

# Brittany Pierre Interview

Todd L. Burns · Aug 2 · [♥](#) [🔗](#)

I'm Todd L. Burns, and welcome to Music Journalism Insider, a newsletter about music journalism. If you're not familiar with the newsletter already, [click here](#) to find out more.

*Brittany Pierre* is a freelance writer with bylines in Complex, The Village Voice, Bustle, HelloGiggles, and more. (This [LA Weekly article](#) may (or may not) have been responsible for [Janet Jackson's](#) eventual induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.)

## How did you get to where you are today, professionally?

As early as I can remember I wanted to be a writer and was obsessed with magazines. *Blender Magazine* and *Vibe Magazine* were the two pubs that really inspired me to go into music journalism. *Vibe* delivered beautiful content on Black music culture and *Blender* was this obscure music mag that gave you all facades of musicians but also helped me find really great music that shaped my broad taste in music.

I started writing for my high school newspaper on pop culture and then in college, I wrote mainly album reviews for Rutgers' newspaper.

I began my career in fashion, working for *Honey* magazine as News Reporter Intern and *Teen Vogue* as an Accessories Intern. Although the hustle and bustle of fashion week and attending photoshoots were fun, I never truly enjoyed working within the fashion industry and knew my passion was music. Once I graduated from Rutgers, I snagged an internship at *Vibe* magazine that really helped mold me as a writer, learning under the editors and working with the cohort of the other interns ([Natelegé Whaley](#), [Eric Diep](#), [Adelle Platon](#), and [Zoy Britton](#)). Following my internship, I did more music reporting for boombox.fm and the drop.fm but I also started pitching to different publications and writing outside of music, mainly pop culture and essays. That has led me to where I am today.

## Did you have any mentors along the way? What did they teach you?

I had a family friend Kim Snow, she works in PR, who really helped me earlier in my career, how to navigate getting into spaces and thinking outside the box when it comes to my career. [Brittany Hennessy](#) also helped me along the way, understanding media, how to conduct interviews but also how to handle publicity when your articles go viral, and how to address controversial topics when you're being interviewed.

I often leaned on my writer friends who were coming up with me, they weren't necessarily all within the music industry but we were all journalists who motivated one another and it was great to watch each of us get new bylines, which helped me not quit when it started to get rough as a freelance journalist the first few years.

## Walk me through a typical day-to-day for you right now.

My day always starts with Twitter, seeing what's trending, what's generating conversations, and then I find a few articles to read throughout the day. I normally take this time to figure out what I'm interested in discussing for my podcast or pitching. I write notes and start creating an outline for a pitch and then I send out pitches to editors. When I get an article accepted, then I start brainstorming and researching for the piece, outlining and then begin writing.

## How has your approach to your work changed over the past few years?

We all have our dream publications we want to work for, but after a few years I decided that I wanted to find a more stable career and write more whenever I'm feeling inspired instead of relying solely on a freelance check. I took a few years away from journalism to work in education, but currently I'm in social media content and marketing.

I started a blog to get back into my creative space. And currently, I think we're starting to realize, creating your own platform is important, especially when so many publications fold and the majority of your work is no longer online. But also, now that we're seeing how big of a gap there is when it comes to equity, it's hard to accept that a lot of publications are not paying Black writers the same amount as white writers. Now more than ever, I understand that negotiating rates are crucial. I still believe your own platform, with your ideas, where you have control of the access, is needed in this business. Personally, I have more of a peace of mind to write when I am inspired by music/culture and pitching to different publications rather than having to do it for survival.

## Where do you see music journalism headed?

It's hard to tell with the recent pandemic what direction music journalism will take or even how many publications we will have left by the end of the year. That being said, I hope music blogs make a comeback.

## What's one tip that you'd give a music journalist starting out right now?

Really stand in your creativity and be proud of it. Being a journalist can be very difficult and you will receive so many rejections that it can make one question if you're talented or not. You're talented, sometimes it's just not the right fit at the moment.

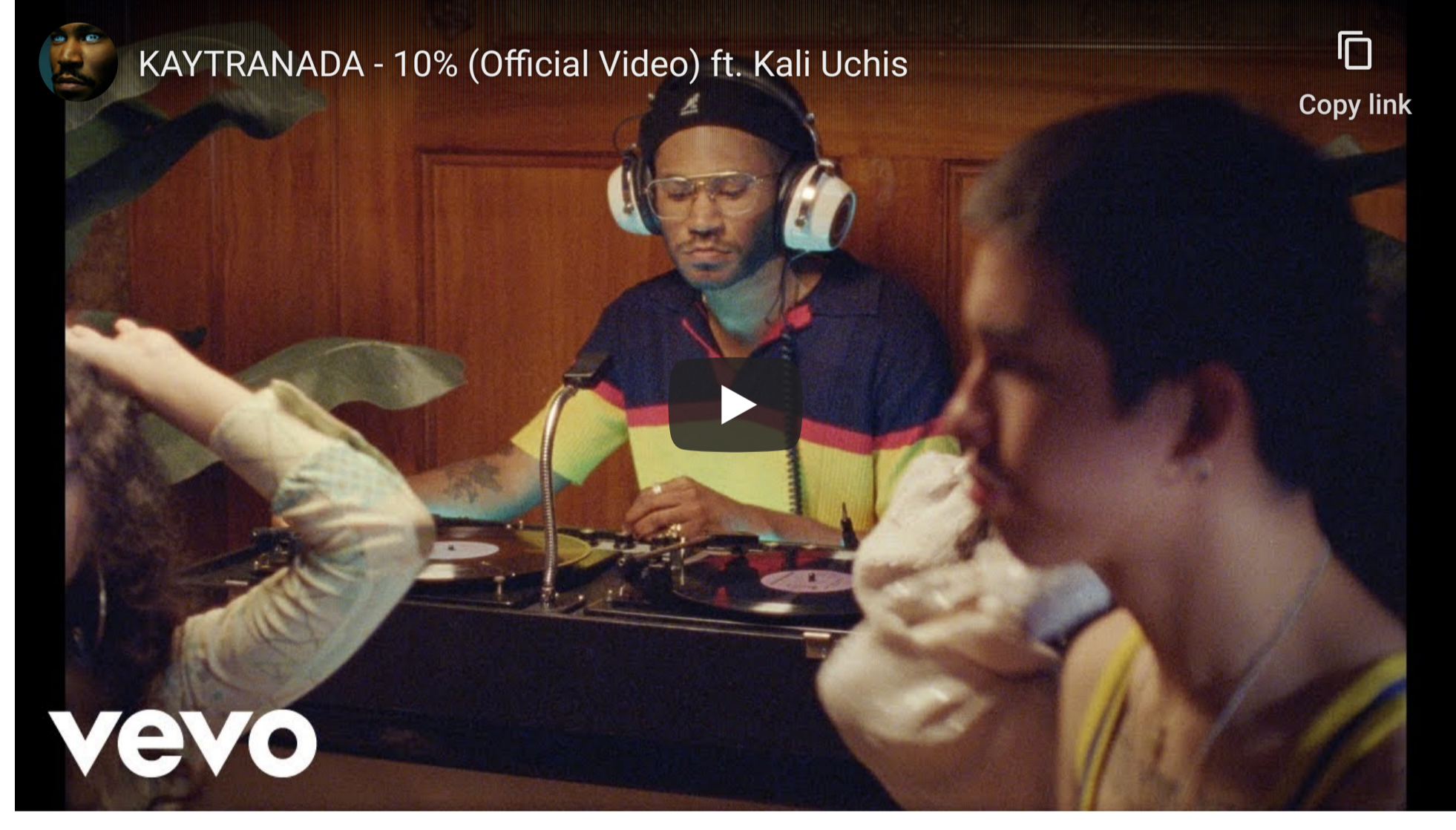
## What artist or trend are you most interested in right now?

What's really exciting to watch is the uprise of female emcees. Watching Megan Thee Stallion, Doja Cat, Flo Milli, City Girls, etc has been exciting after so many years of men dominating hip-hop, it's refreshing to see so many female emcees being successful and creating their own lanes. It's great to see how artists are finding creative ways to share their music during the pandemic, what Travis Scott did with Fortnite was brilliant, all the performances at the BET awards were great... I'm curious how this pandemic will shift the way we consume music and how mainstream artists will adapt to it.

In pop music, there's a resurgence with disco, currently with the albums by Dua Lipa, a little with Lady Gaga and Jessie Ware. Disco is an underrated genre of music that deserves more respect and I'm excited to see more pop artists reinventing disco for new listeners.

## What's your favorite part of the job?

My all-time favorite is still reviewing albums. I love listening to every piece of music until I'm sick of it. And I love finding new parts of songs that I didn't hear the first listen, I enjoy analyzing the lyrics and how it could relate to the current state of the world and then trying to piece it together and share why I believe the reader should listen to the album or not. The whole process can be exhausting, but it's my favorite part of being a music journalist.



## What was the best track / video or film / book you've consumed in the past 12 months?

Kaytranda's recent album, *BUBBA* is still on heavy rotation on Spotify for me. It inspires me, it makes me happy and plus it's a great dance album. I'm still bitter that COVID canceled my plans to dance the night away to his DJing set last month.

## If you had to point folks to one piece of yours, what would it be and why?

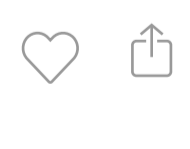
I reviewed [Mac Miller's posthumous album \*Circles for Vibe\*](#). Mac's death hit me harder than I had expected but I think a lot of his message throughout the album really resonates with millennials and I was really proud to connect our struggles to Mac's music.

## Anything you want to plug?

You can check [my blog](#) out here, and you can find me on Twitter at [@sleep2dream](#) discussing pop culture and music.

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