

The self-sabotage of rap artist Nicki Minaj

By Solé Scott
Editor-in-Chief

Nicki Minaj was once hailed as a powerful star who was a pioneer for modern female hip hop. Today, she is nothing more than a despicable human.

She is married to a registered sex offender and aligns her brand with people who are morally questionable. Her moral credibility has long since been destroyed, and according to the BBC, she supported her brother who was convicted of child rape.

Her legacy has been tarnished by her infamous and inflammatory posts on X, like the one that she posted on Thursday, Feb. 12 in response to a video about the SAVE Act.

“BLACK PPL have ID b/c they know their black ass is more likely to be pulled over or stopped in the street!!!” Minaj said on X. “You really mean ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS— so that you can CHEAT American citizens out of fair elections.”

I find this to be deplorable and hypocritical, as Minaj has revealed that she came to America from Trinidad as an undocumented immigrant when she was five years old.

Minaj is now 43 years old and still not a U.S. citizen; however, she has had a green card for the last 20 years or so. Lawful permanent

residency is not the same as citizenship, though, and can be revoked under certain legal circumstances.

In 2003, Minaj was arrested in New York City for criminal possession of a weapon. Her criminal history makes her present-day political standing hard to make sense of.

As the internet says, she is always on a coke rant on X as she tries desperately to convince her audience that the music industry is against her and that Jay-Z is sabotaging her career.

On the night of the Grammys, she unsurprisingly live tweeted after she was mentioned during the ceremony.

“As they do their ritual tonight, God almighty will reveal himself to them. The ritual will backfire on them. God will not be mocked. Blessed is the MIGHTY NAME OF JESUS CHRIST. Every tongue that rises up against me in judgement shall be condemned & put to shame,” Minaj said on X.

We have fully transitioned from self-defense to paranoia.

She utilizes her platform to bully, harass and manipulate her fanbase, the Barbz, in her defense. This has created an unhealthy parasocial relationship with fans, as they truly believe they actually know her and are all friends.

You can find her out

and about at a Turning Point USA event, the U.N. or at the White House.

Something drastically changed in her public persona in 2017, as she experienced a career slump.

Minaj had public beef with Remy Ma and up-and-coming rapper Cardi B. These two separate situations caused a social media hate train and exposed her need to gatekeep being a prominent female rapper.

10 years ago, if someone were to tell me that Nicki Minaj would become a MAGA conspirator who believes everyone is evil and will be punished by God, I would stare in confusion and not believe the news.

Before 2020, she strived to encourage all her fans to obtain an education, be authentic in themselves, and she would uplift the Black community. Now, it seems that persona is long gone, and I cannot help but wonder if it was all for show.

The trajectory of her career and life is in the toilet, and I do not see a comeback in the future. Minaj will likely follow the path of Kanye West and apologize to everyone while blaming her husband or someone else for controlling her.

Some of the best advice I was ever given was to never idolize the rich and famous, and unfortunately, this is a clear example of why.

Brent Faiyaz returns after three long years



PHOTO | ROLLING STONE
American singer and songwriter Brent Faiyaz.

By Solé Scott
Editor-in-Chief

Christopher Brent Wood, known professionally as Brent Faiyaz, continues his reign as this decade’s greatest yearner through his new album.

On Friday, Feb. 13, Faiyaz released his third studio album just in time for Valentine’s Day, and I have had it on repeat ever since.

The album title “Icon” consists of 10 songs with a duration of 34 minutes.

Faiyaz has been in the music business for far too long to have a body of work still be too short to digest. His longest album to date is still “WASTELAND,” with 1 hour and 4 minutes.

This is one of the only

complaints I have, which is not a new critique.

My favorite songs are “butterflies,” “vanilla sky,” “four seasons,” “wrong faces.” and “have to.”

His romantic tone exudes throughout the project. That is a huge development, as in his previous work, the tone was slightly toxic but still raw and authentic.

He displayed this demeaning behavior on “One Night Only” in 2018, which was released by his R&B group, Sonder.

“I wanna see you face to face/ And I don’t give a damn about your boyfriend/ He can have you after I go,” Faiyaz said.

Faiyaz now seems to right his wrongs from the past and puts his feelings

out there on the song “four seasons.”

“That’s why I write these songs thinking maybe I can reach you,” Faiyaz said.

On Sunday, Feb. 15, it was revealed that Faiyaz would drop a surprise director’s cut with two new songs later that night.

The album has already been critically praised, as news organizations such as Medium rated the album a solid 7.7 out of 10.

I will say that the album did lack the punch and ensemble features that were present in his album “WASTELAND.”

However, I am a strong believer that successive albums should not sound the same or even follow the same formula because that stifles an artist’s creativity.

Nevertheless, I am impressed that he wrote all the lyrics to each song since that is a rare feat for today’s artists.

I am proud to say I have been a fan since 2016 when he was on the rise and appeared on the song “Crew” with Shy Glizzy and GoldLink. I even remember when he became one third of sultry R&B group Sonder.

Since then, he has continued to elevate lyrically and creatively, which shows in this new album. The project was executively produced by legendary musician Raphael Saadiq with Chad Hugo and Benny Blanco and blends generations of emotions.

The only thing I ask is that he waits until the summer to go on tour so I can save my coins.



PHOTO | THE NEW YORK TIMES
Nicki Minaj at the AmericaFest conference on Dec. 21, 2025.

SOUTHERN NEWS

Advisers: Cindy Simoneau Frank Harris III	Section Editors Brianna Wallen Valentina Toro Julian Markese Lily Rand Wade Barillaro William Gagné	Editor-in-Chief Managing Editor Staff Reporters Victoria Cruz Draven Dabrowski Vacancy
Contact information: Email: scsu.southernct.news@gmail.com Newsroom Phone: 203-392-6928 Fax: 203-392-6927	News Editor Features Editor Sports Editor Photo Editor Photographer Photographer	News Writer Sports Writer General Assignment (3)
Mailing Address: Southern Connecticut State University Adanti Student Center Room 222 501 Crescent Street New Haven, CT 06515	Copy Desk Hannah Graham & Mackenzie Byerlee	
Issues printed by: Valley Publishing, Derby, CT Follow us on Twitter: @Southern_News Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/thesouthernnews Visit us online: TheSouthernNews.org Print edition online: OurSchoolNewspaper.com/Southern		

Southern News welcomes any and all comments and suggestions. If we make a mistake, please contact us and we will publish a correction or clarification in the next issue.

We are the student newspaper of Southern Connecticut State University, and we welcome the writing of all Southern students and faculty.

To submit a piece, email it to scsu.southern.news@gmail.com, or stop by the Southern News office on the second floor of the Student Center, Room 225. Electronic submissions are preferred.

Visit www.TheSouthernNews.org for more.

The aftermarket which rebuilt the LEGO brand

By Jay’Mi Vazquez
Managing Editor

I still remember the sound of LEGO bricks spilling onto the carpet; that unmistakable rattle that meant an afternoon of building lay ahead.

For me, LEGO was never about value or scarcity; it was about imagination. But as I am watching today’s market, I cannot help feeling that something fundamental has shifted.

Over the past decade, sealed LEGO sets have morphed into unlikely investment vehicles.

I have seen sets that once retailed for modest sums resell for multiples of their original price simply because they were kept unopened.

Entire online communities now track retirement dates, production runs and aftermarket trends with the precision of stock analysts.

When I scroll through resale sites and see prices rivaling luxury goods, I find myself wondering when play quietly turned into portfolio management.

The phenomenon extends beyond full sets. Some of the most astonishing numbers are attached to vintage minifigures.

Seeing the prices on some rare figures makes me regret how often I would toss those tiny plastic characters into shoeboxes without a second thought.

I cannot help but laugh when I think about

the pirate captain or classic spaceman I might have lost under a couch decades ago.

Today, certain rare minifigures sell for hundreds, even thousands of dollars. What once felt disposable has become highly prized.

On one level, the economics make sense. LEGO retires sets, meaning the supply of new, sealed versions only shrinks over time.

I understand how scarcity, combined with nostalgia and a global resale market, drives up prices.

Adults who grew up building castles and spaceships now have disposable income and a desire to reconnect with their childhood. I count myself among them.

There is something powerful about holding a box from decades past, knowing it represents a simpler time.

But I also feel heavily conflicted. When I hear parents debating whether their child should open a new LEGO set or keep it sealed “for the future,” I worry. I worry that people are teaching kids to treat toys as assets first and experiences second.

LEGO was designed to be built, dismantled and rebuilt. I have always believed its magic lies in the act of construction, not in the preservation of cardboard packaging.

However, I do not blame collectors entirely. I understand the thrill of the hunt and the satisfaction of owning

something rare. I have felt the temptation myself, debating if I should buy two of a desirable set: one to build, one to stash away.

The fact that this thought even occurs to me says something about how normalized the investment mindset has become.

What troubles me most is not that LEGO has value, but that monetary value increasingly overshadows imaginative value.

When sealed sets are displayed like museum pieces and minifigures are graded like trading cards, I sometimes wonder whether people are truly missing the point of the product.

Still, I do not think the answer is to dismiss the collector market outright.

For many, collecting is a form of appreciation, even preservation. And I have to admit, something is fascinating about how a simple interlocking brick has achieved cultural and financial significance on a global scale.

But if you ask me, the true value of LEGO cannot be measured in resale charts or auction bids.

It should be measured in the hours spent building something from nothing, in the frustration of collapsed towers and in the happiness of seeing a finished creation.

In the end, I hope people remember that LEGO bricks are meant to be clicked together, not just accumulate value.