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Essays-Skyler Reed

January 21, 2018

Music Emerging has collected essays from four musical women, a musical trio and myself. A simple word: struggles. I asked these women to send me essays about their musical journeys and their struggles. Hope you find inspiration in these personal stories.

Skylar Reed- Atlanta, GA

"Music has been an influence on my life since childhood. I was automatically drawn to it, and having a musical mother only added to my passion. I have always felt a deep connection with R&B music, and the classics from this genre have been the theme songs to my life. I was never really interested in much else besides music, so when it came time to decide on a career, the decision was evident. I've always been a big dreamer and a chaser of what some may perceive as far fetched.

I was born and raised in Wilmington, Delaware for the first nine years of my life, and I remember my mother playing many records from impactful singers like, Whitney Houston and Lauryn Hill. A pivotal moment in my childhood was the when my mother sang a Whitney Houston song to me. I knew that singing was what I had to do. As a child, I enjoyed performing at family functions, which evolved into school functions throughout my teen years.

My mother unfortunately passed when I was nine years old. The only way I knew how to deal with that was through music. I was taken in by my aunt and uncle,

and was given a journal to express myself. I ended up writing my first song and winning a poetry slam in the seventh grade. My intention was not to make people cry, but I realized at that moment that I could impact the world through my lyrics. I continue to write, as a form of therapy, and with the desire to somehow help people get through their situations.



When college time came around, I decided to major in vocal performance at Virginia State University. I studied Classical music, which was a great way to learn proper technique. I then had to decide exactly what I wanted to pursue, because I have a background in several genres of music. I decided to go with my first love, R&B, because it's soulful, has elements of Hip-Hop music, and I am free when I sing it. I get to write my own words, and sing melodies I choose, as opposed to singing notes written on a

page and telling stories of composers.

Being an artist, period, is challenging. The competition is at an all time high, and they are continuously flowing in. This makes booking gigs and growing a fan base difficult. This also makes for a lot of false relationships and trickery. I have been in situations where I worked with people I thought had my best interest in mind. It turned out they were speaking false truths, and using me for their own gain. It's hard to create genuine relationships and a proactive network this way, so I have learned to be very picky with whom I associate myself. I've also learned how important it is to do my research, and not go into a situation blind.

I have self-managed my career as well as playing almost every other role an artist needs. I only outsource for things I clearly can't do, like producing a beat and engineering my sessions. I like being self reliant, and I think being this way in the beginning stages of my career is beneficial. I'm learning what each position takes. I'm fascinated with how the music business runs, and I pride myself in being more than just a singer.

Being an artist is one of the bigger pieces to a giant puzzle of dreams I have. I love the challenge of constantly growing, and

the fulfillment I get. I've never been more driven about something in my life. I hope to inspire and heal the world through my music. I believe everyone has a purpose, and I want to encourage people to pursue it. You really only have one life."

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