

S/VOLUME



\$16.95
DISPLAY UNTIL FEBRUARY 28TH, 2020



TEDDY QUINLIVAN
by Ellen von Unwerth

ONCE MORE WITH FEELING

Donté Colley is making the world a happier place, one dance move at a time.

BY MISHAL CAZMI

DONTÉ COLLEY ENTERED SOCIAL MEDIA'S collective consciousness like a blazing supernova. Less than a year ago, on New Year's Eve, the 22-year-old Scarborough, Ontario, native uploaded a dance video on Instagram and skyrocketed to viral fame. And it wasn't just any dance video—Colley crafted the perfect recipe with infectious dance moves (to the boppable beat of the Wii Sports theme song), a message of positivity, and a cheery explosion of emojis.

Since then, Colley's motivational dance videos have become a balm for world-weariness and an antidote to negativity. "Dance has always been something that makes me feel so good inside. It's made me feel comfortable with who I am and in my own skin," he says. "There's something about movement that really centres my mind, body, and spirit, and keeps me grounded." His brand of uplifting, emoji-filled choreography and encouraging messages like "You've Got What It Takes" and "You Are a Star" have resonated with the more than 790,000 people that follow him on Instagram.

Like dance, emojis are another universal language for Colley. "It's available across the globe, and something that you can understand and relate to," he explains. They're also a way of marrying his love of movement with digital media. The dancer and content creator is currently enrolled at the University of Guelph-Humber for digital communications. "I became obsessed with creating as soon

as I was exposed to Tumblr. I loved creating HTML layouts that were custom and personal to me and my style. From there, I found my love for graphic design, videography, photography, and web design, which led me to apply to [the program]."

Colley has danced his way onto *Good Morning America* and a music video for Ariana Grande, as well as nabbed campaigns for Rihanna's Savage X Fenty and Glossier Play—and that's just the highlight reel. "I've been in awe," he says of the experience. "I love how social media can really connect us all in a positive way, and just make the world so much smaller."

His dance moves aren't the only crowd-pleaser; his style is a hit, too. "Fashion has always been a passion of mine as well, and another creative way to express myself. I love mixing colour and print, and just having fun." You can catch him rocking everything from a dapper suit to a casual t-shirt-and-sweats combo. Kendrick Lamar collaborator and Virgil Abloh-approved musician Steve Lacy is one of his style inspirations, and Colley possesses a similar self-assured swagger and sense of ease with his own style.

Even with his newfound fame and an increasing number of projects and opportunities, Colley isn't focused on social media fame. "Some things don't last forever, and that's okay! It's so important to find ways of doing things that make me happy, as well as others. A smile speaks a thousand words, and that's all I could ever ask for with the content I push out."

"There's something about movement that really centres my mind, body, and spirit, and keeps me grounded."

Photographed by Daniel Lastrés.

