

WINTER EDITION

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VOL. 2



IMPACT
PASSION

New Single
"SAY IT"

tolivia

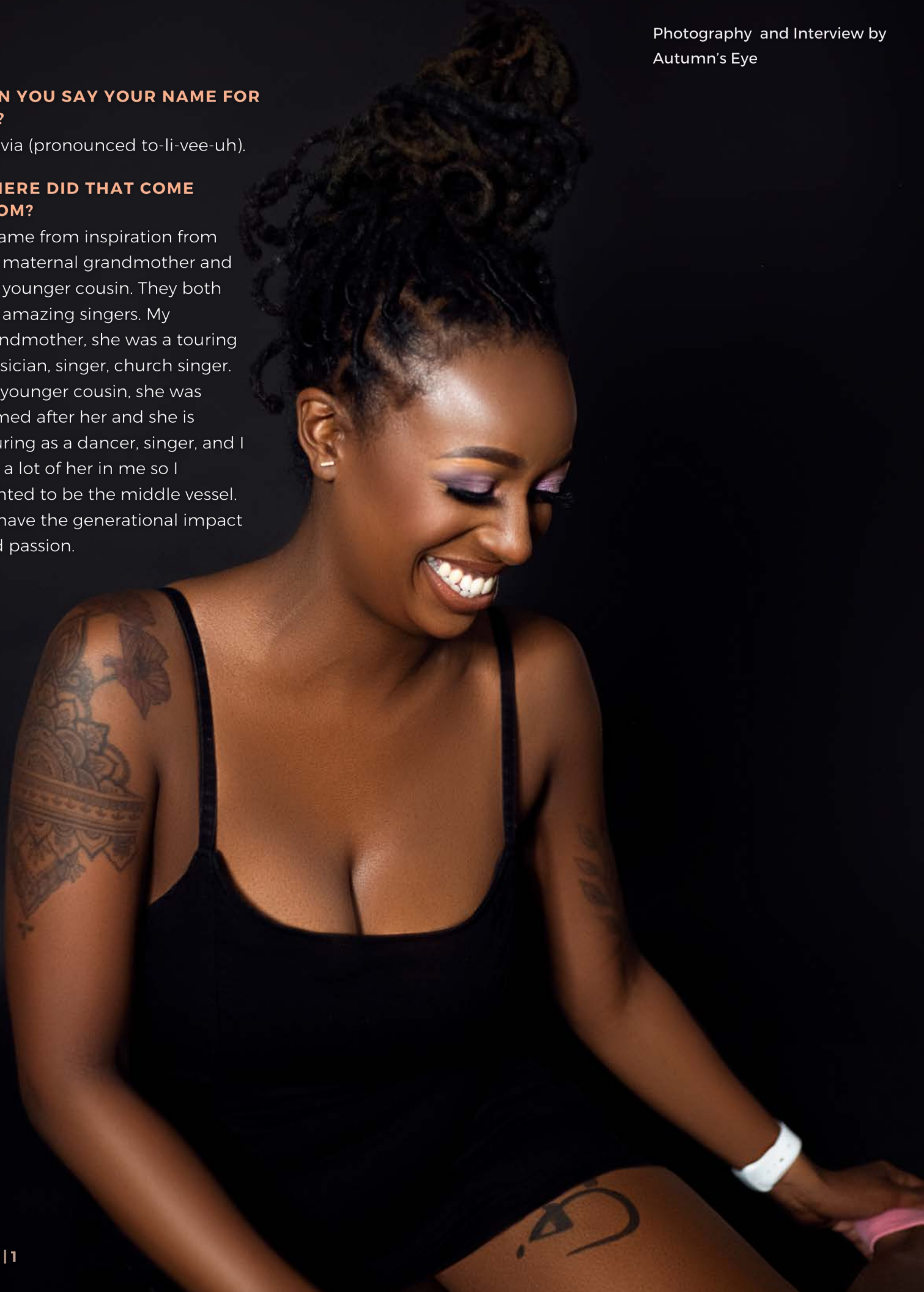


A: CAN YOU SAY YOUR NAME FOR US?

T: Tolivia (pronounced to-li-vee-uh).

A: WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?

T: It came from inspiration from my maternal grandmother and my younger cousin. They both are amazing singers. My grandmother, she was a touring musician, singer, church singer. My younger cousin, she was named after her and she is flourishing as a dancer, singer, and I see a lot of her in me so I wanted to be the middle vessel. To have the generational impact and passion.





A: AT WHAT POINT DID YOU DECIDE TO CHANGE YOUR NAME BECAUSE CHANGING YOUR NAME IS LIKE CHANGING THE TRAJECTORY IN YOUR CAREER.

T: Yeah, I agree. That's a great question. I thought about it when I wanted to infuse my name with it. I wanted to keep some aspect [of my birth name] because it's beautiful and unique and I knew I wanted to add a corporation of it with theirs (her grandmother and cousin). What inspired me was going back to actually looking at home videos of my grandmother singing and getting to know really her journey with singing. Getting to know her journey with being a touring church singer from back in the 30s. Then seeing my cousin flourish; I thought that would be a really good spin to keep her inspired because it can be hard in the arts to still feel like this was a good career choice.

A: SO DOES YOUR MUSIC AT THIS POINT REPRESENT THE NAME?

T: I think it does...

AUTUMN AND TOLIVIA LAUGHING

T: I think it does in different ways. As a singer as far as the meaning of Tolivia is generational impact and passion. I think my music resembles that a lot in different aspects of empowering women and dealing with different types of situations as far as relationship handling, building, communicating in effective ways. Being able to have all of those impacts and communicate them well. I think my music resembles that

A: WHERE DOES YOUR STYLE COME FROM AND WHAT IS YOUR STYLE?

T: How would I label it? I would say my style is infused with jazz, R&B, neo-soul, with a little cherry on top with classical. I believe that that comes from my overall experience around music. I was first raised in [listening to] Bob Marley and R&B straight. Growing up with just that and then going into choir or classical music when I joined the choir in secondary school—that really expanded my mind on music in general. So being able to tap into the jazz aspect, that was inspired by Anita Baker. She is one of my biggest inspirations vocally. I resonate with her vocal range. So yeah, those are the labels I would give my music.





A: YOUR WRITING AND YOUR CONCEPTS, WHAT DOES THAT JOURNEY LOOK LIKE FOR YOU?

T: Oh, that journey is (laughs), it's full of my own life experiences. It's not just in the theme of what a jazz song would be about. Traditionally it would be about the sky or traveling with your loved one in those ways. My inspiration song-writing wise comes from my own experiences of struggling to communicate well or communicating well and still not being effective. Even witnessing other people's life experiences too.

A: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SONG TO DATE THAT YOU'VE WRITTEN?

T: Mmmm...that song to myself.

A: WHERE WERE YOU?

T: I was in Cleveland, in school. I was in my dorm room and Cleveland was known to be a very gloomy city. There was, it felt gloomy outside and no blue skies anywhere and so I just needed a pick-me-up song. I didn't have one. I wrote one for myself.

A: THAT'S SO SWEET

T: It's truly still close to my heart because I remember the state where I just was like I want to be home where I can see the sun or just place my spiritual self there and I'm like let me just go in. The cool thing I love about my songwriting is that I can not only just write from a place I have experience but a space where someone else has the experience and I want to be in. It's the manifestation of it all.

A: DO YOU CREATE YOUR OWN GENRE OR DO YOU FALL IN LINE WITH MAINSTREAM?

T: I believe that I create my own sound that will fall into the R&B soul or it'll fall into alternative. Alternative music is a wide spectrum that a lot of people can't put a finger on because of the different elements they bring to one song or project. I think that's where I will lay. I'm not subscribing to any of them but I'm open to what it could be. But labeling myself, I'm a musician.

A: WHEN YOU SAY "I'M A MUSICIAN" SOME PEOPLE SAY ALL SINGERS ARE MUSICIANS.

T: Well, in high school I was trained with well-known, classically trained opera singers. Like worldly-known, as a teenager. I was trained to sing and play the piano as if I were my own accompanist at [the age of] 15.

A: IN YOUR MUSICAL JOURNEY, TELL ME ABOUT THOSE MOMENTS WHEN YOU DOUBTED YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS [TO MUSIC].

T: Hmm..good questions. Those moments were (pause) scary. They were rough, defining. I tried so many different ways to explore different professions as far as office administration, corporate, and even sales. But the dreams I kept having, the vision boards I created, some things I manifested-they all aligned with music. I knew I couldn't second guess it anymore.

