



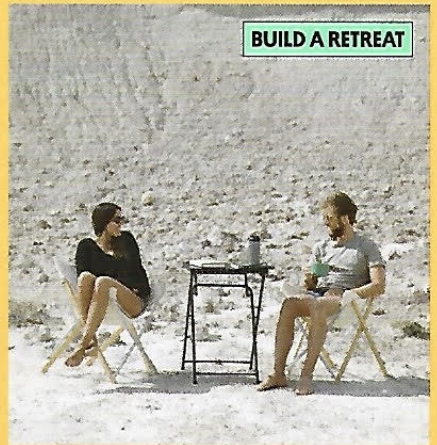
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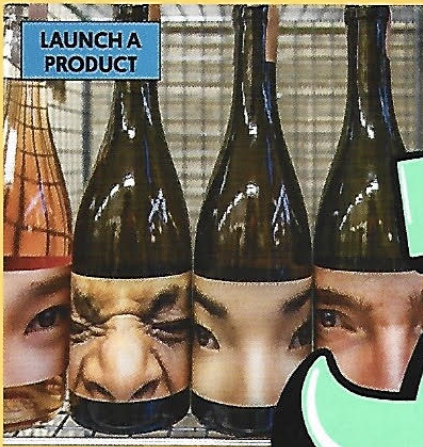
START A DOG SALON



MAKE LINGERIE



BUILD A RETREAT

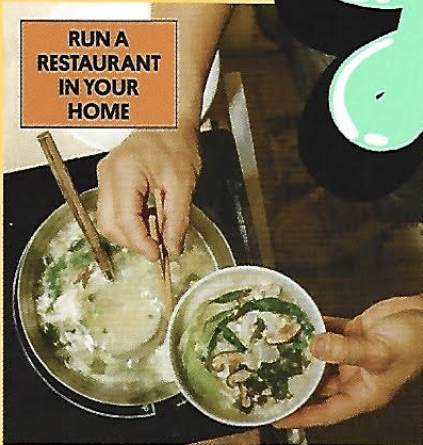


LAUNCH A PRODUCT

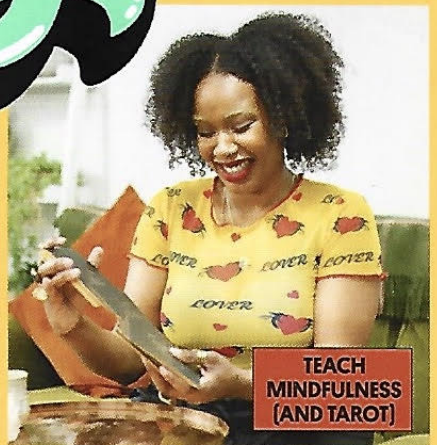


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47.

FOOD AND DRINK

BARTHOLOMEW JONES



Owner of coffee and lifestyle brand Cxffeeblack

Brewing a fresh blend of beans and beats in Memphis to serve and inspire the community.

Rapper and activist Bartholomew Jones clearly recalls the night that Cxffeeblack was conceived. It was at a Memphis recording studio where the self-proclaimed coffee nerd and his friends were mixing music with pour-overs. 'There was this cool vibe – we had guitars and trap drums, my wife and kids were there, we'd created this very black experience – but then we ran out of coffee.' Heading to the local coffee shop was a vibe killer. 'It was very hipster, very posh and the feng shui was off,' he says, laughing. 'And it was like: why can't we have a coffee shop that matches our experience? One where I don't feel like an outsider or have to leave my culture at the door?'

Addressing this lack of diversity in the coffee scene, Bartholomew launched Cxffeeblack in 2018 as an umbrella brand offering everything that the caffeine-loving hip-hop enthusiast could desire, spanning a coffee label, Guji Mane; apparel including hoodies and tees; a podcast; and, of course, music. Right from the

'It's all about looking inside yourself to figure out your purpose and then creating a product that serves it.'

start, the threads of hip-hop and coffee were always interwoven, with Bartholomew rapping about brews and selling bags of coffee at gigs. 'People kept asking us for a second drop,' he says. 'We ended up selling 50lb [23kg] of coffee in 10 days – and 90% of it was bought by young, black creatives.'

He has since neatly packaged up this concept with the Anti Gentrification Cxffee Club Subscription Box, offering first dibs on exclusive coffee and music content to those who sign up. He's even launched a physical coffee pop-up, catering to like-minded folks in his neighborhood. 'It's like a communal living room



Cxffeeblack is the cornerstone of multiple brands.

but we just happen to be making really dope Ethiopian or Afro-Colombian coffee. And every Friday there's some loud Memphis dudes rapping on the corner.'

While Cxffeeblack has certainly struck a chord commercially, often selling out online, it has always been about something bigger than shifting beans. For Bartholomew, it's also about connecting to his history, 'as an African-American disconnected from his ethnic last name and tribal identity'. As an educator, he also sees Cxffeeblack as a means of doing some good in the community. 'We think about it like a social enterprise,' he says. 'Both coffee and hip-hop can bring communities through some really difficult times and also offer an income for people to rise up out of oppression. It was never about: what will people buy? It was more about: what do people need?'

It is this distinction that helps Bartholomew to promote Cxffeeblack with integrity. 'It's about looking inside yourself to figure out your purpose and then creating a product that serves it,' he says. 'If you are



feeling good about what you are doing, you are able to market it without feeling greasy. And then people will connect to your story.'

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given Bartholomew's schedule, self-care has been a stumbling block. 'I had this martyr-syndrome mentality, working 80 hours a week and not paying myself.' His background in faith work and not-for-profits led to a dilemma. 'Once I had profit, I didn't know what to do with it,' he says. 'I had to figure out how to hire help and manage income. But I talked to my therapist and he was like, "Bro, why haven't you paid yourself?" He told me that I couldn't look after others if I wasn't well. That was a big lesson.'

Today, Cxffeeblack is getting attention as a player in the fourth-wave coffee movement, which focuses on socially conscious production. But Bartholomew isn't hung up on labels. 'If people put us in the fourth wave that's cool, but the moment it stops being conducive to sharing coffee with our hood I'm not interested. I don't care about waves, just so long as no one drowns.'



Cxffeeblack's Ethiopian blend, Guji Mane, was launched in 2019.

BARTHLOMEW'S TYPICAL DAY

➤ 6.00am

'Wake up, meditate and read scripture. As I drive my kids to school they talk about dinosaurs but I've not had any coffee yet, so I'm just chilling.'

➤ 8.30am

'Arrive at the Anti Gentrification Coffee Club. Ask my baristas what's brewing and grab a cup.'

➤ 10.00am

'Check our HQ next door and print today's orders.'

➤ 11.00am

'Post on our Instagram (@cxffeeblack) and grab another brew to go. Recently I've been drinking our Blxck Is Gxld blend.'

➤ 12.00pm

'I'll head back home for a lunch date with my wife, Renata Henderson. She's a designer and does the graphics for Cxffeeblack.'

➤ 1.00pm

'I try to make music every day.'

➤ 2.00pm

'At the club I do some pour-over training with our intern Jerome while listening to hip-hop.'

➤ 3.00pm

'More coffee. I usually drink nine coffees throughout the day but they're small 18g brews.'

➤ 4.00pm

'Edit a video or work on a blog. My goal is that once the club closes at 5pm, that's it for work.'

48.

MENTAL HEALTH STARTUPS



The general consensus is that Covid didn't do our mental health any favors. But one silver lining is that public awareness around the importance of our psychological wellbeing has never been greater, and more people are accessing support remotely. Since 2020 alone, there was \$1 billion of venture-capital funding given to **startups focused on mental health**.