

FIVE ARTISTS | FIFTH ISSUE | THE RETURN TO THE 805

UNDRGRND

CENTRAL COAST



BIG RAY

SANTA MARIA

KACEY FAMILY

GROVER BEACH

MARIE FLOWS

SANTA MARIA

FG THRILLA

LOMPOC

ENDLESS

MORRO BAY



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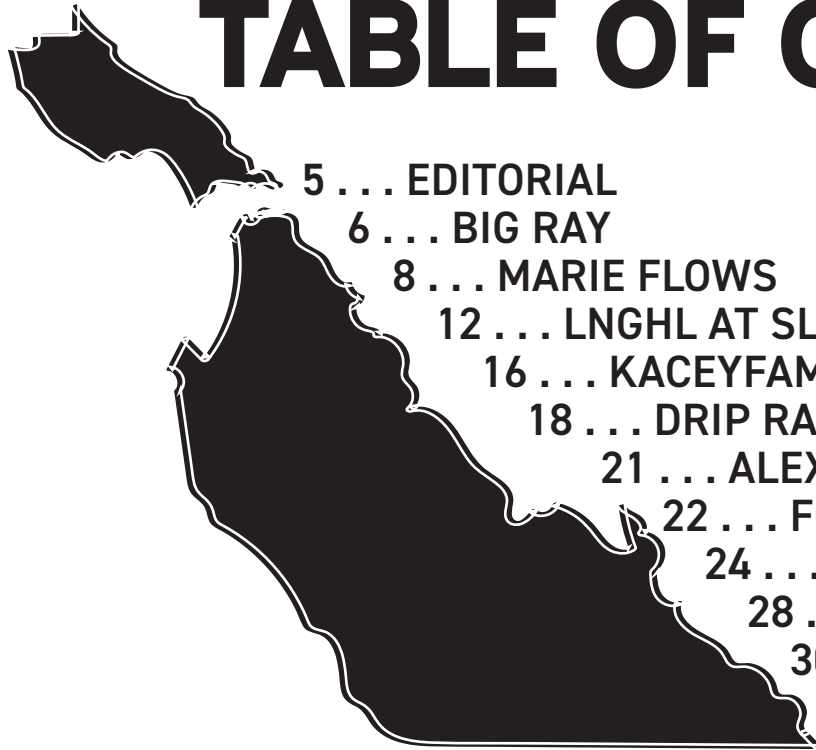
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2021 | UNDRGRND 3



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Big Ray

GOV'T NAME: Raymond Mendibles
STAGE NAME: Big Ray a.k.a. Big Ray The Don
HOMETOWN: Santa Maria, Calif.
BIRTHDAY: April 22, 1998
HEIGHT: 5-foot-9-inches
HIGH SCHOOL: Righetti
MAKING MUSIC: 6 years
FAVORITE MOVIE: "Gran Torino"
FAVORITE TV SHOW: "Snowfall"
DREAM FEATURE: Lil Wayne
FAVORITE 805 PROD/ENG: FYAMOJI
OTHER OCCUPATION: The Home Depot ("I'm the plant man")
BEST CENTRAL COAST FOOD: High Street Deli (San Luis Obispo)

"I'm trying to put everybody in a good position where they're fit for life. And to me *that's a Don.*"



REPPIN' BLUESWRLD

"Our friend passed a few years ago, and I always called him 'Big Blue.' My other friend [Thomas] came up with this brand, just to keep his name alive. And man, I shit you not, his name's alive. Look at me now, wearing *Blueswrld* right here. Long live Chris, baby. That's all I wear."

STAYING POSITIVE

"Being happy is a big thing for me even when I'm down. Like, I can't just show my bad emotions because I'm having a bad day. If you're on a good vibe, fuck it, I'm on a good vibe too. That's how it works for me—I'm different."

ADDING "THE DON"

"It was just Big Ray, you know what I mean? And I would just mess around and be like, 'I'm Big Ray a.k.a. Big Ray The Don.' And that kind of stuck with me. I was like, 'Wait, that kind of goes hard.'"

BEEFING WITH FYAMOJI IN HIGH SCHOOL

"Me and this mothafucka Sean [FYAMOJI] had a class together. Miss Reed's class—English. And he hated me. I was young, I was stupid, obnoxious. I was a freshman, he was a junior. He's already like up there, all mature. [Zeke Biggs and I] went to Sean's house to record music and from then on we've squashed the beef, obviously. He's one of my closest buddies now, bro, and he's my only producer."

"EVERYTHING ADDS UP"

"The beat, the cover art, studio time, production. The whole thing, everything adds up. But it's worth it, it's gonna be worth it and believe that. It's a risk I'm willing to take."

YOUR MUSIC STRATEGY

"I'm always planning. My marketing on my Instagram could be a lot better. I have this little pamphlet of what I want to do with music, and I'll tell you right now, what I want to be in the next year is genuinely trying to make money off music. I'm not really making money off this shit right now but that's what I'm willing to take. I love this shit, I literally love it. I'm just trying to get my name out there, dude, make sure everybody knows who I am."

IDEAL COLLAB PARTNER

"Creativity is everything. Imagination is everything, and creativity and imagination go hand in hand. Anybody creative and that I know will make my stuff pop and further me, let's work."

LOYALTY

"I've always liked 'The Godfather,' 'Scarface.' Not because the drug aspect and what they're doing all bad and shit. No, it's the love part and the loyalty they have for each other. And that's what I want to do with my team. I'm trying to bring my team up, and I'm trying to put everybody in a good position where they're fit for life. And to me *that's* a Don."



MARIE



FLOWS



GOV'T NAME: Marie Dumadara
STAGE NAME: Marie Flows
HOMETOWN: Born in Manila, Philippines / Raised in Santa Maria, Calif.
BIRTHDAY: Feb. 23, 1998 ("real b-day"), May 23, 1998 ("legal b-day")
HEIGHT: 5-foot-5-inches
HIGH SCHOOL: Pioneer Valley
COLLEGE: Allan Hancock
MAKING MUSIC: 3 years ("but I've been singing since I was five")
FAVORITE MOVIE: "The Pursuit of Happyness"
FAVORITE TV SHOW: "That's So Raven"
DREAM FEATURE: Justin Bieber
FAVORITE 805 TRACK: "Beautiful" by KaceyFamily or "Holy Water Drip" by \$horty DuWop (feat. Lorde Sanctus)
BEST CENTRAL COAST FOOD: Mikado Sushi (Santa Maria)

"PISCES ARE KNOWN TO BE VERY ARTISTIC AND VERY EMOTIONALLY SENSITIVE. AND THAT'S ME."

MIXING FILIPINO & 805 CULTURES:

"My first language is the Filipino language, which is Tagalog. And then I learned English when I came here. I want to connect my Filipino culture and the culture on the Coast together. When it comes to music, I want to incorporate the language, so I can just merge the cultures together."

HAVING TWO BIRTHDAYS:

"The day I actually popped out was Feb. 23, 1998. Both my parents had to sign my birth certificate for my birthday to be official, but my father wasn't there. In May of that year, my aunt from my mom's side finally signed the certificate [in my father's place]. So any time I sign a document I have to put the fake birthday of May 23rd."

MUSICAL INSPIRATIONS:

"My parents introduced me to Michael Jackson, Chicago, La Bouche. I feel a lot of that has influenced my music, and who I am. And at the same time I'm very into pop artists like Chris Brown, Justin Bieber, Rihanna."

INTRODUCTION TO HIP-HOP:

"I was in elementary school—I think it was first grade. The first hip-hop song I heard was "Smack That" by Akon, or like, "Apple Bottom Jeans," you know, by T-Pain and Flo Rida. Classic. The kids would just get down to those songs, and I thought it sounded really cool. That was the time when hip-hop basically entered my life."

RAP CULTURE IN THE PHILIPPINES:

"A lot of people even breakdance and there's a lot of people that do cyphers now. And you know, all those rap battles? It's a big thing over there. I've actually been dreaming of going back there."

WHY DON'T YOU HAVE MORE MUSIC OUT?:

"I'm still working on my first few songs. I struggle with self-doubt, or self-belief. There was just like a whole period where I just didn't really believe in myself. I was stuck for some reason, and I just couldn't really put my finger on it. But thankfully, thank God, I've passed that period. And I can honestly look at myself and be happy at who I am."

STRATEGY FOR UNDRGRND PERFORMANCE:

"Give it all I got. I might be nervous, you know, that I'm gonna like trip or something, but I just gotta get in the zone and relax. Sometimes I just overthink."

BEING A PISCES:

"I feel like I'm an all-around Pisces. I just have really good Pisces energy, I guess you could say. Pisces are known to just be like, in their own world, which I am. And I gravitate a lot towards the water. I'm very artistic—Pisces are known to be very artistic and very emotionally sensitive. And that's me."

BOXING & PAINTING:

"Growing up we would watch Manny Pacquiao fights, and I would always be so hyped for it. In the back of my head I always wanted to try boxing, and I've been training at John Leo Dato's gym since August of last year. Now I want to fight, I really do. Boxing and painting are both great outlets to let out the dust of everyday life."



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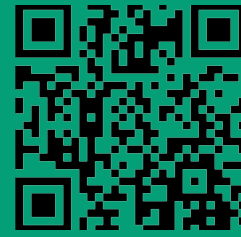
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THE COAST RETURNS WITH LNGHL

I first met Longhaul Music Group's James Kaye in early August 2021. It was the release event for Compton's Chris O'Bannon's new summer project, *O'Bannon*, and I had just pulled up to RunnerzLA where the event was being held. You can recognize Kaye right away—he's white with curly blonde hair, and told me he sometimes gets called "Lil Dicky" or "Rick from 'The Walking Dead.'" He stands out and certainly has both the confidence and the musical talent to back it up.

Kaye was born in Santa Barbara, raised in Ojai, and moved to San Luis Obispo as an early teenager. Now, he sits at the top of Longhaul (LNGHL), a music label and production group originally created in the Central Coast in 2011 by Kaye and co-founder/artist, Wynn. LNGHL is currently the home to Kaye and Wynn, as well as producer Sean Ross and rapper Kody Balboa. The team is now based in the Los Angeles area, and has its very own studio located in North Hollywood.

Although they have moved out of the Central Coast, the LNGHL members are undeniably helping connect 805 artists to the mainstream game. Not only are they making connections and getting the 805's foot in the door, but they continue to elevate local artists coming out of their hometowns.

Welcome to "THE COAST RETURNS," presented by LNGHL. The showcase was first planned for March 13, 2020, but was postponed to Oct. 1, 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The event had an unusual amount of anticipation around it—BOBBYBEENFRESH had been telling me about this concert since I first met him in Sept. 2020—so I made the drive up to SLO Brew Rock in San Luis Obispo to see for myself what all the LNGHL hype was about.

The lineup was absolutely stacked with Northern 805 underground talent: Connect the Coast, FG Thrilla, KaceyFamily, BOBBYBEENFRESH, Cam Jones, Howflyy, and more. It was honestly the best 805 local rap show I have ever been to, including the *UNDRGRND* shows we have thrown. The 400-plus crowd was fully invested in the artists' sets, and the entire night put a unique spotlight on 805 culture that hinted at the potential the Central Coast hip-hop scene truly has.

Here's what some familiar faces had to say about the night. A special thank you to Erick Beltran (@erickb.photography) for providing these great photos of all the action.

"I know James Kaye from Ojai, long before any of us were making music," said **Risko**, the lead vocalist and frontman for popular Central Coast hip-hop/funk band, Wordsauce. "We stay in frequent contact, so he put me on the bill."



"I've been rocking with LNGHL since 2015, and I used to open up shows for them back then," said Santa Maria's **BOBBYBEENFRESH** (Issue 2). "They're family to me."



"The day of the show, James Kaye reached out to me," said Grover Beach rapper **KaceyFamily** (Issue 5). "He said, 'Hey, you wanna perform? Get it ready then.' It was an amazing show, people showed out and were rocking with us."

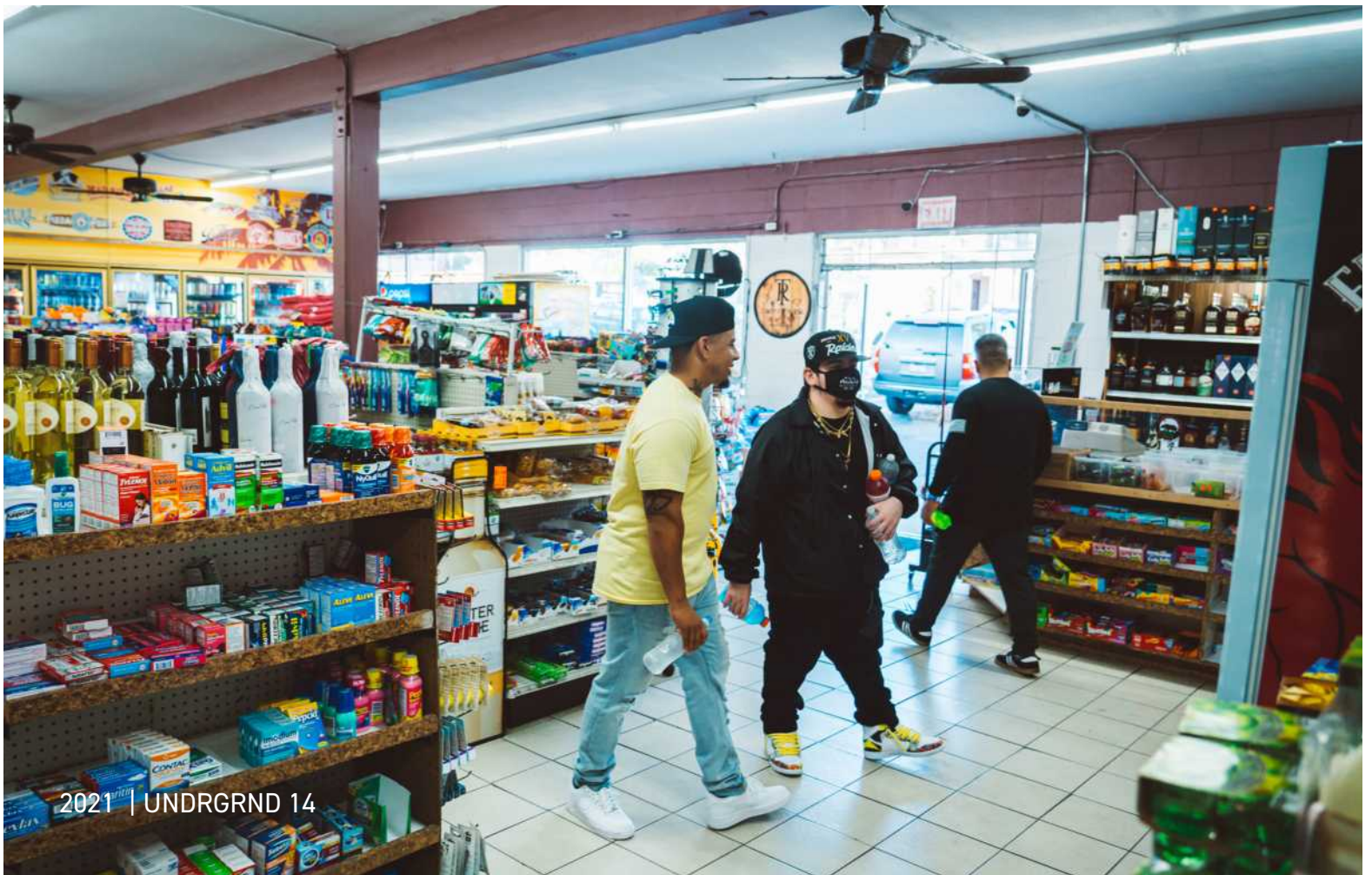


"We had performed at SLO Brew before, but it changed ownership and the new people didn't really know about us," said **James Kaye**. "We got booked for an after party at the Downtown SLO location, and met the new people from that. So then we worked on this show to do for ourselves. It was our first show back since COVID."

"It was dope stepping up on that stage," said **Wynn**, noting SLO Brew's 500-person capacity concert hall. "I love that venue. Standing up and seeing that shit packed to the back."

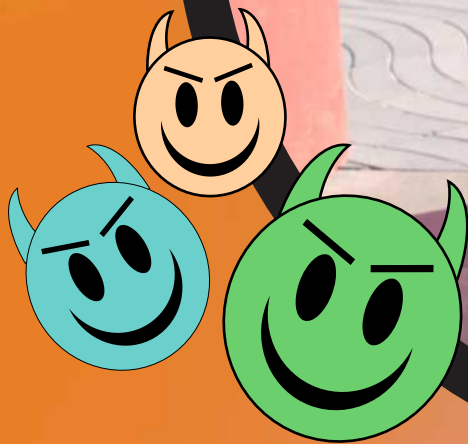


"FG Thrilla and KaceyFamily killed it. Pretty flawless performances by both of them," said Morro Bay artist **Endless** (Issue 5), who was in attendance at the event. "FG taking his shirt off, getting live and hyping the crowd. KaceyFamily coming smooth with the lyrics. That's what you got to do—put on a show."





KACEY



FAMILY

GOV'T NAME: Keith Howard
STAGE NAME: KaceyFamily
HOMETOWN: Grover Beach, California
BIRTHDAY: Sept. 17, 1994
HEIGHT: 5-foot-9-inches
HIGH SCHOOL: Arroyo Grande
MAKING MUSIC: 10 years
FAVORITE MOVIE: "Soul"
FAVORITE TV SHOW: "Dave"
DREAM FEATURE: J. Cole



DREAM 805 FEATURE: \$horty DuWop
FAVORITE 805 TRACK: "NEVERBEFORE" by Reaves (feat. Joro & Brysjuan)
FAVORITE 805 ENGINEER: Food Product
FAVORITE 805 PRODUCER: Cazz Lorde
BEST CENTRAL COAST FOOD: Denny's





"KACEYFAMILY"

"First of all, my mom named me Keith C. Howard. My middle name is 'C'—it doesn't stand for nothing. So she always called me 'KC.' When I got a little older, it just became more of a flow like 'Kacey.' And then 'Family'—if it comes to music or my family, I'm choosing my family. Family first, right? I don't say 'KaceyFamily' because I'm the perfect family man. I say 'KaceyFamily' because I understand what's important."

MAKING RELATABLE MUSIC

"I don't talk about shit I don't know about. And all I really know about is either being broke, hustling, being in trouble, or being at the bottom. That's what I know about. Most people in the world are at the bottom. Not many people are at the top—that's not a common place to be. I think that's what makes it relatable."

UPCOMING ALBUM

THE HARD WAY

"The reason I haven't put out an album is because I was going through shit the hard way. Now that I'm on the other side of that, it's time to create an album about that. It's called *The Hard Way*. I don't have a date for it yet but it's definitely coming real soon. It's about almost done."

OUTSIDE OF MUSIC

"I cut hair and I got two kids. It's just a hustle to give them, you know, a good life. So it's mainly about getting this bread for these kids—just cutting hair, having fun with them. That's what I'm trying to do on a daily basis. I can't breathe no more, but I like playing basketball too."

BOUNCING BETWEEN THE CC AND LA

"I was born in San Luis Obispo and very soon after I moved to LA. Moved to Vegas, then moved back to Inglewood. Then my mom moved up here to get away from the craziness that my family was into. So I was just a kid, I want to go with Mom, you feel me, so I moved up here. And then when I got tired of my mom, because

she was putting too much on me or I just got sick of it, I went to go with my dad when he got out of prison. And so I just bounced back and forth. It used to be when I got uncomfortable, I liked to run. I'm uncomfortable here, I'm going back to LA. I'm uncomfortable there, I'm coming back. And I ended up staying here because I have kids here."

LIFE ON THE COAST

"On the Coast, you have a lot of opportunity. You don't have to worry about nothing over here except for your own actions. There's not too much that's gonna come and just, you know, knock you upside your head and be like, 'Nah, fuck you.' Right here in Grover Beach, in San Luis Obispo, [you have] an opportunity to breathe and to actually figure out what you want to do. And, you know, live your own life."

THE UNDRGRND COMMUNITY

"This is a bunch of young people keeping this shit alive, which is really what it's all about. Just the way they're operating, the way they communicate. And everything is very professional, you know what I'm saying? I feel like they have a genuine interest in the artists. That's what I feel I'm

getting from it. Not to call anybody kids, but just a bunch of young people getting it in, doing what they think is dope. And that's it. That's the bottom line, keeping the show alive."

D BANKS FROM CONNECT THE COAST

"I think D Banks is next up and I'll say that on the mic. That n***a has the style, has the look—that's just my personal opinion. That's a n***a I can look at and be like, 'Yeah bro, if somebody is gonna make it, it'd be Banks. It'd be the Banks.' He's not the only one, but that's just the first one that comes to mind."

**"I don't say
'KaceyFamily' because
I'm the perfect family
man. I say 'KaceyFamily'
because I understand
what's important."**

Drip Radar

Like its budding hip-hop movement, the Central Coast's fashion culture is a satisfying blend of outside influence and unique self-awareness. Since *UNDRGRND* came into the game in 2019, rappers in the Northern 805 have always rocked styles that have helped shape their images as musicians.

Lorde Sanctus starting Crypto Drip, BOBBYBEENFRESH always sporting the cleanest hat in the room, Trey Anthony's black gloves or \$horty DuWop's iconic cane—the Coast's fashion sense is unconventional, but undeniably new, cool, and totally its own.

FYAMOJI is a hyper-pop artist from Orcutt, Calif. and multi-time *Connect the Coast* Fashion Award nominee. Aleena Ali is the owner of *Generation Umbrella*, a nonprofit streetwear clothing line based out of Ventura County. Here's what caught their drip radar at our Issue 5 Photoshoot Day in San Luis Obispo.



“Pairing the acid wash jeans and Off-White belt, FG brought a casual yet hyped appearance to photoshoot day. Usually dressed in a new pair of Vans, he instead came strapped in a pair of black high top sneakers that signal a more sporty look. The natural afro and reflective shades give off a SoCal beach-goer sense of mind, while respectfully touching roots with his Ethiopian heritage.”



FG Thrilla



“Marie Flows’ look is subtle, with details that make for the ideal photoshoot fit. The oversized cobalt blue Champion hoodie-vest paired with bright Nike joggers and Mid Air Force 1’s, complemented with under-the-jogger black socks, all make for a look that would be unassuming UNTIL she hits the stage. Really though, who ain’t wishin’ they could pull off comfy and sleek like this?”



Marie Flows



"First off, can we note the colorway of those Air Maxes? The straight-out-of-the-box crispness of the shoes' design goes a long way to contrast the deep blue denim of his Levi's. With the white hoodie from the local apparel brand *Blueswrld*, and a bandana draped around the neck, Big Ray walked into this photoshoot ready to rep West Coast fashion to its maximum."



"Tattered light blue denims, undistured Air Force 1's, and a clean taper: quintessential items for the modern California look. The neutral, soft pastel colors of Kacey's fit juxtapose well against the darker tones of the Pismo Beach Boardwalk sign attraction. Kacey's telling us, 'I BELONG HERE!' —he understood the atmosphere and dressed accordingly."



"Endless nearly embodies the look for Central Coast Beachy-Type Hip-Hop. The blue graphic tank top and distressed dark wash jeans practically scream "beach town," and the added silver chains and rings personify him further as the artist he is. This rugged outfit is tied together with the worn Ugg boots and color complementing hat, making for a look only Endless can pull together."



TREY ANTHONY'S "SANTA MARIA STYLE" TRI-TIP

Santa Maria-based and UNDRGRND Issue 3 rapper Trey Anthony has already proven he can light up a stage. But the 26-year-old father of two has been hiding another talent: cooking. Follow these instructions straight from the man himself, and you can be the star of any backyard cookout in no time.

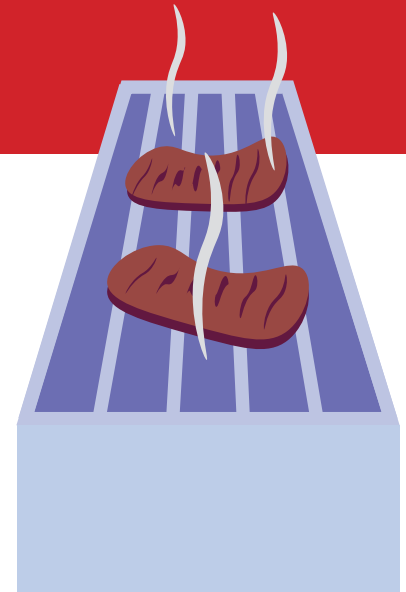
FIRST THINGS FIRST:

What is tri-tip?

A cut of beef from the bottom sirloin subprimal cut, usually the shape of a triangle a.k.a. the best meat you'll ever put in your mouth.

Where can I get it?

Any grocery store. If you're privileged and from the suburbs like Andrew go to Albertsons. If you're from the hood like me go to Foodmaxx or Foods Co. Overall, if you can't find it, you're not looking hard enough.



MARINADE INGREDIENTS

- Olive or vegetable oil
- Sliced green onions (or scallions if you wanna be all professional and shit)
- Cayenne pepper (not sure how to even pronounce this but it's highkey mandatory)
- Imported beer of choice (*Corona, Modelo, Pacifico*)
 - You can even go IPA if you want. I tried a Mind Haze and it was fire. Use beer that you like!

RUB INGREDIENTS

- Dried rosemary (like sprinkles on a fucking cupcake)
- Paprika (it's smoky and gives the meat a nice color. Keep it light, don't over-do it!)
- Get yourself some "Susie Q's Original Santa Maria Style Seasoning" to make your life easier. Use a nice handful—this is the foundation of your rub
 - If you can't find Susie Q's, you can substitute it with:
 - Salt
 - Dried garlic pepper (enough to cover your tri-tip)
 - Black pepper (there's no such thing as too much pepper)

STEP #1: PREP

Now you're ready to cook. Trim SOME of the excess fat off. Don't over-do that shit though because the fat is where all the flavor is. Ain't nothing wrong with a little extra cake on that thing, and I'm not just talking about the tri-tip here.

STEP #2: MARINATE

Get a big-ass Ziploc bag or container that your tri-tip can fit in. Marinate for at least 4 hours, preferably overnight. My rule with marinate: treat yourself don't cheat yourself.

STEP #3 MAKING THE RUB

Once marinated, you want to add this rub to your meat before throwing it on the grill. Don't be afraid to get your hands dirty! Lather the whole tri-tip with an even spread.

STEP #4: THE FIRE

Use ONLY Red Oakwood—no charcoal. This isn't your grandpa's "hotdog night." And please, clean your grill—nothing pisses me off more than a dirty-ass grill. Half a white onion or a lemon/lime does the trick for me. Place tri-tip over the flames and sear all sides to get that char. Once seared all over, cook tri-tip off the flame to your preferred wellness of meat. If you like your meat well-done then maybe grandpa's half-ass hot dogs were more what you were looking for.

LAST COOKING TIPS!



Don't be flipping the tri-tip like crazy. Let it cook in peace. Let the fat hang onto the juices. We all like it juicy, am I right!? Good luck & enjoy y'all! If you have any questions, hit me on Instagram (@treyanthonyofficial).

photo by @bing.visuals



STRAIGHT OUTTA CHI-CITY



The Chicago artist recently moved to Los Angeles for a promotion at his chemical engineering company. But after just two years in California, **Alex Martin** is capitalizing on the music scene opportunities that his new home offers.

Alex Martin (real name Julian Alexander Martin) is a 32-year-old hip-hop/R&B artist born and raised in Chicago. He attended Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Okla where he graduated with a bachelor's of science degree in engineering, with a concentration in mechanical engineering. After moving to Los Angeles in 2019 for his work, Martin linked up with popular audio engineer Big Rula, and has collabed on an unreleased track with Miami-based artist Rarri.

Considering he is somewhat new to making music Martin says he's only been taking his rap career seriously since he moved to California — he is making quick progress.

His SoundCloud page displays a variety of tracks that show off his melodic flair and vintage R&B lyrics, and he has become a fan-favorite performer at recent *UNDRGRND* events. Martin has also used his savvy networking abilities to get his songs played by DJs in LA's popular nightclubs. Looking forward, he promises three more singles and a music video in the near future.

Catch Alex Martin at the next UNDRGRND show, and follow him on Instagram @_alexthagr8_. You can stream his recent track "Vibes" by scanning the QR code below.





FG THRILLA RECKAH JAY REILLY

GOV'T NAME: Fabio Genovese
STAGE NAME: FG Thrilla
HOMETOWN: Lompoc, California
BIRTHDAY: Aug. 16, 1995
HEIGHT: 6-foot
HIGH SCHOOL: Cabrillo
MAKING MUSIC: "Since 2018"
FAVORITE MOVIE: "Gladiator"
FAVORITE TV SHOW: "One Piece"
FAVORITE 805 PROD/ENG: Reckah
("Jay Reilly also does his thing")
DREAM FEATURE:
Drake or The Weeknd
DREAM 805 FEATURE:
Sadboy Loko
BEST CENTRAL COAST FOOD:
Yamanagi (Santa Maria)



LINKING UP WITH LORDE SANCTUS

"He reached out to me in like 2018-19 for a show. It was one of the first *Connect The Coast* shows ever. It was the first time I met a lot of artists from the coast...Lil Boney, King Trip, So-Si—a lot of people I still know to this day. [Sanctus has] done a lot for the Coast. I'm not signed to him but he's done nothing but show me love and help me in my career."

DEALING WITH HATE

"I ain't had a lot of beef until this music shit. I see all the jealousy and shit developing, it starts drama. It's a crazy feeling knowing n****s know you and you don't even know who the fuck they are...but I signed up for this shit, so I'm ready for it. Haters are your biggest supporters 'cause they're still looking at your shit."

PERSONAL PRIDE IN THE COAST

"There's a really big problem with people not wanting to claim that they're from the Central Coast—like this is where we're from, you know? I've been in fucking fights because people say we're washed out. Saying shit don't really happen here."

"NOTICE" GOING VIRAL ON TIKTOK

"I didn't even know it went viral. It's actually one of my oldest songs. Whoever made the beat, it has like a little snippet of Drake's song "Shut It Down," and I remixed it and it went viral in like the Philippines. I'm definitely going to focus on marketing on TikTok."



"THERE'S A REALLY BIG PROBLEM WITH PEOPLE NOT WANTING TO CLAIM THAT THEY'RE FROM THE CENTRAL COAST."



BEING SOCIAL MEDIA SAVVY

"It was my little sister who told me, "If you get into music, you need a poppin' social media," and that's the fact. Building your social media is building your self brand."

BALANCING KIDS AND MUSIC

"If two kids is what's gonna weigh you down, [then] it's gonna weigh you down. That n****a NBA YoungBoy—he's way younger than me—but that n****a had like three, four kids by the time he blew up. My kids, if anything, motivate me 100 million times more."

FIRST GENERATION PRESSURE

"When you grow up with an African family they set some super hypocritical standards for you, like want you to be like 10 million times better than they were. My family watches all my shit, so they'll be on my ass about everything. Even my nose piercing or my earrings, they fucking hate that shit."

ANGELO DEPRATER

"All my music videos—when I personally pay for them—I go to Angelo, because he is one of the most creative, craziest motherfuckers I know. That's why famous people fuck with him because he's really *directing* and shooting videos. I do come to him with a lot of ideas and he helps me make more ideas. He's definitely helped me amplify what I've tried to do."

FANS CAN SOON EXPECT

"At least three to four more videos from Thrilla, definitely with some artists from the [Issue 5] magazine."

// ENDLESS //
S // ENDLESS // ENDLESS // ENDE
// ENDLESS // LEADERS



GOV'T NAME: ERIC DONNELLY
STAGE NAME: ENDLESS
HOMETOWN: MORRO BAY, CALIF.
BIRTHDAY: MAY 8, 1985
HEIGHT: 5-FOOT-7-INCHES
HIGH SCHOOL: MORRO BAY;
GRIZZLY YOUTH ACADEMY (SLO)
MAKING MUSIC: 20+ YEARS
FAVORITE MOVIE: "THE GOONIES"

DREAM FEATURE: EMINEM
DREAM 805 FEATURE: WORDSAUCE
FAVORITE 805 PROJECT: "IF IT'S FROM THE 805, I'M
AUTOMATICALLY A FAN"
FAVORITE 805 ENGINEER: ERIC "EMORTAL" MATTSO
FAVORITE 805 PRODUCER: DJ MIX MANGLA
BEST CENTRAL COAST FOOD: HIDDEN KITCHEN
(CAYUCOS)

**"YOU'RE GONNA GET TURNED AWAY
IF YOU'RE FUCKING NOT BEING REAL."**

MEETING BOBBYBEENFRESH:

"We've met a few times because we both use The Sauce Pot Studios to record our music. I think we've met in passing there. And then I met him at the Central Coast Beat Social down in Santa Maria. And then again at the 'Bridge The Gap' show [at Dairy Creek Golf Course]."

GROWING UP IN MORRO BAY:

"It's like 15 minutes from San Luis Obispo, a little beach town. Fishing village. Cool little upbringing—terrorized the town, you know. Had a crew of friends and we were always either skateboarding or biking from town to town, stealing cigarettes and candy and going in the trees and smoking. There's not really a hip-hop scene, but there's a melting pot of talented artists from all over the place that go there."

BECOMING A RAPPER:

"I started writing in early 2000 because I knew I had something to say. I admired people getting up on stage and being the frontman. I've got a lot of energy and I want to steal the show, and I felt like [music] was an avenue to release this inner fucking voice that I had inside."

INFLUENCED MORE BY LA OR THE BAY?:

"Damn, we're right smack in the middle. I guess I would have to say maybe I lean a little more towards LA—Tupac, NWA vibes. But it's strong on both sides because I got E-40, Brotha Lynch Hung, Celly Cel from The Bay. But I'm influenced by everything. Like, I listen to Frank Sinatra, old school, classic rock, you know? Led Zeppelin, Metallica."

WHY SHOULD SOMEONE LISTEN TO YOU?:

"I'm definitely conscious hip-hop. I put a lot of thought into what I say. I write every word. It all comes from me, from my heart, from my influence. Because it's all me and I'm all up there by myself. I take up the whole stage, I fucking present myself."

BIG SURREAL FESTIVAL:

"My friend Michael Handy—he does Luvlab Productions and they're up in Big Sur. He started the Big Surreal Festivals. That was probably my first big show—the first Big Surreal Festival. It was like 2013 and Zion I Crew was there, Vocab Company from down south. That was my major big show. On top of the hill in Big Sur, with probably like 200-300 people."

NETWORKING IN MUSIC SCENE:

"Nobody knows you're there if you don't say nothing. It's about getting your way through little by little, making connections and just being real. Because you're gonna get turned away if you're fucking not being real."

GIVING MERCH & CDS OUT FOR FREE:

"You really gotta hustle. You invite that comfortable space for people to come in and check you out. Then if they want to buy and they want to donate, then they will. They'll be interested because they're comfortable and stoked. But if you force it on them, a lot of people will be like, 'whatever.'"

CONNECTIONS TO WORDSAUCE:

"Me, Eric, Wes and Shawn, from Wordsauce, we all went to recording arts class together at Cuesta [College]. And so I've been knowing them since the beginning, you know, before this place [Sauce Pot Studios] existed. We were all going to school to learn it first. It's pretty cool to see them rise professionally from school to trade, you know, and they've made a career out of it."

"ENDLESS":

"I'm not attached to one topic. I'll talk about anything. Different genre, whatever. I'll branch myself out from a weed song to a love song, party song, chill song. Be all well rounded with that."



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THE FORMULA: AJ Brown

How the Paso Robles teenager took Grateful Minds from a high school project to an 805 music video heavyweight.



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AJ Brown, now 19 years old, describes the person he was in Fall 2017. “A young little kid, I wasn’t doing much. Hanging out with the wrong group, you know what I mean?”

The San Luis Obispo native was 17 and had begun his freshman year at Paso Robles High School. He had shown some interest in videography in recent years, mostly from filming and editing his friends’ skate tapes.

“I was just looking for something to put my energy into,” he says.

Brown enrolled in PRHS’s Introduction to Multimedia Journalism class, taught by John Rucker. According to Rucker, his intro class isn’t for everyone and can be intimidating. Rucker jokingly admitted that he may “come off as a jerk, especially to freshmen.”

Despite this self-analysis, it was Rucker’s mentorship that Brown credits for kicking off his film production career.

“I took this class, and Mr. Rucker was super inspiring, taught me a bunch about video making,” Brown says. “I just fell in love with making videos.”

Brown had found a place to let his creative angst loose. As the school year went on, Rucker began taking note of his highly-motivated new student. Rucker told *UNDRGRND* he remembers Brown being “full of energy and punk,” calling him a “sponge, but also a digitally-native teen.”

“For the first year I was tough on him, I didn’t want to fill his head,” says Rucker, who worked at PRHS for six years before relocating to New Mexico with his family a year before the pandemic. “AJ was just a little different – he was always looking beyond, thinking, ‘How can this be applied in a cooler way?’”

Halfway through his freshman year, Brown capitalized on his newly toned skills and relationships. Building from what had originally begun as one of Rucker’s class assignments, Brown conceptualized the business model and logo for Grateful Minds, a production company designed to provide hip-hop music videos to Northern 805 artists.

Around the same time, Brown had been introduced to San Luis Obispo-born rapper Niko Cochiše.

“I met AJ through his friend at the Kennedy Club in Paso Robles,” says Cochiše, who is well connected with the *UNDRGRND* community and has music with BOBBYBEENFRESH, KaceyFamily, Joro, and more. “I was playing my music and his friend thought it was dope, so he introduced me to AJ to do a video.”

Photos by @christopherbrownphotos, @bruhitskris, and @Justin.coria





Niko CochiSe - Stay Woke (Dir. AJ Brown)

042 views - Jan 5, 2019

120 1 SHARE SAVE



Niko CochiSe - Cockpit (Dir. AJ Brown)

46 views - Premiered Sep 4, 2020

250 6 SHARE SAVE

That video became “Stay Woke,” the first ever music video published through Grateful Minds. Released on Jan. 5, 2019, the video made modest but impressive traction for a brand new YouTube channel. The video now has over 2,000 views and boasts a lopsided 120-1 like-to-dislike ratio.

“Once my first music video came out, that’s when it started getting some traction,” Brown says.

Fast forward to the end of 2021, and Brown’s Grateful Minds has dropped 14 music videos, collaborating with notable Central Coast artists such as D Banks, leatasswhatsup, \$horty DuWop, and Fr.Deja Vu.

Brown and CochiSe still maintain a close relationship. The two released another video together for “Cockpit,” in Sept. 2020. Brown has also accompanied CochiSe on music-related trips to Los Angeles, filming vlogs and documenting CochiSe’s career closely.

“AJ has been this successful so far because he values building relationships more than getting videos to film,” says CochiSe, 24. “He will work with you to help bring your vision to light.”

As for 2022, Brown tells *UNDRGRND* he has plans to travel the country to shoot videos in cities like Atlanta and Chicago for out-of-state clients who he’s met online.

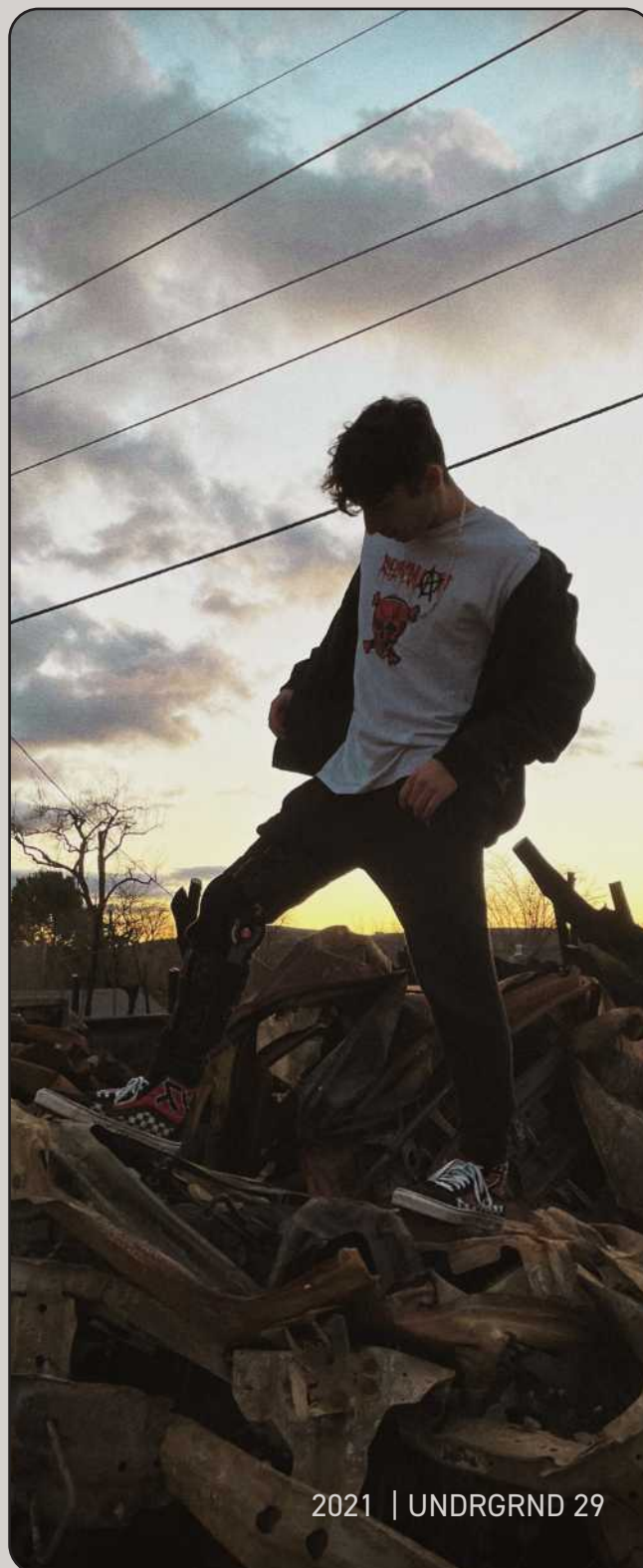
He also aims to further diversify his artistic portfolio. Brown teases the upcoming release of his long awaited, “Charlatan Angels.” The passion project has no official release date, but is rumored to be multimedia in nature and influenced heavily from the Central Coast’s local rap scene.

“I’m kind of straying away a little from the ‘camera guy look,’ and just showing I got a lot more to offer than just videos,” Brown says. “I’m investing a lot into this.”

At just 19, Brown is setting himself up to not only be an important figure in the 805’s hip-hop landscape, but beyond its borders too. While many aspiring directors his age are in college or working internships, Brown is grinding on his own production company.

With his success so far, he is evidence that the Central Coast’s rap world is wide enough for even non rappers to make an impact.

“[Brown] had a funny way of listening and paying attention, but keeping his own direction, which I think earned him well,” says Rucker, who still keeps in touch with Brown regarding filmmaking. “If you aren’t careful, a teacher can detour you from genuine inspiration—and that hasn’t happened here.”



Follow Grateful Minds on Instagram @gratefulminds_official, and check out all of AJ Brown’s music videos on YouTube by scanning the QR code.



LEADER OF DARKNESS

Lilith Mors

OUTCAST.

TABOO.

GROWTH?

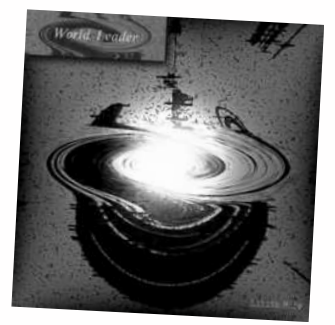
DEATH?



Lilith Mors (real name "Liliana Harvey") is a 16-year-old ethereal electronic musician from the rural outskirts of Pittsburgh, Penn. Her lyrics tell the wicked stories of a young woman spawned to Earth from Hell by a witch. She communicates her gothic messages to humans through her music, which ranges in style from avant-pop to grunge — but Mors "hates genres," she says.

The singer, pianist, drummer, and guitarist has dropped two projects in 2021, the most recent being the 14-track *World Leader*, which debuted in August. Mors released one full-length music video nearly every month to her YouTube channel during pandemic time. Impressive for an independent artist still in high school.

Go follow Hermitage, Penn.'s Lilith Mors on Instagram @lilithmors, and find her music on all streaming platforms right now.



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