

A CELEBRATION OF OUR ICON



BRAXTON BLUE BAKER

BIRTH: DECEMBER 8TH 1998

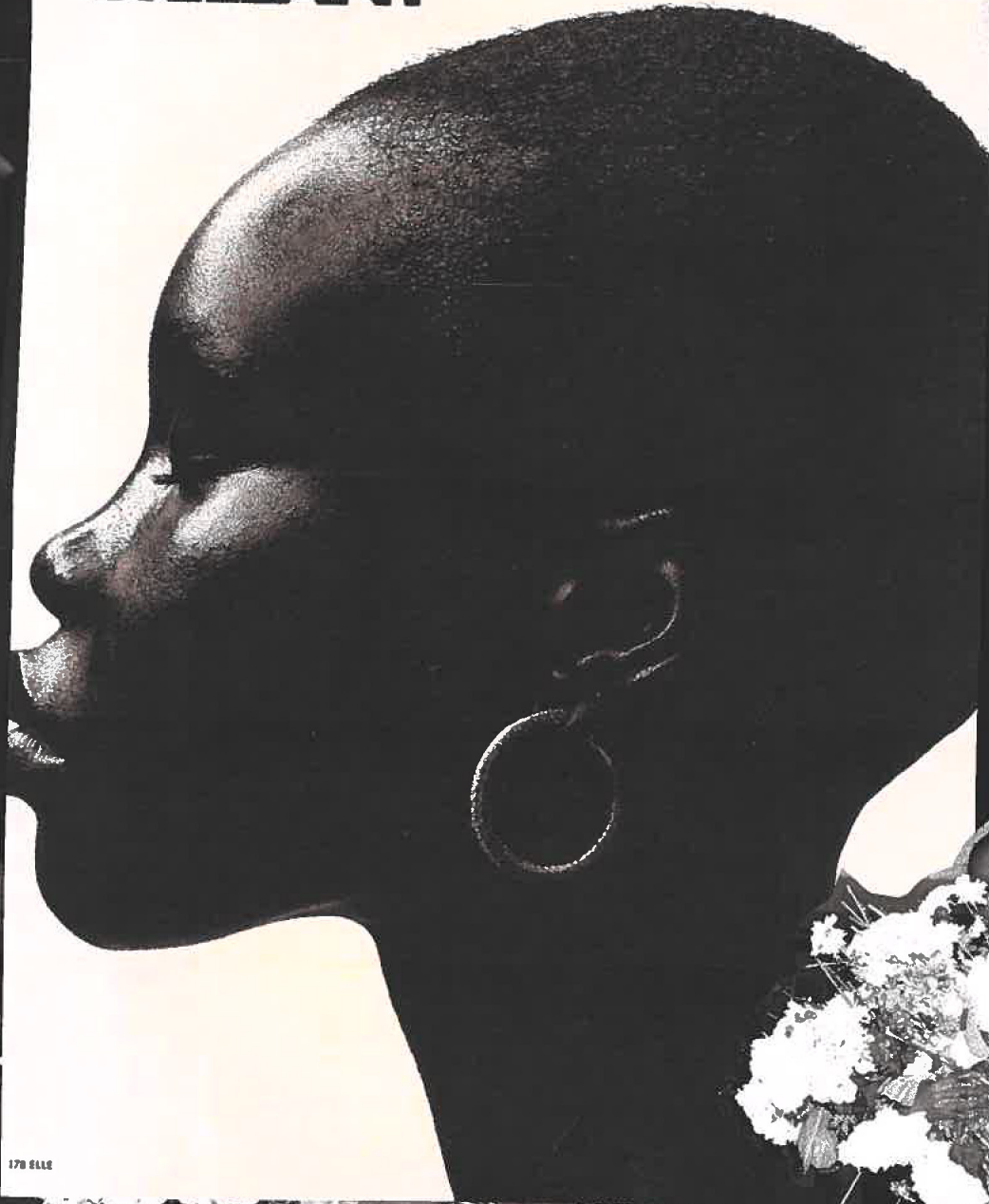
ASCENSION: NOVEMBER 2ND 2020

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH 2020
11:00AM**

**PLEASANT ROCK BAPTIST CHURCH
1099 SCOTT STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21230**

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LEGACY OF BRAX

On Monday, November 2nd, 2020, our beloved Braxton Blue.B Baker transitioned from this Earthly realm at the age of 21. Braxton, known as Brax to family, friends, and fans, was born to Letricia Loftin Russell and Jonathan Baker in Richmond, Virginia on December 8th, 1998 by natural birth. Braxton entered this world exuding purpose, passion, force and divinity. The way she arrived from her mother's womb, with no additional assistance of medicine, and with nothing additive, laid the foundation for her life. Everything about Braxton's birth was a euphemism for the totality of her existence.

In each phase of her life, Brax took up space, with her body, her brilliance, her music and her art, and she refused to apologize for it. She was a true artist in every sense of the word, and spent her entire existence creating. Braxton made her body a canvas, and made her story art in pure form. From childhood dance performances on stages across the country to lyrical tracks that catapulted her into the national spotlight, Brax's creative genius bridged gaps between identity, possibility, healing and divinity. The world wide legacy of Braxton's work reveals her unabashed confidence in being herself - a queer Black woman who remained unafraid to step into the complexity of her truth.

B3 + FAMILY LIFE

Brax was born the youngest of three sisters to her mother, who was the oldest of three sisters. She embodied so much of her mother's radiant aura, and cited her mother as her "number one inspiration and heaven on earth." For all of the gifts her mother had given, one of the most treasured was the gift of sisterhood. With her mother, Letricia, and her sisters, Staci and Timera laying a firm foundation, Brianna, Brooklyne, and Braxton shared an intimately sacred bond that was recognized by all who knew them. If you knew Brax, you knew how much she adored her sisters, and how much they adored her, too. There was a palpable joy shared between them, and an immense pride that they took in being each other's sisters. The way they would support each other, with outpourings of affirmative care at every step of their journeys, was the most precious testament of their sisterhood. With B3 tattooed on each of their bodies, the depths of their love extends far beyond the physical realm.

EARLY LIFE

As a young girl, Braxton had an extremely luminescent presence and a keen love for words. Her bubbly smile, energetic spirit, lively curls and daring curiosity would light up any room she entered. Her joy was contagious and her brilliance was apparent. After cultivating a passion for literacy at the Pleasant Rock Christian School of her grandmother's church, she entered Charles M. Johnson Elementary School, then Ruby F. Carver Elementary School in Henrico County, Virginia. She became aware of her intellectual power early on. An avid reader and writer, Braxton demonstrated an inquisitive mind and creative genius that transcended the bounds of her young age. While she received all A's on report cards, Braxton remained unafraid to challenge and interrogate classroom learning with kindness and sass.

As a dancer, Braxton could learn complex choreography faster than most students twice her age. Her raw talent was incomparable. She left her predecessors in awe of her ability to use her body as a vessel for God's word. Sisterly Grace, her mother's dance studio, became a sacred space where Braxton's talent was honed. She watched her two older sisters, Brianna and Brooklyne, teach dance classes, and learned from them the process of producing creative work with power and meaning. Braxton went on to attend Brookland Middle School, where she excelled on the cheerleading team, while still dancing with Sisterly Grace. The dance collective became a traveling ensemble that opened for leading gospel artists across the country. During this time, Brax further nurtured her art and creativity in the comfort of her mother, her sisters, and her beloved dance community.

HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE

Braxton attended Henrico High School, where she became a Dance Major at the Center for the Arts. As a result of her exceptional ability, she was invited to skip Level One and move into Level Two of the program. She became the star of the program, and one of the youngest captains of the Pure Elegance Band Dance Team. Braxton was widely known within and beyond her high school for her extravagantly stylish outfits, six inch heels, and unapologetic aura. At this time, Brax began tapping into her social media life, with a large following on Tumblr and tens of thousands of followers on Instagram. She began to lean more and more deeply into her creativity of adornment, and it was in this phase of her life that she stepped into her identity as Brax, the fabulous, flamboyant trendsetter we know and love today.

By the end of her highschool years, there is so much about her extraordinary talent, unique aesthetic, and bold edge that has

been cultivated. She went on to attend Clark Atlanta University to pursue psychology for a year, but was left unfulfilled. She recognized that the best bet was herself, and that there were so many other ways to be educated beyond the limitations of the college environment. In her decision to leave Clark Atlanta, she dismantled traditional ideals of what it means to be schooled and what it means to learn.

BRAX + MUSIC

After her departure from undergraduate education, Braxton becomes fully animated in the craft of her artistry. She immerses herself in the world and questions what it meant to be both teacher and learner, professor and student, all within her own creative process. She asks, how can life be my teacher and what can I teach life? She pursues herself relentlessly. She becomes her greatest teacher and her greatest learner.

In returning to her love for words, Braxton explored her passion for hip-hop more deeply. She had always loved lyrics, writing, and the power of song. While she had previously been most known for her unremarkable skills as a dancer and fashion icon, she had always been an extremely talented writer. She loved to articulate herself through storytelling, which was her way of expressing her unique perspective on the world and her place within it. As a Black female rap artist, Braxton believed that she had something to offer a space that was typically male-dominated. She knew that her art could have the power to make other Black women feel as free, as liberated and as unapologetic as she did.

Brax's first solo album, (VERSE)atilty, debuted 8/28/17. For her first single, Lil B., she fully funded, creative directed, styled, designed, and edited her own video. Brax was a one woman show and learned in this process the true power of her own creative vision. This project garnered national attention, and by this point she has one hundred thousand followers on Instagram. She then drops aijuswannarap, and is continuously expanding her fashion, her aesthetic, and the multiple layers of artistry that she is so widely known for.

As Brax becomes more familiar with the industry, she pulls away for spiritual retreat in order to process her own intentions. She realizes that while she is in the industry, she is not of it. Remaining true to herself becomes priority. Healing becomes essential. Braxton leans deeper into her advocacy for sexual abuse survivors after experiencing it herself, and becomes a huge advocate of mental health after battling depression. In this phase of her life, we see her enhance and transform into an even more beautiful and complicated version of herself. She begins to chase wholeness and healing relentlessly.

Brax released Don't Deny on 12/8/2018, her 20th birthday, as a love letter to her own queer Black womanhood. After spending silent time with herself, reflecting on the layers of labels that no longer served her, Braxton began to clarify for herself what systems and structures she no longer desired to uphold within herself. In her process of unpacking and unlearning, she realized that she was tired of living the life that everyone told her she should live. She was tired of denying her own right to be. After surviving sexual assault and depression, she stripped herself down to the core and sat with her truest parts. She realized that she was none of what the world had told her to be, and that in being her own authentic self, she was so much more powerful. Don't Deny was birthed from that place. In it, she celebrates her loving relationship, which was an inspiration for many.

In the final months of her life, Braxton was fervently working on her next project, Blue, which features her most raw, vulnerable, and complex art. She said that this project represented, more than any other project she had done thus far, the artist that she was always meant to be. It is rooted in healing, authenticity, and unique expressions of truth that resonate deeply with the spiritual realm. She finds a delicate balance between being completely decorated and naked at the same time. In addition to Blue, she was working on multiple expressive arts, from left hand painting and connecting with her inner child, to writing novels and her budding brand, which merges her love for literacy, fashion, and black queer revolutionary women. Braxton was tapping into every part of herself, working so intently on operationalizing one of her most treasured quotes, "When I stand before God at the end of my life I hope that I will have not a single bit of talent left and can say 'I used everything you gave me.'"

Braxton leaves to remain empowered by her legacy: her mother; Letricia Loftin Russell her father; Jonathan Baker, her two sisters, Brianna and Brooklyne; Her bonus family, Arthur Russell III, Kahlil and Jada; Grandparents, Rev. Dr. Timothy Loftin & Rev. Dr. Doris Loftin; Mr. Sylvester Baker Sr & Ms. Barbara Baker; aunts, Timera and Baker family; cousins, Laniah, Nia, David, Iman, & Jodie; Special Friends, Kennet & Suriya; her Sisterly Grace family and a host of wonderful supporters of her music, fashion & art. She was preceded in death by her beautiful Aunt Staci Loftin Roberts. May they rejoice in heaven together.

*We thank you Braxton.
We love you Braxton.
We applaud you Braxton.
Always.*

CELEBRATION OF LEGACY

“MUSIC IS NOT A FAME THING. MUSIC IS A GIFT FROM GOD. MUSIC IS GOD’S LANGUAGE, HIS WAY OF CONVERSING WITH US, SERIOUSLY.”

-DR. PHILLIP TABANE

(EXTRACTED FROM SIGH, THE BELOVED COUNTRY OF BONGANI, MADONDO)

AFRICAN DRUMS INTERLUDE JAYLEN BROWN
OPENING PRAYER SHANDY MILLER

SET THE ATMOSPHERE TRIS LORAINE
JESUS IS A LOVE SONG

NEGROE SPIRITUAL STUDIO A ENSEMBLE
WADE IN THE WATER | ULTRALIGHT BEAM

BRAX DEVOTIONALS DEON KIPPING

THE READING OF “LEGACY OF BRAX”
BY BRAX’S MOMMY – LETRICIA LOFTIN RUSSELL

REFLECTIONS
REE BOTTS
ALEX WALKER
JAKE HOLMES
ADRIENNE WATSON CARVER

MADE TO LOVE STUDIO A DANCE ENSEMBLE
CHOREOGRAPHED BY BRAX

REFLECTIONS
FRIENDS
COUSINS
AUNT
DAD
SISTERS
MOM

SERMONIC HYMN KEOLA JONES
WELL DONE- DEITRICK HADDEN

EULOGY
KYNDRA FRAZIER

OUTERLUDE SAMOHT

BENEDICTION..... MINISTER DORIS LOFTIN

RECESSIONAL
FLY LIKE A BIRD – MARIAH CAREY



ESSENCE | 50 YEARS

Rapper Brax, 21, Passes Away

HER COMMUNITY OF SUPPORTERS AND FRIENDS HAVE BEGUN TO SHARE THEIR CONDOLENCES ONLINE.

People

Rapper and Social Influencer Brax Dead at 21: 'God Retrieved the Angel He Loaned Us'

"Her internal and external being was completely pure," her mother wrote on social media



VARIETY

Brax, Rapper and Social Media Influencer, Dies at 21



billboard

Rapper Brax Dies at 21







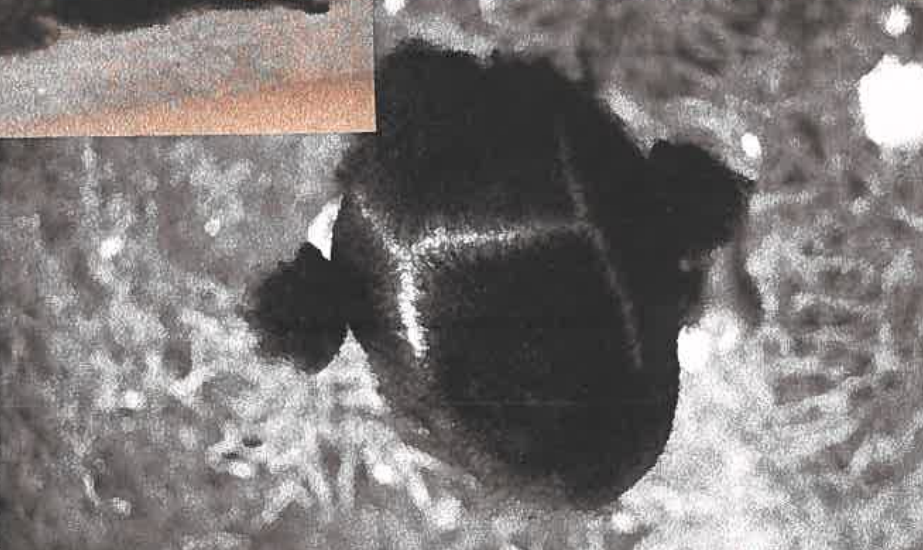




Photo by
William H. Johnson
1968-1970
The National
Museum of American Art
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POWER
TO THE
PEOPLE

Supports 1968-72
William H. Johnson
1968-1970
The National
Museum of
American Art
Washington, D.C. Gift of
The Johnson Foundation

AVEN PANTHER DEFENSE

KIDNAPPED



"we are no longer treated
AS WOMEN-as this system has
told us we were- because we are
thrown in jail, beaten, over the
head, just as much as the men are.
Ericka Huggins was the first one
that had to deal with all this, that
had to endure all this madness.
And so the women in the commu-
nity are resisting to this very much.
I think that these people, these
men, are going to stop acting like
lesser kids and are going to start
to fly the other way, and pick up
and have to defend themselves
like the men do."
Artie Seale



...the revolution...
...attempts to...
...magnation...
...Blacks began to...
...might have...
...United States...
...South Africa...
...apart...
...clear politics...
...cycles of...
...THE REVIVAL OF...
...Yemen used...
...the world...
...and Black women...
...one side...
...And we "will...
...that strength...
...struggle...
...And we have...
...newly...
...The killing...
...is that the...
...the only one...
...she will...
...locking on...
...the human...
...I'm referring...
...women who...
...sexual...
...quers, or...
...double...
...tells Black...
...we are...
...and that...
...And this...
...on out



EVERY...
...LIBERATION SCHOOL
...COMMUNITY POLITICAL
EDUCATION
...CLASSES FOR ADULTS...
...MONDAY...
...BLACK PANTHER PARTY
...MADISON 243-8276



FLOWER BEARERS

KENNET ANDERSON
SURIYA MCGUIRE
ALLIYAH BATTLE
SHANDY MILLER
NICOLE JOHNSON
COURTNEY MANNS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

BRAXTON'S FAMILY EXPRESS OUR DEEPEST GRATITUDE FOR THE OUTPOURING OF LOVE FOR OUR ANGEL, BRAXTON BLUE.B BAKER. WITH OVER A MILLION IMPRESSIONS, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL COVERAGE OF HER PASSING- IT WAS MADE CLEAR THAT THE WORLD FELT THE POWER, CYNOSURE, AND SACREDNESS OF BRAXTON. BRAXTON IS AND WILL ALWAYS BE OUR GREATEST GIFT, A SHINING EXAMPLE OF WHAT IS POSSIBLE WHEN YOU TRULY BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT HIS OWN. SHE WAS TRULY AN ANGEL ON EARTH AND WE ARE IMMENSELY BLESSED FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF EXPERIENCING HER.

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