

# Listen: KIRBY: Miss Black America Album Stream



KIRBY's *Miss Black America* is a dedication to her Mississippi hometown and a loving defense of the south. It was four years ago when the singer-songwriter released *Sis. He Wasn't The One*. KIRBY pulls you in with her soulful tone that has a tiny rasp and an angelic higher register. Whether she is calling out the government on "The Man" or reminding folks that Mississippi is not a remote island but a part of the nation on the title track, KIRBY manages to entertain while sharing structural frustrations and heralding family. It is a world of old Cadillacs, Waffle Houses, plantations, the KKK, and curvy women.

She sums it up when she says, “When I go to the Dockery Plantation and stand on the land that my ancestors picked cotton on, sang on, danced on, and cried on, how can I not feel a responsibility to tell their story? To try and own my masters because those who started the blues indeed had a master. If you’ve never been to Mississippi, this record should take you there.”

*Miss Black America* does revere KIRBY’s ancestors, but it’s also an autobiographical trip planted in a musical foundation of funk, blues, and R&B. KIRBY celebrates southern culture and claims the American dream while still pointing out certain gripes about life in the United States. *Miss Black America* compresses the contradictions of being Black and successful in the United States. She delivers the 12 songs with a short guest list that includes fellow Mississippian Big K.R.I.T., Akeem Ali, and the Tennessee Mass Choir. KIRBY oozes a sweetness that makes the gospel blues of “Reparations” feel like an accessible karaoke moment that does not lose the power of its message. KIRBY’s *Miss Black America* is a rich dip into the happenings below the Mason-Dixon Line with a group of songs just as sustainable as the cuisine.

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## **TAVE Releases Fly Away EP**



TAVE's *Fly Away* EP is one more thing to add to your 2025 R&B haul. The producer/musician and his guests, who include but are not limited to Stacy Barthe, Bibi Bourelly, Eric Bellinger, Musiq Soulchild, and Kenyon Dixon, excavate through a raft of emotions and land on listening bliss. TAVE summed it up when he said, "It's about having real conversations and creating stories that stay true to what we are experiencing: melodies, truth, and ultimately... love." From the moment the EP

opens with “Difference Now,” it’s clear that *Fly Away* was created with raw confessional energy tapped from soul-etched memories. Barthe’s voice is an emotional highway leading deeper into self-knowing that plays off of singer Runkus’ words. The engagement continues throughout the EP that has guaranteed replay value thanks to no filler and eight juicy songs with a team of underground stars and a Philly legend. TAVE has been busy writing songs for folks like K-Pop girl group AESPA and R&B phenom Masego. The switch from writing for others and focusing on his own art was a fluid move with *Fly Away* and should be the beginning of an interesting solo career.

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## **Throwback: Foxy Brown: Hot Spot**



Foxy Brown's "Hot Spot" was the first song released from her 1999 sophomore album, *Chyna Doll*. Brown co-wrote the lyrics with Jay-Z and Irv Gotti and Lil Rob produced the beat. Brown had reached stardom with her 1996 debut album, *Ill Na Na*, and *Chyna Doll* kept the momentum. The album landed at number one on the Billboard chart and no other woman rapper had done that except Lauryn Hill one year earlier. Critics slammed *Chyna Doll* and accused Brown's efforts of falling short compared to *Ill Na Na*, which was praised and sold well. Brown was also seen as not too different from Lil' Kim, who also wore skimpy, sexy clothes, referenced the mafia, and loved rapping about money. No record label or music critic ever said there were too many male gangsta rappers but the idea that there can only be one woman rapper still persists in 2025.

In retrospect, both artists pioneered another lane for women rappers that is being mimicked by most of their female descendants in mainstream contemporary rap. “Hot Spot” was the only single from *Chyna Doll* to chart but the album achieved platinum status two months after its release. Foxy Brown’s legacy is often overlooked because of the comparisons to Lil’ Kim and her leaving rap. Nicki Minaj and Megan Thee Stallion are just two of the women rappers to come after Foxy Brown and recognize her contributions. Foxy Brown reunited with Nas, who is one of her colleagues from their supergroup The Firm, to appear on “Full Circle” on his *King’s Disease* album released in 2020. In 2024, she had a feature on Young Devyn’s “Intro.”

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## Media Questions Of The Week

[https://twitter.com/Alchemist/status/1961416405452296477?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1961416405452296477%7Ctwgr%5E54a6e411f1f01702e0c607340b223dcefdb7aedd%7Ctwcon%5Es1\\_c10&ref\\_url=https%3A%2F%2Fd-19706826101029054655.ampproject.net%2F2507172035000%2Fframe.html](https://twitter.com/Alchemist/status/1961416405452296477?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1961416405452296477%7Ctwgr%5E54a6e411f1f01702e0c607340b223dcefdb7aedd%7Ctwcon%5Es1_c10&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fd-19706826101029054655.ampproject.net%2F2507172035000%2Fframe.html)

When will Erykah Badu’s collaboration album with The Alchemist, *Abi & Alan*, come out?

Is Drake right about London having the best rappers in the world?