

## Hip Hop is not Dead - But it is on Life Support

Written by Robert ID3189

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Hip Hop may not be dead, but it seems to be on life support.

The genre of hip hop and rap has become so stale that people are not really 'listening' to the music anymore. So called Hip Hop heads buy the records they are told to. They think the artists with the most money behind them are the best the hip hop culture has to offer.

When massive amounts of money are spent in promotion, people assume that this artist or that artist is the hottest hip hop artist or rap artist out there; and in many cases they are not.

Hip Hop and Rap artists like Immortal Technique, Mr. Magic, redruM781, Binky Mack, Squeak Ru, Joe Serious, Gail Gotti, Don Cutec, Wize Fool, DonCarlo Third Degree, Tommy Danger, Loc Saint, Shady Ray THA SINISTA, Dangerous Rob, Street Politicks and so many other talents are over looked because they may not have major money behind them – but most of them, and many many others, can out spit most of the major money backed so called talents.

Those who are really 'listening' to the music that hip hop culture has to offer know the best rap can be found by looking into the unsigned artists.

Then there are the mainstream artists who always throw out names of late hip hop and rap icons just to sell records. Icon names like Tupac (2Pac), Eazy-E, and Big Pun are always 'tossed out there' by various artists. But when it comes to remembering their fallen 'homies', where are some of these artists who love to throw out the name but are no where around to either help the family of the artist (as in Big Pun's case) or helping to preserve the Legacy and helping to finish a Art Center in Tupac's case. Artists love to say they have love for these cats but few really show that love, but many 'fans' fall for that 'phoney homie' routine and support an artist just cause he can spit a name.

Then there are the books. The one sided memoir's being released which tell one side of a story, and people flock and believe what they read. There are always two sides to every story, so to get the truth on some of these memoirs's or accounts of what really happened back in the day - we need other involved parties to write their accounts of what happened so we can see the whole landscape at the time. Maybe icon figures like Ice Cube, Ren, or Yella can write their

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memoirs and tell the other side of the real story. Remember President Nixon said he was not a crook, and when you looked at the whole picture most had a different perception.

Then there are the respected figures in the hip hop culture that seem to do things that are hard to understand. An example would be Common doing commercials for the GAP. I really don't understand that one.

And there are the respected hip hop figures that many do not even look to anymore. Afrika Bambaataa and the Universal Zulu Nation, X-Clan, KRS-1, Grand Master Flash, Chuck D and Public Enemy, MC Lyte, Yo Yo, Doug E. Fresh, Big Daddy Kane, Too Short and the list goes on and on. These were the inventors the refiners of an art we call hip hop and few look to them for guidance or direction; and even worse – many younger members of the hip hop culture do not even know who some of them are or what they represent.

This past year we have seen many artists arrested and some go to jail. We have lost some artists to senseless violence. We have seen the same artists dominate the award shows, which goes to show that even the award shows really hold no real meaning to hip hop culture anymore as they can not be trusted to recognize the real talent of the genre. They have turned into just a stage for the same artists to get together to pat each other on the back and not to really recognize real talent.

Hip Hop is not dead; but it is on 'life support'. Someone needs to yell 'CLEAR' and send a jolt of life back into the music and the culture. Hip Hop is an art form not a cash cow and should be respected as such.

If fans keep falling for the 'okie dokie' or settling for the notion that the majors know best; we will have to settle for the weak music being put out by many of these artists. We will see a steady decline in hip hop until it reaches the 'pop slop' level and then none of us will be happy.

There are a few good major artists out there; innovative, fresh artists who always bring something to the table. Ludacris and Missy Elliot always bring something fresh and ground breaking. Artists like X-Clan and their current album Return from Mecca would surprise many if they would take time to check it out.

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As 2006 comes to a close and we are on the dawn of 2007, hip hop culture should make a New Years Resolution to make 2007 the turn around year for hip hop and rap and bring back the culture in its pure form. We should expect more from the artists and we should expect more from ourselves. We should support those who are actually doing something we can be proud of as a culture and ignore those who have nothing to bring but stale music and outrageous headlines of violence and other non related, not good for hip hop's name headlines.

As 2007 begins let us make it our 'resolution' to take back our culture that we love. To bring hip hop back to the glory it deserves. To again make the culture something we can be proud of, instead of this insane circus that it has become.

Remember Real Recognizes Real – and it is time we demand and Recognize the Real in our culture.

Hopefully 2007 will be the year of the unsigned artist: the true source of our talent pool.