

DESIGN

A woman with long dark hair and glasses, wearing a white leotard, is captured in a dynamic yoga pose. She is leaning back, with her right leg bent and her foot held by her hands behind her head. The background is a light, textured surface.

COSIGN MAGAZINE

THE BODY

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**CLAIRE
FOUNTAIN**
OG YOGA VIXEN

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WITH FITNESS AND HEALTH TRANSFORMING INTO A TRENDING LIFESTYLE. THE YOGA CULTURE HAS BECOME A VERY POPULAR OUTLET FOR THOSE LOOKING TO BETTER THEIR LIVES MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY.



"I think body acceptance begins on the inside, as cliché as that sounds, but I'm a huge believer in the power of the mind and how our thoughts can run, or ruin, our lives," **Claire Fountain**, owner of Trill Yoga, tells us during our interview.

Fountain, 30, resides in New York City and has found her niche, which is a beautiful achievement for an entrepreneur. Combining her love for yoga and music, Trill Yoga was created to celebrate the human form and provide an avenue for anybody and any body to learn to utilize the power of yoga. COSIGN had the pleasure to dig deep inside the mind of Claire Fountain to discuss the future of her business, sexy versus sensual, the perfect body and how she built her brand.

COSIGN: According to your website you're originally from Mississippi. Did your Southern upbringing have an influence on naming your brand Trill Yoga? And what essentially made you want to name it "Trill Yoga?"

TRILL YOGA: I am indeed born and raised in Jackson, Mississippi ... and obviously my Southern roots played a part in influencing my brand and ideals. I grew up on Southern hip-hop and blues music, so when we needed a term to define what I was doing (and something more guerrilla and different for the yoga world), we came up with Trill Yoga. It stuck because it feels authentic to me — both the movement and the message.

COSIGN: Can we expect you to collaborate with Bun B or any Southern artists in the future?

TRILL YOGA: Wouldn't that be fun? I'll ask Bun if he's on board. He did sign off on Trill Yoga, calling me the "OG Yoga Vixen," so you never know what might happen upon my return to Houston. Bun continues to be such an important person in music and culture, makes the word trill mean that much more.

And other Southern artists? Holler at me. Trill Yoga is for everyone.

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COSIGN: What made you want to move to New York? And coming from the South, was it an easy transition?

TRILL YOGA: I always knew there was far more to life outside of Mississippi. I moved right after high school with a one-way ticket here. I went to Vassar [College] in upstate New York, but it's just north of the [New York] City, a train-ride away. I wouldn't say the first year was an easy transition but college rarely is, especially when you're by yourself. I don't fear change or being uncomfortable because I knew where I wanted to be ... and I'm still here.

COSIGN: We read in an interview that you began practicing yoga to deal with anxiety and depression. For someone who is currently dealing with the same situation, how does one benefit from practicing yoga?

TRILL YOGA: Correct, depression and anxiety got me into yoga because I knew I had to do something. You get to a place where you're desperate to feel better. I knew about yoga and from what I was reading, it appeared it might help. I threw myself into any local classes I could find, which for me were at the gym. Thank God I had a brilliant teacher who came from an Ashtanga background and really provided a solid, in-depth practice in such a seemingly "not-so-yoga" space. But yoga isn't about the space. It's ultimately about breathing, and that rhythmic breathing can help produce a feeling of detachment and you start to realize you can let go of the thoughts that plague you.

Yoga is a moving meditation and therapy at times. I won't go into all the science of the brain, nor do I know terribly much about the intricate workings of it, but meditation has been found to change the brain. As you find a deeper sense of self and open up to all the things yoga might bring up, you find more peace, solace, acceptance, truth, and love.

Sometimes it gets harder before it gets easier, but I encourage everyone to stick with it. Our bodies are barometers of our truth. We have lifetimes of things that happen to us, that we feel, rational and irrational, but the body holds onto it, and it's up to us to let it all out so we can feel better.

COSIGN: This is our body issue and we wanted to highlight different shapes and sizes and show people that beauty can be found in all body types. You're a beautiful curvy fit woman, how do you feel about stereotypes of a perfect body being slim and tall?

TRILL YOGA: It's sad to me that people are made to feel less than because their body doesn't fit an "ideal" or a certain shape. It just perpetuates the ideas that you're not good enough if you don't look a certain way, as well as saying your worth is in your body and your appearance. That's a damaging message, and as children we begin to internalize those messages, we grow up comparing our insides to others' outsides.

I think body acceptance begins on the inside, as cliché as that sounds, but I'm a huge believer in the power of the mind and how our thoughts can run, or ruin, our lives. I think society, and media at large, are making headway in terms of representing different bodies as beautiful and acceptable, but we still have a long way to go. I think when something doesn't have to be talked about or highlighted and when it just is ... that's when we have overcome it.

COSIGN: We also noticed you stated that you don't "sexualize" yourself. Even though most people will clearly classify you as sexy, do you think this is a benefit? Or do you believe this hinders you from being taken serious in some aspects?

TRILL YOGA: The terms "sexy" and "sensual" often get confused, and society has given us these very overt sexual images and somehow that's passed that off as our "sexy" definition – a poor one if you ask me, as it's built on the most fundamental level of sexuality. Society conditions you as to what physical attributes are "sexy," but sexy happens on the inside. Is a lacy garter belt really sexy? No, but a woman owning her body in all of its real raw amazingness certainly is.

Sexy, to me, cannot be contrived. The minute it's forced, you've lost it. Sure, it might still elicit a response, but it's an immature one. The deeper you get into yourself and your truth, the more sense it will make. Sexy happens when you're comfortable in your own body. For me, I own who I am. When I present my most raw,

genuine and real self, then I feel sexy. If that is seen or felt, so be it. I can't control someone else's response but hopefully it triggers them to question what they feel about me, my body, and why.

In terms of being taken seriously, well that's just a bigger issue than me all together. It appears to me that as Americans, we can't handle someone being sexy because we see women's bodies as distracting. Sexuality makes us feel "some type of way" solely because we have long been repressed and/or shamed by it. When we realize sexuality and sensuality are not solely based on the body and its features, we will move on to a more productive world where people are seen for what they can really do, and offer, instead of just bodies that trigger sexual feelings.

COSIGN: What is your favorite part of your body? And what would you consider the perfect body?

TRILL YOGA: Everything? No, really, I just appreciate my body for what it can do; I love my strong legs and healthy hair, and feeling like a woman, and taking up space. Everything on me is part of what makes me "me," so I'm cool with it. A body that is well-loved is a perfect body. Bodies are incredible beings. They help us experience life, love, pleasure, pain ... they're just amazing sensory machines. And all that is worth loving.

I've long been fascinated with hands, and all they do for us, and how much they mean. When you break your body down into what it can do, and what it does for you, it's hard to not be amazed and grateful. Yoga has been said to help people see what their bodies can do, and I continually hear stories about how happy someone felt after doing something they didn't know was possible but that's the beauty of it; because the body can do so much. Inside and out; so much. That's a perfect body.

COSIGN: With a huge following on social media comes unwanted attention. How do you deal with guys who may approach you the wrong way because they see the poses and flexibility on Instagram?

TRILL YOGA: You have to keep it moving. Social media has become super titillating for a number of reasons. Men (and women) have started to think certain behavior is acceptable.





How a man approaches me says more about him than it ever will about me. I have very little tolerance for it, and my curve game is very strong otherwise.

COSIGN: What would be your favorite playlist to work out to? Can you share a few of your favorite work out songs?

TRILL YOGA: I like to work out to whatever I'm enjoying at the minute, so it's always changing. I don't need upbeat or high tempo, just needs to be what I'm feeling. I really like the London Bars album for when I'm in the gym. Otherwise, most music is linked on my SoundCloud or Spotify.

COSIGN: Congratulations on joining the Beats By Dre family. Can you tell us a little bit about how this happened and how you fuse yoga with music and art?

TRILL YOGA: Thank you, it's a really amazing brand I've been involved with, in some capacity, for a while now. Most recently, we're working on the #ChargedUp campaign which fuses music, movement, and fitness – for me specifically, yoga. Health and wellness is a lifestyle and certainly one [that] music supports, so the goal of this initiative is to motivate people to push through a workout and push through a potential, via music through Beats products.

A big part of Trill Yoga is the music and arts component, as it's a genuine and authentic extension of myself. I'm a creative in the wellness space, and I think anything that makes you "you," is part of Trill Yoga. Plus, music and art make people feel something. Feeling is a huge part of what makes us human, so why not bring those elements into your yoga practice?

COSIGN: The Trill Yoga brand is definitely taking off. Will there be merchandise in the future, if it doesn't already exist? And will you be touring, doing classes all over the U.S.?

TRILL YOGA: I'm blessed to be able to share who I am and why I do what I do in a way that

resonates with people. There will certainly be merchandise, but it will be stylized, more than just screen-printing. Hopefully the merch will appeal to people even if they don't fuck with yoga.

The Trill Yoga tour is slated for late summer 2016, but I'm already teaching when I travel, so be on the look out, y'all.

COSIGN: Where would you like to see your brand and yourself in the next five years?

TRILL YOGA: I'd like to see Trill Yoga continue to grow with more followers, creatives, support, etc. Everyone needs wellness and as we learn better ways to care for ourselves, internally and externally. I want Trill Yoga to continue to be a source of knowledge, inspiration and a way for us all to practice in our own unique ways.

In five years, I'll be 35, and who knows if social media will still exist, as we know it. I am confident I'll still be living the trill life I do now, still trying to make decisions out of love, not fear, and still doing yoga and preaching wellness for all, even if I am balancing a little legend on my hip the whole time. I want to speak on more panels and use my platform to have a voice that speaks on things that matter. I feel like I have a responsibility to keep living with purpose and helping people the best I can.

COSIGN: Who does Claire Fountain #COSIGN? Who do you support and give your stamp of approval to?

TRILL YOGA: Love, always. And of course, yoga. But I also COSIGN truth, acceptance, compassion and living a life of experiences over things. I COSIGN ditching the mask you wear and letting yourself be seen in all your natural glory.

I also COSIGN lots of greens, lots of water, and ... monochromatic outfits.

Love more. Bless the world.
Thank you, COSIGN.