



JUNX

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What got you started in the game? Who & what inspired you to take this type of journey?

"It's hard to tell what got me started. I've always been into a lot of shit without knowing what it was. As a kid, my parents got me magazine subscriptions. My household was always into music and movies. My dad got me and my sister cameras. I got into sneakers and clothes through my friends and sister. My dad and school got me into computers. And when the internet popped off it was a portal to the world and information as I got older. I think my first loves were books, music videos, cartoons, computers, and whatever you call unscrewing stereos and seeing how they work. Throughout all of it, I was fortunate enough to come up in an environment that encouraged and fed that curiosity. I feel like I'm bricking this question but it's a tough one haha."

After ending with Complex, how does it feel to start a new chapter in your life?

"Fire! Like I feel the best I've felt in year. Just the idea of closing a chapter, and starting a new one is a powerful feeling. But if we're keeping it a buck, I was mad hesitant and had been toying with the idea for like 2 years. But I reached a point where I said, "fuck it." I had been telling folk that at some point I turned a corner and had reached just the right amount of fuck it in my system—the healthy amount where it allows you to take risks, not the unhealthy amount where you just blow trees all day and don't do shit. But my the work I put in there afforded me a lot, and my exit showed it to me. I had no clue how many people had really rocked with what I brought to the game, and a ton of folk reached out to show love. All of that positivity, was extra fuel to further confirm that I had done something right all those years. So if it ain't broke, don't fix it I guess. And fortunately, for me this new chapter is off to a strong start."

What was your greatest moments at Complex that you miss the most?

"My greatest moment isn't one I'd say I'll miss. I've said it before to the point some people laugh at it, but it was by far the work I did back in 2014 when I was in Ferguson, Missouri covering the aftermath of the murder of Michael Brown. It shifted my entire being, as well as many others who were tuned in. I didn't really know what I was doing out there, and we were really in the shit. Like deep during the riots that would break out, but also among the community trying to understand as they were trying to make sense of the madness that had set down upon their community, at the same time speak out about the abuse they had been dealt their entire lives as black people. In the end me and my team just followed our inner compasses and I think we created work that was honest and compelling. CNN took notice and reached out. That's also where I met and interviewed J. Cole. I'm positive Ferguson altered his state of consciousness as well."





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What inspired you to become a photographer?

"I didn't really realize it, until a couple years ago, but I've always had a camera. My dad always bought me and my sister toy cameras, or polaroids or disposables. He shot a lot himself when we were young, so I think the familiarity of a camera has always been there. But what really made it a thing was a combination of Instagram and working at a creative agency in Soho, New York. When IG first popped off I was like I ain't really with this shit, but then I got on and saw people were flexing and it brought me to a new style of photography I had never seen before. I remember being really into 13th Witness and Trashhand. But at the creative agency, I got to be around dudes like Jason Goldwatch, the late great Wyatt Neumann, and many others. So I got a crash course just being in proximity. I still don't think I have a style and have a lot to learn but it's one of my favorite things ever. I try to keep some type of camera on me at all times."

Not only that, with all the different talents you have, which do you enjoy the most and why?

"Man, DJing is sort of a selfish act for me. Like I just really wanna hear some records loud. People dancing to it is just the icing on the cake haha. Actually.. most of the things I'm into are kind of selfish, but not in a bad way. Just like trying to put some of myself out in the world. Put what I like to listen to, or information I've learned about, or images I think are sick out into the mix and let it do what it does. I think I enjoy them all differently at different times, but photography feels different to me off the strength that you can just rock out with yourself and do it anywhere. It's like soccer mixed with golf. In the case of soccer you really only need that one piece of equipment and you're good, same with photography. You can do it collaboratively or solo and you're still Gucci. But I'd say it's like golf in the sense that you're really playing against the course, your environment and surroundings. Focus on that and you'll be better."

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Favorite film to shoot with?

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What is something that people misunderstand about you the most?

"Yo I don't know. It's weird because the term "people" has grown to include a wide swath of folk that I'll never actually meet. Which is a good problem I suppose. But it results in some weird behavior, especially on the internets. It took me a little minute to wrap my mind around it, but like people are 'accing' me in small bursts be it on YouTube or TV or social media. But they don't know me, you know? Like not even a little bit. That doesn't stop them from laying out their opinions or approaching me based off of whatever assumption they've spun from the two to twenty minutes they've seen me. The thing that I've gotten sporadically across my career is "Jinx says white" or some variation of that. Maybe the funniest iteration is back when I was at Complex a dude that I'm pretty sure is white who runs a rap blog. I can't remember his name, but I remember thinking, yo... this is mad weird. Damn he wants to be down really badly, that he's gotta find someone in the mix he can try to use as a stepping stone, even if it means shading his own folk. Shit wild on the net. But it comes a lot from black folk too. The most disturbing part is that people kind of tell on themselves when they do shit like that. It says a lot about what they think of black people even as a black person. Real shit, it's disgusting. But look, I get it. I grew up into a LOT of different shit, I was a black nerd who dropped bands at the book fair and played video games and obsessed over sneakers and music and computers. I would hide my Limp Bizkit CD in my Fabolous CD case so kids on the bus wouldn't give me shit. I grew up hood adjacent but was fortunate enough that I could leave after school and go back to my home. And I always had a diverse pool of friends. And as I got older the internet fed all of those things. So in some people's minds, I might not fit into their construct of what it means to be a black person, and I've surely been labeled weird most of my life. But my blackness, my person, my interests aren't for you to define. And I don't need to validate your views either. I feel fortunate that all of the things that some folk have questioned have worked in my favor. Like who would think that me just being me would be something that would allow me to pay my bills, meet and work with my tools, and dream bigger. I feel the best being me. And I love that I'm older now and can see it in younger folks who I know are cut from a similar cloth. We in ayle, let's run it up."

Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

"I can NEVER answer these types of questions, but I'm just now starting to be able to conjure up plans that span more than a month or so. I'm in a building stage right now. I feel like I'm legit just getting started and everything before this was the scrimmage. I'm working on a few things behind the scenes that hopefully fulfill my passions and expand my resume. And if I do it right, will maybe give me some stability to be able to look out for some younger versions of me."



What was your hardest moment in life?
How did that inspire change?

"Jesus man, this is heavy. Um... I don't know about in my life, but I'd say my career has been pretty challenging. Like it took a lot for me to even figure out what I wanted to do, let alone how to do it. But it's probably the reason I juggle a few things now. And then there's the whole "is this even good?" thing that comes before, during, and after the creative process. I've grappled with self doubt and people trying to knock my confidence for a decent portion of my time. That happens a lot in the creative pursuits, and isn't unique to just me. But it put me in a bad place. And I've had a lot of doubters. Many from the outside, and some within arms reach. Add that to the hunger to actually make a life out of this shit too. But somehow I'm still here in this game, racking up points and getting to the next level. I know that's very open ended, but if I broke it all down, you'd run out of pages for print. I'd say that the change it inspired is that it made me look to self a lot more, and more recently has cemented the idea of me taking better care of myself. Like if I gotta rely heavily on my own beliefs and ability to do, then I need to keep my self-maintenance at an all time high. The ill thing about that, is you end up attracting a lot more positive energy when you're positive. And you shun away a lot of negativity because there really isn't any real estate for them to set up shop. If I had to sum it all up now, I'd say all of these things brew into what I can only call appreciation. I feel more appreciative of all that I have, because of what I've gone through. Appreciation is rocket fuel for anyone looking to find their own path."

For those who don't know,
what inspired your name "Jinx"?

"Super un-sexy story. I had a screen name on AIM Messenger: BTJINX. My first and middle initial, followed by Jinx' which is an abbreviation of my last name. My pops came up with these when AOL first popped off. Before digital was our whole lives, screen names were what handles are today. But it was some shit you lived with on the net. So in real life I was Brandon Jenkins, on AIM I was BTJINX. There's always that one friend who kind of gives everyone their nicknames. For me that was my boy RAS. He started calling me BTJINX in the hallway one day, and I was like "Yo stop, that's not cool." But when you do that, dudes just triple down on it. I guess BTJINX was too annoying to say all day every day. That combined with the unrelenting desire to annoy me resulted in the compromise of "Jinx." Eventually it got to a point where my high school principle called me Jinx. I'm pretty sure that's how they announced me when I received my diploma at graduation. It's followed me everywhere I've gone since, even without me saying anything. And I'm of the belief that you can't give yourself your own nickname, so I've rolled with it. Now in life, its funny cause there's things that happen to me and only me—good and bad—and they'll be like "that's some Jinx shit." It just works."





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What was your worst interview you've done and what did you learn from it?

“Oh my God dude, I’ve got a decent amount of bricks haha. One that comes to mind was a press run for Chris Rock and his movie Top 5. It wasn’t horrible, but it was like I kept trying to find a groove that wasn’t there, and Chris Rock wanted to be in the driver seat and I was trying to steer the convo. When that shit happens, let them take the wheel. If they crash the whip, it’s like aight that’s on you dog. Don’t get me wrong, when you fight for control it often pays off, but you gotta figure it out quickly. That and I naively walked in expecting live-ly stand-up Chris Rock, instead I got slightly exhausted press run Chris Rock. What’s crazy is I interviewed this dude like a few weeks ago for this thing I’m doing with the NY Knicks. I tried to onboard him really quick, but it was sort of the same shit. He kinda shrugged off the interview and was like “I’m only here cause I get free court side seats.” Which is whatever, and kind of a dick move, but I was like “ah I get it.. this is just a you thing.” I think he might be one of those celebs that really only likes to deal with other celebs or extremely well known people. Maybe my interview was beneath him in his mind? I don’t know. But I’m ok with people being themselves, in fact I prefer it. I actually hope I keep interviewing him, cause now I’ve reached the point where I’ll just go in there and fuck around and see what makes him lean back in his seat. That or I’m a just let him crash the car each time until it builds a junkyard that’s hopefully an entertaining snapshot.”