

THE R&B SPECIAL EDITION

MAY 2016

THE TOP 10

ADELE

RIHANNA

DRAKE

RIRI

TALKS ABOUT
RECORDING
WORK.

ALL SECRETS
UNVEILED:
DRAKE ON HIS
NEW ALBUM



and in your life nothing is worth





NICKI MINAJ
IT'S THE PERFECT PILL,
AND IT'S PINK.
NEED I SAY MORE?



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TOP 10



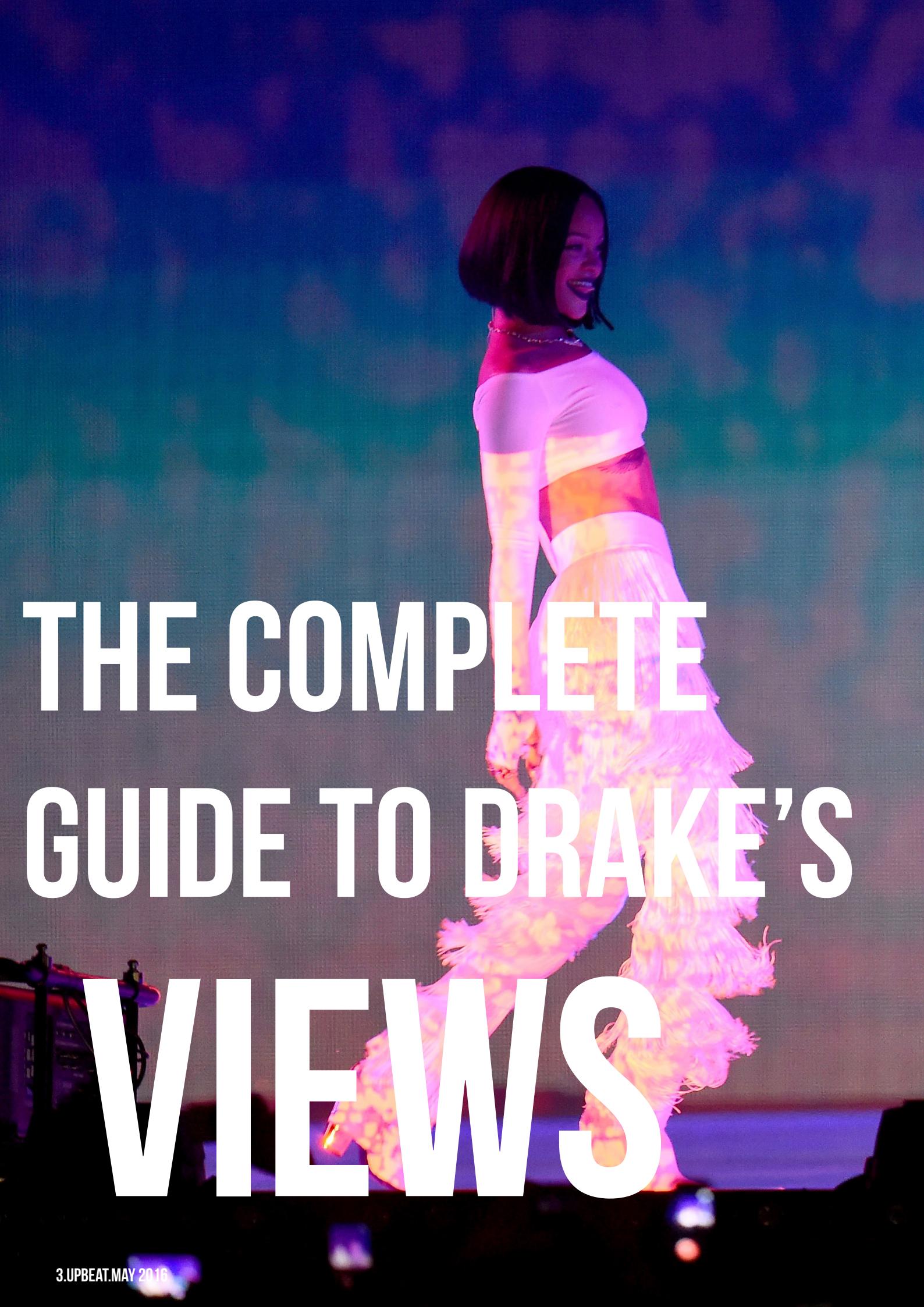
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THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO DRAKE'S VIEWS



THE BUILDUP

July 2014: Ten months after the release of Drake's third album, *Nothing Was the Same*, the title *Views From the 6* is revealed without any additional information. Speculation has "the 6" representing Toronto, Drake's hometown.

February 2015: In the wee hours of Feb. 13, Drake surprise-drops the 17-track mixtape-as-commercial-album *If You're Reading This It's Too Late*. It's the six-year anniversary of his breakout mixtape, *So Far Gone*, and the nine-year anniversary of his debut tape, *Room for Improvement*.

April 2015: The same month Drake headlines Coachella, an all-access profile on the site Four Pins sees writer Ernest Baker asking The Boy if he thinks his fourth album needs to advance the hip-hop game as hard as Kanye West's *808s & Heartbreak* did in '08; Drake concedes that it's a yes.

"He only has two songs finished that he likes. One is a collaboration with Beyoncé that he recorded a while ago. The other is a song that he expects to inspire a paradigm shift. His days of releasing lay-up bangers that everyone loves right away are over. For now."

May 2015: An unfinished version of the Beyoncé collab, "Can I," leaks. (It will reappear—and re-disappear—in October.) So do two other context-less songs, "Go Out Tonight" and the Tinashe-featuring "On a Wave." (Listen to each

in the MUSIC section below.)

July 2015: Responding to ghostwriting allegations, Drake releases two Meek Mill diss tracks, "Charged Up" and "Back to Back." In the same breath, he drops "Hotline Bling" and "Right Hand." (Listen to them all in the MUSIC section below.)

September 2015: Drake and Future—tied for the Biggest Rapper of 2015 spot with Drizzy and Kendrick—surprise-release an 11-song collaborative mixtape, *What a Time to Be Alive*. It features "Jumpman" and a solo closer from Aub, "30 for 30 Freestyle."

A Fader cover story has lots to offer about *Views*, which Drake reps say is due "imminently" and which the author says has absorbed the rapper's attention for "most of the year." "If I want to make the album I want to make, I have to go find [longtime in-house producer Noah '40' Shebib]," Drake says. "I have to go sit with him, and we have to really put in effort." He says they're working together more closely than they have since November 2011's masterful *Take Care*.

OCTOBER 2015: AFTER ITS DANCE-Y VIDEO DROPS, “HOTLINE BLING” HITS NO. 2 ON THE BILLBOARD HOT 100, TYING DRAKE’S PREVIOUS RECORD, SET BY “BEST I EVER HAD” IN 2009. AS IT LOOKS LOCKED IN TO HIT NO. 1 (ADELE WILL END UP THROWING UP A ROADBLOCK WITH “HELLO”), DRAKE WRITES ON INSTAGRAM:

“I SPEND MY LIFE TRYING TO MAKE WAVES FOR THE CITY I AM FROM. NO ACCOLADES REALLY MATTER TO ME OTHER THAN THE FACT THAT I HAVE

NEVER HAD A BILLBOARD NUMBER ONE. IF DURING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER IT WILL BE CAREER TO DATE (IN MY MIND) AND IF YOU ARE PARTICULAR EVENING I WILL BE PASSED OUT CONNECTS TO OUR POOL. I LOVE YOU AND THE RIES. I ALWAYS LOVE THE MOMENT RIGHT BEFORE WHEN IT ACTUALLY HAPPENS. SO THANK YOU.”

**YOU KNOW LIFE IS WHAT WE MAKE
IT, AND A CHANCE IS LIKE A
TURE, IT'D BE NICE IF YOU**

-UN-UNTHINKABLE

I GET MY FIRST NUMBER ONE
THE BIGGEST MOMENT OF MY
ARE LOOKING FOR ME ON THAT
UT IN THE WATER SLIDE THAT
HANK YOU FOR THESE MEMO-
EFORE IT HAPPENS MORE THAN
U...EVEN IF IT DOESN'T."

MAKE A PIC- JUST KABLE BY DRAKE



March 15: Drake shares an Instagram photo of his minimalist Toronto billboard—VIEWS in big black font on a white background—and captioned it “APRIL.”

So yeah, Views from the 6 is less than six weeks away—and possibly as close as two weeks. Reminders; Drake’s got ‘em if you need ‘em.

March 19: In a 6ix-song surprise set at SXSW, Drizzy performs “Summer Sixteen,” indicating he’s still into the single, despite it having fizzled out quickly after its Jan. 20 release, and that it may appear on Views.

March 21: Drizzy appears on PartyNextDoor’s new single “Come and See Me,” produced by 40.

March 30: Two new Drake tracks leak. “Controlla” features popular Jamaican artist Popcaan, while “These Days”—which reworks Nico’s song of the same name—is quickly revealed to be a Babeo Baggins tune with some heavy lifting from Drizzy.

April 5: Two new official songs drop, with Drake captioning the tweets #VIEWS. “Pop Style” features both Jay Z and Kanye West—billed as The Throne for the first time in a significant period of time—and “One Dance” has Wizkid and Kyla. They premiere on Apple Music and iTunes; “Pop Style” hits Tidal shortly after.

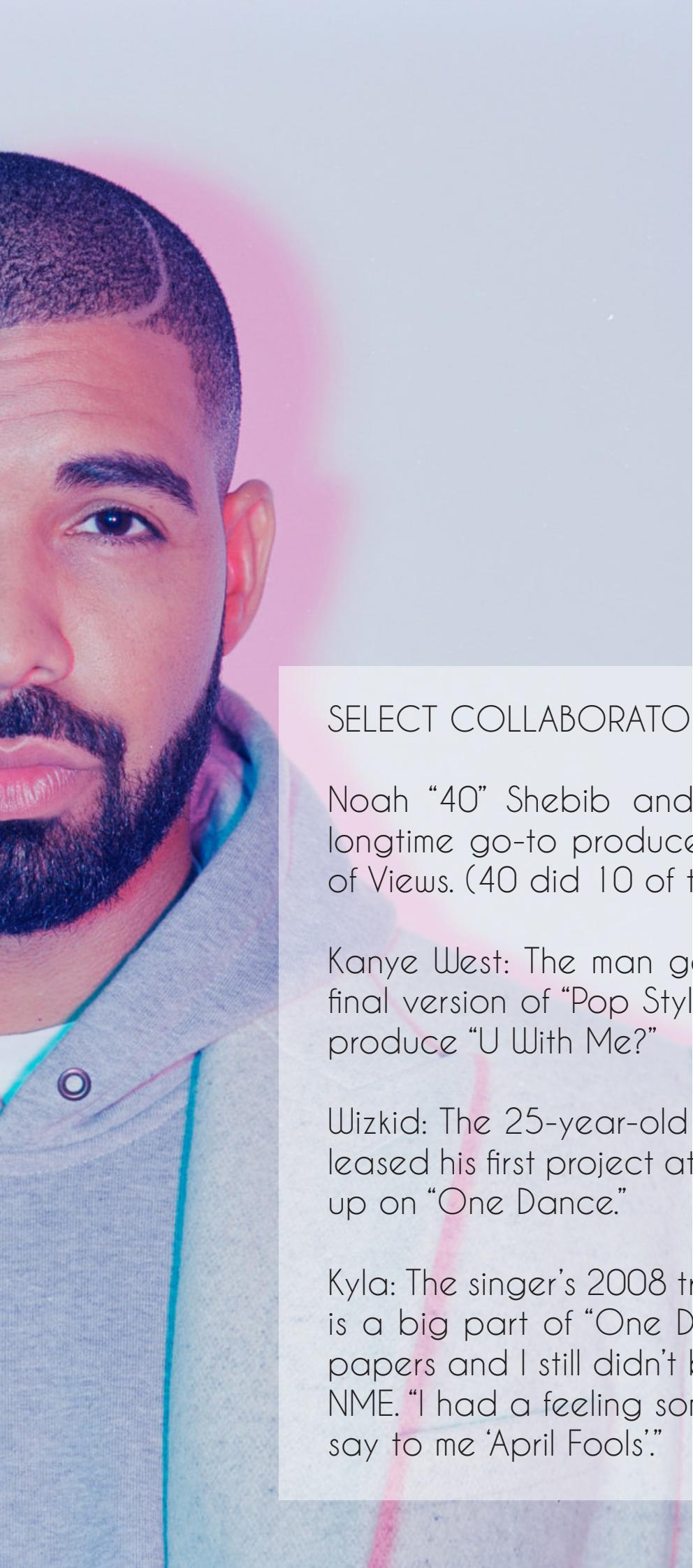
April 9: Drake announces an April 29 release date with the following poetic video:

Retweets 198,311 198,311 likes

It’s the perfect combo of the Take Care art and the Nothing Was the Same art, right? Photography credit goes to Caitlin Cronenberg, while art direction was provided by Nicky Orenstein (per Billboard).

April 27: Drake shares the tracklist; scroll down for that. “Hotline Bling” made the cut, as did “One Dance” and the Jay Z/Kanye West-featuring “Pop Style.” It looks like it might just be called Views now.

April 28: Drake posts one last teaser before the night’s Views premiere on Apple Music/Beats 1’s OVO Sound Radio (and yes, it’s really just called Views now; RIP Views from the 6). ■



SELECT COLLABORATORS

Noah “40” Shebib and Boi-1da: Drake’s longtime go-to producers handled a ton of Views. (40 did 10 of the 20 tracks.)

Kanye West: The man got pulled from the final version of “Pop Style,” but he did co-produce “U With Me?”

Wizkid: The 25-year-old Nigerian artist released his first project at age 11. He shows up on “One Dance.”

Kyla: The singer’s 2008 track “Do You Mind” is a big part of “One Dance.” “We signed papers and I still didn’t believe it,” she told NME. “I had a feeling someone was gonna say to me ‘April Fools.’”

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STORES
NOW

PARENTAL
ADVISORY
EXPLICIT CONTENT

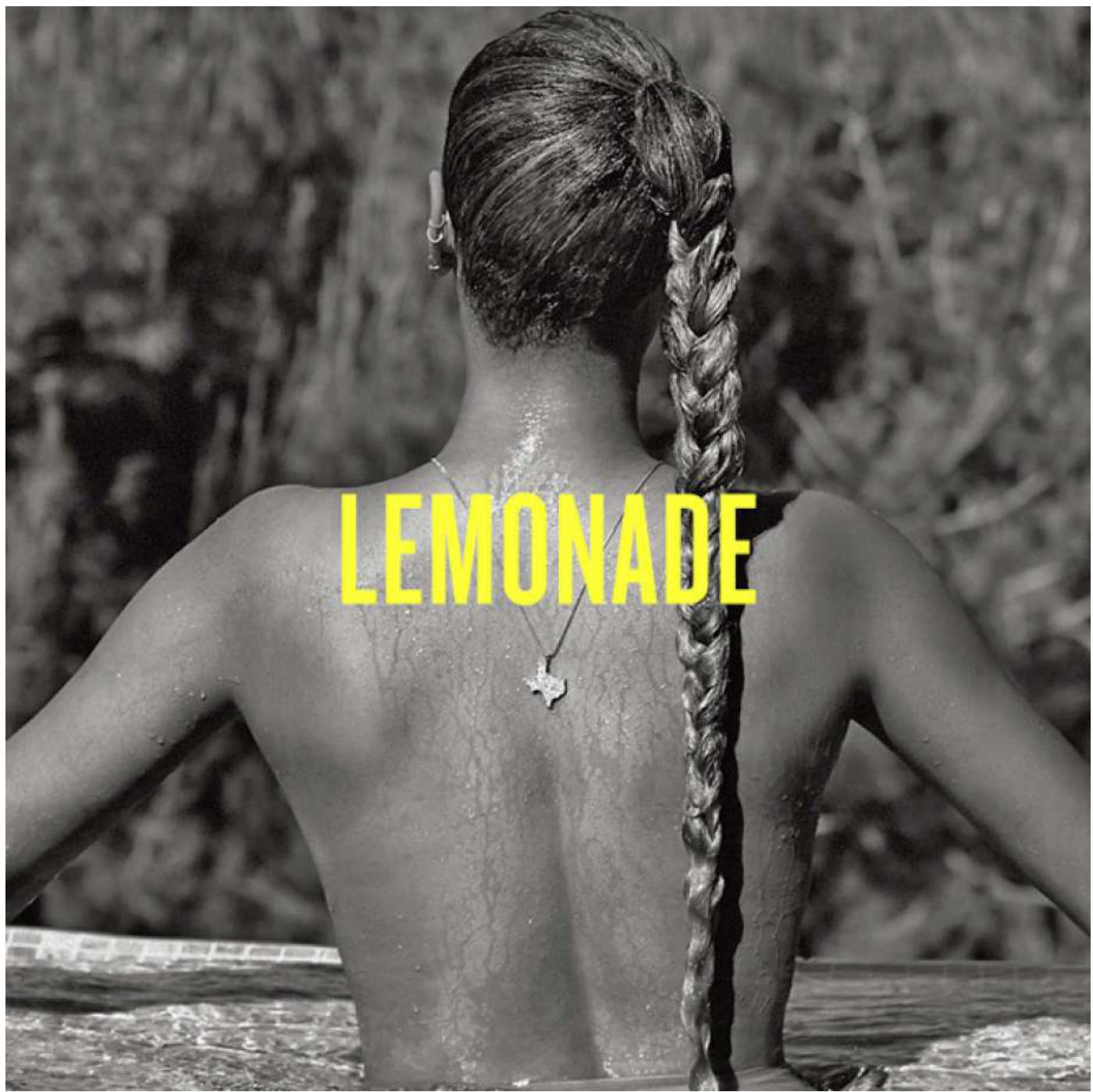
MA

FEATURING
DEVON BALDWIN
PRODUCED BY G-EAZY

D



BEYONCÉ'S LEMONADE IS CAPITALIST MONEY-MAKING AT ITS BEST



Fresh lemonade is my drink of choice. In my small Kentucky town, beautiful black, brown and white girls set up their lemonade stands and practice the art of money-making – it's business. As a grown black woman who believes in the manifesto "Girl, get your money straight" my first response to Beyoncé's visual album, Lemonade, was WOW – this is the business of capitalist money-making at its best.

Viewers who like to suggest Lemonade was created solely or primarily for black female audiences are missing the point. Commodities, irrespective of their subject matter, are made, produced and marketed to entice any and all consumers. Beyoncé's audience is the world, and that world of business and money-making has no color.

'Beyoncé is not a woman to be messed with'
- Lemonade review

Beyoncé's imperious sixth album sees her turn her attention to her marriage, with witheringly powerful results

[Read more](#)

What makes this production – this commodity – daring is its subject matter. Obviously Lemonade positively exploits images of black female bodies – placing them at the center, making them the norm. In this visual narrative, there are diverse representations (black female bodies come in all sizes, shapes and textures with all manner of big hair). Portraits of ordinary everyday black women are spotlighted, poised as though they are royalty. The unnamed, unidentified mothers of murdered young black men and boys are each given pride of place.

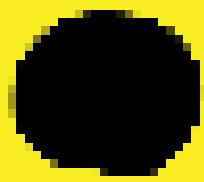
Real-life images of ordinary, overweight, not-dressed-up bodies are placed within a visual backdrop that includes stylized, choreographed, fashion-plate fantasy representations. Despite all the glamorous showcasing of deep south antebellum fashion, when the show begins Beyoncé as a star appears in sporty casual clothing, the controversial

hoodie. Concurrently, the scantily clothed dancing image of athlete Serena Williams also evokes sportswear. (Speaking of commodification, in the real-life frame Beyoncé's new line of sportswear, Ivy Park, is in the process of being marketed).

Lemonade offers viewers a visual extravaganza – a display of black female bodies that transgresses all boundaries. It's all about the body, and the body as commodity. This is certainly not radical or revolutionary. From slavery to the present day, black female bodies, clothed and unclothed, have been bought and sold.

What makes this commodification different in Lemonade is intent; its purpose is to seduce, celebrate and delight – to challenge the ongoing present-day devaluation and dehumanization of the black female body. Throughout Lemonade the black female body is utterly aestheticized – its beauty a powerful in your face confrontation. ■







**DIPLO AND SKRILLEX
REVEAL THEIR SURPRISING NEW GROUP: J**

YOU LOVE HOW YOU PUSH ME TO THE
POINT OF CRAZY AND I LOVE
WHEN YOU'RE ON YOUR
KNEES AND BEGGING
FOR ME YOU GOT
ME GOOD WITH ALL
THESE MIND GAMES
THERE YOU GO, YOU
GOT MY HEART AGAIN
SAY MY NAME, I
WANNA HEAR YOU CALL
HOLD ME CLOSE, I WAN-
NA FEEL YOUR HEART I'M IN
A COLD SWEAT AND I WANT YOU BAD

ing
Diplo and
this for a fact,
shows in the venue
can EDM explosion c
Diplo and Skrillex are a
ing hundreds of shows a y
Garden last New Year's Eve
of co-stars and styles. Both ap
earnings estimated north of \$15
the success is no big deal. Show
ting their time and energy into strc
the crew, and generally moving thro
trappings found with some of their fa
Before they came together as the ger
Jack Ü, Wesley Pentz and Sonny Moore
ing deep journeys through diverse music
as and sounds, growing stronger and so
cumulated. Both are prime examples of t
model the music industry has ever seen, b
it from meeting them. Dressed down and
tasking music machines who oversee smo
as producers, DJs, songwriters, artists and
is the point man for Mad Decent; Skrillex
The Jack Ü project represents the future
artistic evolution—the album is diverse
collabs with Justin Bieber, 2 Chainz a
loud, demanding your attention. But th
too cool to force it on you.

Diplo was born in Florida and grew
DJ in Philadelphia, before exploding
a champion of underground sou
maica. Without a defining hit sin
tify style (to the contrary, by d
styles) Diplo became an ic
startling array of genres o
Beyoncé, Usher, and his
ior Lazer. Along the
(he dated Katy P
social media
and inte
ey

For two superstars orbiting the boom-DJ / producer / dance music universe, Skrillex and Skrillex are surprisingly down-to-earth. I know, because I worked with them through years of live shows at Wynn Las Vegas, at the heart of the great American dream of 2010 to 2014.

A huge attraction at nightclubs and music festivals, drawing in legions of fans year around the globe—the duo headlined Madison Square Garden. They're constantly developing new music with a dazzling array of styles. They've appeared on Forbes' list of The World's Highest-Paid DJs with annual earnings of \$10 million each. But they carry themselves with a low-key vibe, as if all the time after show, week after week, they are approachable and cool—putting on performances, then patiently taking photos with fans, eating with their families, living life with a smile—not the prima donna attitude of some famous EDM counterparts.

genre-defying party monsters called Diplo and Skrillex built followings organically, taking in different music subcultures, absorbing ideas from all over the world, and getting bolder and badder as their output ac- cepts. The most efficient business model in the industry, but you wouldn't know it. They're not prima donnas, they are multi-talented entrepreneurs, building empires, operating record labels, and label owners (Diplo spearheads OWSLA). They're taking the next step of an ongoing musical revolution by design, featuring artists like Skrillex and Bunji Garlin. It's clear that the guys behind it are

on the rise to prominence as a DJ, working as a producer and songwriter, and finding success in Brazil and Japan. Skrillex's single or an easy-to-identify sound, deftly embracing many genres of hipness, working with a variety of artists and stars, including Madonna, and creating his own electro-reggae outfit Major Lazer. In 2014, Diplo became a sex symbol (after hooking up with Katy Perry last year) and a lightning rod for internet chatter, where his offbeat sense of humor and occasionally silly, postliterate text often raises eyebrows. Skrillex has been a lead signer for the band From First to Last. ■





MAD DECENT BLOCK PARTIES TOUR DATES:

7/19

CALGARY, AB @ VENUE TBA

7/20

LAS VEGAS, NV @
ENCORE BEACH CLUB

7/26

TORONTO, ON @ FORT YORK

7/27

PHILADELPHIA, PA @ GREAT PLAZA AT
PENN'S LANDING

8/2

WASHINGTON, DC @
MERRIWEATHER POST PA-
VILION

8/3

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL @ REVOLUTION
OUTDOORS



book
book
book
book

2



LEMONADE



3



6

top ten
this

7



SIA



8

4



5



or albums
month

2. KONNICHWA
SKEPTA
3. LEMONADE
BEYONCE
4. VIEWS
DRAKE
5. TAKE ME TO THE ALLEY
GREGORY PORTER
6. A HEAD FULL OF DREAMS
COLDPLAY
7. PURPOSE
JUSTIN BEIBER
8. THIS IS ACTING
SIA
9. GET WEIRD
LITTLE MIX
10. ANTI
RIHANNA

9



10



1

'25' is only the sixth album released since 2001 to sell 8 million in the U.S.

25 REMAINS THE BIGGEST-SELLING ALBUM RELEASED SINCE ADELE'S OWN **21**, WHICH BOWED IN 2011. THE LATTER HAS SOLD 11.5 MILLION, AND IS THE 10TH LARGEST SELLING ALBUM IN NIELSEN MUSIC HISTORY. **25** WAS RELEASED ON NOV. 20, 2015 THROUGH XL RECORDINGS/COLUMBIA RECORDS. IT IS ADELE'S THIRD STUDIO ALBUM AND HAS SPENT EIGHT NONCONSECUTIVE WEEKS AT NO. 1 ON THE BILLBOARD 200 CHART.







talk that talk

with

About ANTI and Working with DRAKE

IT'S SUPER BOWL SUNDAY, and I am in the large gothic home of Real Housewife Carlton Gebbia in Beverly Hills, the setting for Rihanna's Vogue shoot. The 28-year-old singer appears in the doorway, fresh off a plane from Toronto, where the night before she and Drake wrapped the video for their hit single "Work." She is wearing a vintage Guess leather biker jacket, a gray Star Wars T-shirt, and green Vetements sweatpants, her sleek black hair chopped into a blunt nineties bob. Even such a Netflix-and-chill look cannot conceal the singular proportions of her body. She hugs me hello and then floats upstairs, where hair and makeup stylists await.

I settle into a chair outside and pass the time by—what else?—checking my phone. Thanks to the demands of the 24-hour news cycle, every Instagram post by a pop star has become a source of intrigue, every teased video clip fodder for frenzied speculation. On this particular afternoon, the RiRi chatter, robust on any day, is reaching peak hysteria. Ten days earlier, Rihanna dropped *Anti*, her first album since 2012. For seven years, she had released a new pop confection every year, like clockwork. Then, suddenly, nothing. It wasn't just the timing.

Anti immediately announced itself as something different. A defiant, idiosyncratic mix of dance hall, doo-wop, and soul, it did not deliver her usual instantly gratifying, reliable pop formula. Stoking the fire were rumors that *Anti* was leaked through Tidal, the streaming service run by Jay Z and co-owned by Rihanna. Next were the reports of impossibly low sales figures. Then, the day before, out of nowhere, came the surprise release of Beyoncé's pointedly political video for "Formation." The Internet is ablaze:

Did Bey just try to steal RiRi's thunder? And, most breathlessly: Is Rihanna going to make a surprise appearance at the Super Bowl?!

Rihanna, meanwhile, is reclining on a chaise on a veranda in the sun, taking pulls from a joint and sending wisps of smoke into the cloudless California sky.

She's listening to a remix of Sia's "Chandelier," occasionally belting out a lyric in that inimitable Bajan tone: "I'm gonna live like tomorrow doesn't exist! Like it doesn't exist!"

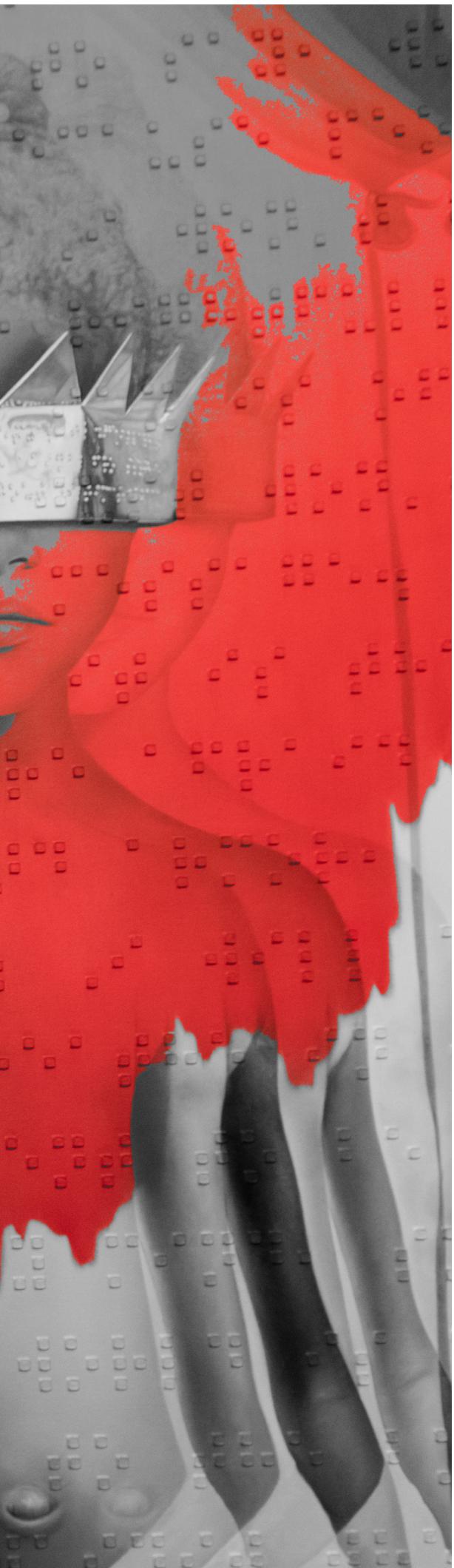
Rihanna



when i do get time
to myself,
i watch tv.

The beat's everything
is demanding it grabs
your attention right
away.





WE ARE LIVING in a golden age of pop divas. Beyoncé, Taylor Swift, Adele: Rarely have the top ranks been so ruled by women. We feel vulnerable with Adele, empowered by Taylor. We want to watch Beyoncé. Watch her dance, watch her dominate the marketplace, watch her slay. In this gloriously crowded arena, Rihanna transmits something unique. Not afraid to show us her flaws, Rihanna inspires us to, as her friend Cara Delevingne puts it, "go with your instinct and go with your gut, and if people don't like you, fuck 'em."

This take-it-or-leave-it realness is what draws young women into the ranks of Rihanna's fiercely loyal fan base, known as her Navy, after a lyric from her song "G4L." And in 2016, the Navy is going to get a lot of Rihanna.

Over the next few weeks alone, her plan is to fly to New York to debut a collection she designed for Puma at New York Fashion Week; return to L.A. for the Grammys; then head to London to perform at the Brit Awards (she will grind with Drake in white-hot fringed pants); and, two days after that, go back to California to begin a 63-city world tour. Her looks on tour are "inspired by neutral earth tones," she says, "and evolve from one extreme to the other as the show progresses." Joining her will be Big Sean and the Weeknd in Europe, as well as Travis Scott, whom she's been seen out with in the last few months. "I like to bring people who can get the crowd excited," she says.

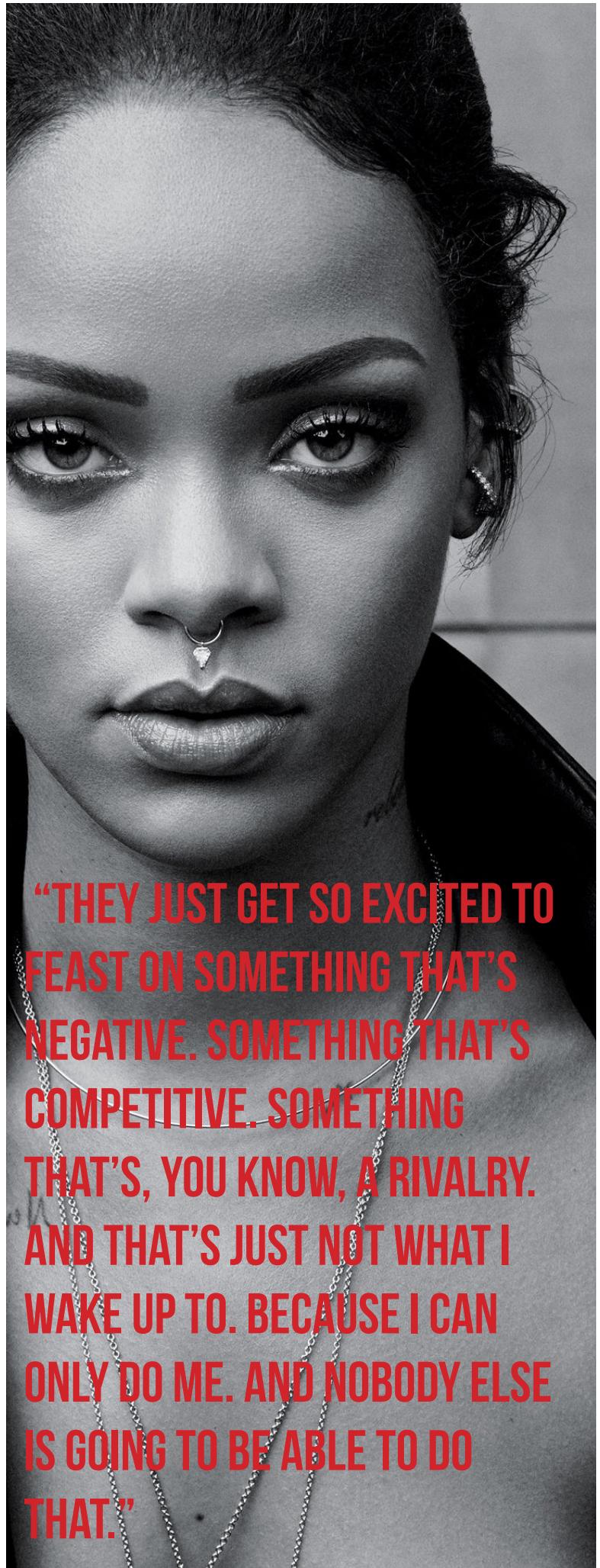
"I probably am going to have like four days of tour rehearsal in total, which is Freaking. Me. Out," Rihanna says. It's after 9:00 p.m., the shoot is over, and we're sitting cross-legged in red leather recliners in the home theater of the Beverly Hills house, sipping Pinot Grigio from Dixie cups. "My schedule is so crazy right now." It's why, she says, she's single: "It's definitely going to be a challenge when I do decide to pursue a relationship ... but I have hope!" Exercise is also hard to find time for. "I don't work out as much as I'd like to," she says, "but my trainer Jamie is a beast and she makes me pay for it."

After her last tour, in 2013, for *Unapologetic*, Rihanna vowed to take a break from recording. "I wanted to have a year to just do whatever I want artistically, creatively," she says. "I lasted a week." The paparazzi got a picture of her going into the studio, "and my fans were like, 'Oh, yes! We's droppin' a single.' " From that moment, she says, the Navy was expecting an album. It would be another two years.

Turns out it takes a while to reinvent your sound. As Delevingne says, "Anti's got its own genre, and that genre is her." Had Rihanna gotten bored with the pop formula? "Very much," the singer says. "I just gravitated toward the songs that were honest to where I'm at right now." From the first song, "Consideration," a trip-hop collaboration with SZA, the message is clear. The chorus has Rihanna singing, "I got to do things my own way, darling." It's "like a PSA," she tells me. She recognizes the risks: "It might not be some automatic record that will be Top 40. But I felt like I earned the right to do that now." Avoiding the bravado and easy hooks of past hits, another song, "Higher," reveals a woman who's been burned by love. Rihanna compares it to "a drunk voice mail." She explains, "You know he's wrong, and then you get drunk and you're like, 'I could forgive him. I could call him. I could make up with him.' Just, desperate." The candor is heightened by a husky, soul-inflected warmth. "We just said, 'You know what? Let's just drink some whiskey and record this song.'"

Over the past two years, Rihanna has definitely been all about her business. After fulfilling her contract with Def Jam, she created her own imprint, Westbury Road Entertainment, on Universal's Roc Nation label. In a bold move, she then acquired the masters of all her previous albums and made a reported \$25 million promotional deal with Samsung.

Robyn In the midst of all this, she somehow found time to take a role in *Valérian* and the City of a Thousand Planets, a film based on a French comic series. Directed by Luc Besson, it costars Dane DeHaan and Delevingne and is due out in 2017. Speaking by phone, Besson is reluctant to give too much away about her character, except to say that her personality changes "every fifteen seconds." "As you can imagine, because she's number one in her business, she has a protection, like a crocodile," the director says of Rihanna. "But she really let herself go. I was so touched by her." ■



"THEY JUST GET SO EXCITED TO FEAST ON SOMETHING THAT'S NEGATIVE. SOMETHING THAT'S COMPETITIVE. SOMETHING THAT'S, YOU KNOW, A RIVALRY. AND THAT'S JUST NOT WHAT I WAKE UP TO. BECAUSE I CAN ONLY DO ME. AND NOBODY ELSE IS GOING TO BE ABLE TO DO THAT."



beats™ by dr. dre™



"PEOPLE AREN'T HEARING ALL THE MUSIC."



FENTY



by Rihanna



UPBEAT