edwards on an exciting remake of the Parlet/Funkadelic hit “Don't Ever Stop (Lovin' Me, Needin' Me).” The song drops in **August 2024.**



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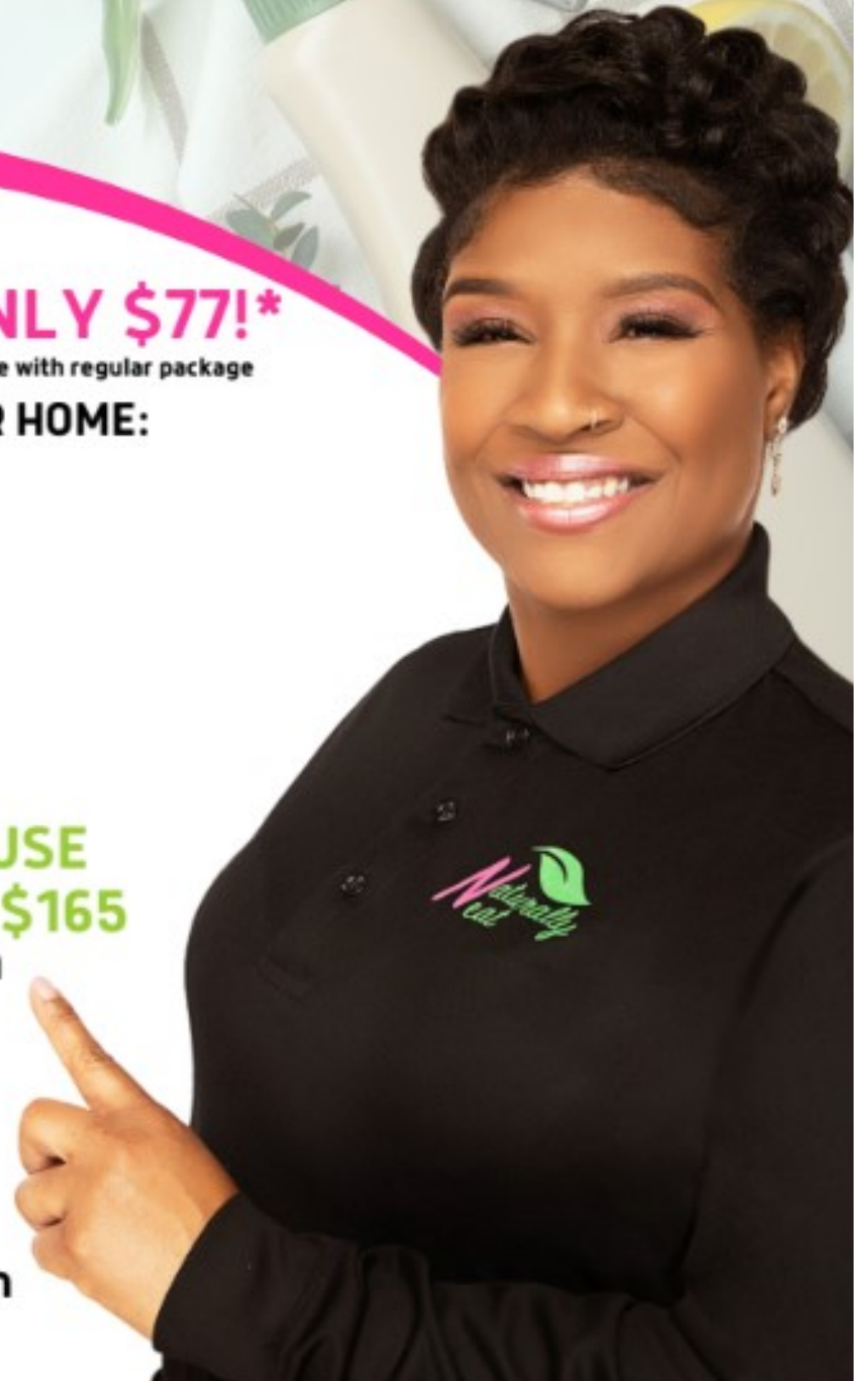
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**AUGUST 21ST, DELL-P WILL RELEASE HIS 9TH ALBUM  
"I CAN'T MAKE THIS UP"  
FEATURING GRAND PUBA MAXWELL**



it's been an honor to watch Dell-P throughout the years, to see him humbly show up and perform on various stages, consistently supporting the community with genuine kindness. His dedication and humility have always stood out, making this article a long time coming. Dell-P has not only made a name for himself but has also inspired many along the way. Now, with his new album "I Can't Make This Up" on the horizon, it's time for all of us to show our support for an artist who has given so much to his craft and community.

**Shelly Shell: Childhood Reflections:** Growing up in West Philadelphia, what are some of your fondest memories from your childhood? How do you think those early experiences shaped the person and artist you are today?

Dell-P: My fondest memory would have to be hearing Run DMC for the first time and memorizing songs from Krush Groove. I always wanted to be like DMC. I come from the same neighborhood as legends like Steady B, Cool C, and Da Youngstas, so seeing them on TV gave me hope for making it big with my music. I have to give credit to my uncles Paul (my mother's brother) and Phillip (my father's brother) for inspiring me to be an emcee also. I used to watch them rapping with their friends and told myself I can do it too. Music has been a part of my life since an early age and I eventually made a name for myself.

**Shelly Shell: Early Influences:** As a child, what were your favorite hobbies or activities that kept you busy? How did these pastimes influence your approach to music and creativity?

Dell-P: Me and my friends used to play basketball by hanging a crate up on my grandparents' backyard gate. I also played video games, and watched music videos religiously. Shoutout to The Box, Yo MTV Raps, Rap City, and Urban X-Pressions. These are the programs that molded me and taught me what great music sounds like.

**Shelly Shell: Musical Awakening:** Can you recall a specific moment or experience when you first realized that music was your calling? What was it about that moment that made it so pivotal for you?

Dell-P: The first time that I performed on stage was in the 6th Grade at Turner Middle School. Not only did I have the students standing up clapping, the teachers were loving it also. That was the day I realized my gift.

**Shelly Shell: Personal Growth:** Throughout your career, you've consistently demonstrated kindness and humility. Who in your life would you say played a crucial role in grounding you in these values?

Dell-P: I have been down to earth and kind since I was a kid. I will say one thing that I have learned is to focus more on the people who

support my craft rather than feeling some of type of way about those who don't. Your goal is nobody else's responsibility so I appreciate everyone who embraces my music.

**Shelly Shell: Lessons Learned:** Reflecting on the years of hard work and dedication, what are some of the most valuable lessons you've learned about persistence and resilience in the music industry?

Dell-P: I have learned that you have to bet on yourself. Never let anyone tell you how you are supposed to do you. You can be open to suggestions but always control your narrative. Believe in yourself and others will soon follow.

**Shelly Shell: Personal Milestones:** Apart from your professional achievements, are there personal milestones or experiences you've had that particularly stand out to you as defining moments in your life?

Dell-P: My milestone outside of music would have to be when I married the love of my life. Shoutout to my wife, Zaina, and be sure to follow her at @zainalove for the best Shea Butters on the planet.

**Shelly Shell: Nurturing Talent:** Were there mentors, family members, or specific events that significantly contributed to your growth as an artist?

Dell-P: Yes I have a very music oriented family. My mother (R.I.P) and my grandparents are a major reason why I have such an old soul. I am a huge fan of Stevie Wonder, Earth, Wind, & Fire, Gil Scott Heron, Roy Ayers, and The Sound Of Philadelphia due to hearing their music all the time as a kid. I always try to spread a positive message and tell a story so my music can be relatable for many generations to come.

**Shelly Shell: Staying Humble:** In an industry often characterized by ego and competition, how do you maintain your humility and kindness? What practices or philosophies help you stay true to yourself?

Dell-P: I just keep Allah first and stay on my path. I'm a person that loves to see other people win so I'm not in competition with anyone. My goal is to better myself and make my family proud.

**Shelly Shell: Personal Message:** If you could send a message to your younger self, just as you were starting out, what would you say? What advice or encouragement would you offer?

Dell-P: I would tell myself to remember why you started. Don't feel like you have to follow the crowd to be accepted. Know your worth.

**Shelly Shell: Beyond Music:** With your recent ventures into acting and your role in the film "When George Got Murdered," how do you see your path evolving in the entertainment industry? Are there other areas outside music you're passionate about exploring?

Dell-P: I look forward to more movie roles and curating more events behind the scenes. I have started my own platform called The WordSmith Experience that gives other aspiring artists a chance to be seen and heard. Shoutout to my guys Bob (Owner of Crate Diggaz Records), Big Cuz, and DJ Waxspinner for helping me bring this vision to life. A special thank you to Melody Forrester (Artists First Inc.) and Uptown Radio 98.5 FM for the official sponsors for this movement. Be sure to join us every second Friday of the month at 711 S. 4th Street, 6 pm till 9 pm, \$10 to enter.

**Shelly Shell: Legacy and Impact:** As someone who has already left a mark on the hip-hop scene, what do you hope your legacy will be? What message do you want your music to carry to future generations?

Dell-P: My goal is to be known as someone who inspired the people and united the city as a whole through music. I want to be living proof that being yourself pays off.

**Shelly Shell: Upcoming Projects Sneak Peek:** You've teased some exciting projects on the horizon. Could you give us a hint or sneak peek into what fans can expect in the near future?

Dell-P: I will be releasing my 9th album entitled "I Can't Make This Up" on August 21st, which is my birthday. I have numerous legendary guest appearances that I want to keep a secret for now, but since I'm about to release the next single, I can let you know one of the names. I have been blessed with the opportunity to work with one of my favorite emcees ever, the legendary Grand Puba Maxwell!!!! The single is called "Hear Me Out" and produced by Trac-Qaeda... We will be releasing it very soon. My latest, "Heat Em Up," produced by DJ Flash of The Justus, is available on all digital platforms now, so be sure to download it and tell a friend.

Please provide a website, social media and how they can stay connected to you.

Be sure to follow me @DELLP215 on IG and @WHOISDELLPEE on Twitter

Thank you for the continuous love and support Shelly Shell I truly appreciate it. Peace and blessings!!



# HOW LOSING 90LBS GAVE PHILLIP STEWARD THE CONFIDENCE TO PURSUE ACTING



Phillip Steward, a multi-talented individual excelling as an actor, model, and musician, shares his inspiring journey of how losing weight gave him the confidence to pursue acting. His new-found love, Phillip Steward, an actor, model, and organist, has been a significant support in his life.

## Early Beginnings and Professional Life

Born into a family of creative minds, Phillip always harbored a love for the arts. However, it wasn't until recently that he

truly embraced this passion. "I've been acting for about a year and a half," he shares.

"Before that, my life was all about my business—web design and marketing—which I've been doing since 2001."

## Blending Passions and Professions

Phillip's decision to keep his creative endeavors separate from his professional life stemmed from a belief that the two were vastly different. "I never saw how acting, modeling, and music could intersect with web design," he admits. But this perspective has shifted. Encouraged by friends and mentors, Phillip now sees the potential synergy between his skills. "When people on set

learn I'm a designer, they're always interested. It made me realize I could blend my talents."

## The Serendipitous Start to Acting

Phillip's entry into acting was somewhat serendipitous. Inspired by a casual conversation with a friend, he decided to pursue this newfound interest. "I never thought I could do it—I didn't see myself as handsome enough," he confesses. But a casting call on Facebook changed everything, leading to his first role in a YouTube short film. Since then, he's been unstoppable, landing various roles and consistently honing his craft.

## Anointed Ads: Merging Business with Creativity

Beyond his artistic pursuits, Phillip runs Anointed Ads, a web design and graphic design company. "We focus on website design, graphic design, and social media management," he explains. His business acumen and creative flair make him a sought-after professional in both the business and entertainment worlds.

## A Transformative Weight Loss Journey

Phillip's recent weight loss journey is another testament to his determination. Shedding 90 pounds transformed not just

his physique but also his self-esteem. "Losing weight made me believe in my potential as an actor," he says. "It boosted my confidence and changed how I view myself."

## Relaunching Max Ads Magazine

With a newly relaunched magazine, Max Ads Magazine, Phillip continues to expand his horizons. "We put out 13 issues between 2015 and 2017. Now, we're back with a focus on profiles and ads," he says. The magazine's return is a reflection of Phillip's relentless drive and creativity.

## Future Ambitions

Looking ahead, Phillip's ambitions remain high. "I'd love to have a speaking role in a movie or TV show that makes it to

theaters," he shares. "Acting in commercials has been fantastic, and I want to bring my talents to a larger audience."

## Connecting with Phillip Steward

For Phillip Steward, the future is brimming with possibilities. Whether through acting, music, modeling, or his business ventures, he is a testament to the power of versatility and passion. To connect with Phillip or explore his work, visit [MrPhillipSteward.com](http://MrPhillipSteward.com). As he continues to inspire and entertain, Phillip Steward proves that it's never too late to pursue your dreams and reinvent yourself.

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