

TLA Interview With JT The Bigga Figga

Written by Robert ID934

Sunday, 27 February 2005 03:15 -

JT The Bigga Figga

Much more than a west coast hip-hop rap artist JT The Bigga Figga is a phenomenon in the music game. He is a rapper, a producer, a writer and he is CEO of Get Low Records.

The wide range of the man we know as JT The Bigga Figga is explored in this interview. Along with talking about his new drop by the Game 'Westcoast Resurrection'; many projects that we can expect from JT The Bigga Figga are touched on, along with some updates on relationships and JT's thoughts on a lot of different things.

Being in the 'game' since 1993 has given him a unique insight on how things work and has taught him many things. One of the things that he learned was how to spot talent and how to develop it.

In 2002 he ran across an artist who had a fiery approach and delivery and JT knew that the young rapper could go somewhere. JT recorded over 30 tracks with the artist now known as The Game. The second album with JT and The Game releases March 29th. Please check it out. Support the West Coast artist. BUY IT don't bootleg it.

JT takes time out of a very busy schedule to speak to www.ThugLifeArmy.com about all that is going on in his life, career, what's going on the west coast, and the state of everything really.

We do appreciate him taking time for this.

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Robert – First thank you for your time to do this.

JT – No problem, what's up with ya.

Robert – Well I guess the hottest thing going on at the minute is the drop of the JT Bigga Figga release of "West Coast Resurrection" with Game. This album follows the 'Untold Story' album. Are these tracks from that same time period?

JT – Yeah the tracks are from the same period. A couple of the songs was recorded like a little bit after. Like he left and then he came back and did a couple, so maybe 2 or 3 of them is from; they are all from the 2002 era; so I guess we could say they are all from the same era.

Robert – How does this album differ from the 'Untold Story' in content or is it more of a continuation?

JT – This album is definitely a continuation of what 'Untold Story' left off. It gives the listener the opportunity to get exposed to The Game when he was formatted in the Bay Area. So his 'hunger' was a little different; a little bit more 'fire'ry'

Robert – Are these the last of the tracks you did with Game?

JT – No, we actually have one more album coming after this.

Robert – How does this kind of drop work? Do you have to pay Interscope anything or is the business just between you and The Game?

JT – This is all done prior to Interscope. So they have no say so, they have no input. All they can do is watch.

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Robert – Ok, and what about Game?

JT – Game, basically he has to watch to, he's a student on this project, so it's all up under my jurisdiction

Robert – Is Game going to make anything out of it?

JT – Yea, he is going to make some money out of it, after I flip a few condos, apartment buildings ya know a couple things of that nature. Property, real estate; something that won't turn its back on me, something that will be there. After I flip at least once then he will get his cut.

Robert – What are some of your favorite tracks on the album?

JT – My favorite tracks off the album are 'Krush Groove' (feat./ JT & Get Low East), 'The Streetz of Compton' (feat./ feat JT), 'Blacksox' (feat./ feat JT & Bluechip), and one heart felt track that he does called 'Promised Land'. Those are my favorite tracks.

Robert – Is the album still on track for a March 29th release?

JT – Yea, March 29th is the street day.

Robert - Would you like to see Game give you some credit where credit is due? While he act's like Dre found him, but in turn, you were the foundation for Game's career.

JT – It would have been nice to see him give some credit, but I actually like the 'David and Goliath' approach where there's a power struggle for the credit. And along with the credit there's

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plenty of money also, so I'm getting the credit and the funds and I like that better because it's not under his jurisdiction; because he's not too good of a business man himself to be giving out credit or to be issuing payments or kick backs, so I didn't want for him to do any of those things; in which in the XXL he said that he would have brought, he didn't say my name but he said People could have been here with me right here right now but they would rather get theirs now, so I cut them out. So ya know; he said also in XXI that he's making 75% and we make 25, but he's really getting nothing right now. He hasn't got a check yet. So he has to wait patiently, ya know we have to recoup first, the hundreds of thousands of dollars we spent creating The Game.

Robert - It was rumored that you were the one who got Game started on using the Blackwallstreet name, is that true?

JT – Yea that's true also. We started Black Wall Street in the Fillmore District in the Bay Area in 2001. And Game liked the sound of the name and wanted to use it for the label, that's when we was hooked up, and I told him that's cool. He basically ran off with it and acted like he created it, but he got it from me.

Robert – How are things between you and The Game now?

JT – Personally he's not a friend of mine we never were friends... ever. We were just business, it was just business. He seen an opportunity, I seen an opportunity. So business is great, personally it's nothing.

Robert – Is he really from Compton?

JT – Yea he's from Compton, I think he was a Crip first though. But the Crips looked like they were losing in his part of town so he switched to the Bloods.

Robert – So he's been a Blood since he went to Interscope?

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JT – Yea.

Robert - Folks in the Bay seem to feel like other cities have stole part of the Bay's Style, are there some things you feel other artists have taken from the bay, if so what(beside slang) and who?

JT – I think really and truthfully the Bay Areas known for starting something but we wasn't known for finishing it. So we started a lot of things, but we didn't finish it and other people came along and seen the opportunity to use what we started and capitalize for themselves. So I don't blame it on no one individually or no one specifically.

Robert – When you first started in 1993, did you want to make beats or rap first?

JT – I wanted to rap first. I came into the game rappin, I've been an artist, still am an artist since I came into it day one. That's my first foundation in this, MC'n. Making beats came along when finding a producer was hard, so I started making beats for myself. By my first album I produced half the album by myself.

My first project was a EP released in June of '92. Six songs, then my second project was a 14 song album that I produced half of called 'Don't Stop Till We Major': December 10th 1992.

Robert - What made you want to get into producing or beat making.

JT – I'd say the opportunity to be creative and also the opportunity to save money and pure impatience. Tired of waiting for somebody to make beats for me; so I say impatience first.

Robert - Who were your influences in rap growing up and I'm talking locally (Bay) and SoCal?

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JT – Locally my biggest influence was E-40. Too Short was a lil older but as far as all around businessmen and as a rap artist I would say E-40. As a businessman, as an artist and as a producer I would say Dr. Dre.

Robert – Were you tight with Dr.Dre?

JT – No, I have no connection to Dr.Dre, nothing more than just being a fan. Never personally inner acted with him with no business or music ever.

Robert – How did the passing of Mac Dre affect you?

JT – I felt like you know, he was helping to bring the Bay back. I felt like he was on his way to another level of the game. It affected me by making me evaluate my own surroundings and evaluate my own mark that I am making in the game; and not just take no days for granted.

Robert – When you were fresh in the business, we had the passing of Easy-E, the shooting of Tupac and Biggie; at that time did you re-evaluate the thought of staying in the business when all that was going down?

JT – Yea, when Tupac and Biggie was killed I definitely seen the effect it was having in the music, it never made me want to quit the music, not one time. It just affected me by really looking at the drama that comes with the game and how to deal with the drama.

And the Hip-Hop Summit was actually something that happened in 1997, after Biggie was killed. The Honorable Min. Louis Farrakhan called a meeting at his home to discuss the hidden hand in the music industry. And to discuss the companies and corporations and the powerful people behind the scenes that manipulate drama for the purpose of making money and the purpose of controlling the game and the purpose of eliminating artist.

Robert - Being a good business man, and with years of experience in the rap game, What is it

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you feel the Bay is lacking, or maybe has too much of, that the industry is shying away from the Bay?

JT – I would say a lack of branching out and lack of power moves. Nothing less short than that. It's just a power move you have to make to establish yourself in further areas and marketplace and position. Like having this Game album for me adds creditability to the Bay Area. So this is a power move for the Bay. Not only for JT and Get Low, but it is a power move for the whole Bay Area.

Robert - What do you remember the most from the early 90's rap scene, when cats were still starving and things were just about to pop off in the Bay?

JT – What I remember most is the excitement of inner acting with shows, inner acting with autograph signings. Anything promotional to put your name out there. It was exciting because it was brand new. It was for business and it was for money but it was exciting because it was new as individuals. For me especially, I know I was excited at every little thing I did. But I was excited to have my own company so young and actually be able to make product myself that the company is depending on. So I was self contained 100%, and I was the best at it in the whole world and still am.

Robert - Did you ever finish recording "Fetti Can't Buy You Love," and if not, what happened with that project?

JT – The project was put on hold due to an overload of work, and I didn't want to release something that I didn't feel solid, so I wanted to put it on hold till I'm able to give it the proper attention.

Robert – So we will see it sooner or later? –

JT – Sooner or later, yep.

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Robert - What's the situation with the collabo album with Xzibit?

JT – That's scrapped.

Robert - What your relationship with Yukmouth?

JT – My relationship with Yukmouth is he's a Bay Area artist, I'm a Bay Area artist and ya know that's my fam. He has problems right now with my other fam San Quinn, who is my fam, my Fillmore fam, he's like my brother; so I would like to see them resolve their issues. Hopefully it's resolved, I don't know the status. But ya know that's my fam though.

Robert – What's the situation between you and Daz like now?

JT – My situation with Daz, that's my fam also. Me and Daz are partners, we had our issues ya know but since then we have talked a number of times and we have resolved them issues of the past. He's getting money, I'm getting money now, there ain't no issues ya know. It's just conflict, family conflict.

I give Daz Dillinger a shout out and wish him much success in all his independent moves getting that money.

Robert - "Black Wall Street: The CEO Manual" how did that do and is it still available?

JT – Yea, actually I am about to re-release the 'Black Wall Street Manual' down to about 25 dollars. It's 100 dollars right now. It did real good for me because it was limited and it was only to the exclusive E-D, the people that were trying to make money, not people that just want to look at the book. So it did good in that that market place.

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Robert – Is it going to be available on your web site?

JT – Yea, it's been available on my web site, but what I'm doing now I'm about to drop the price and blow it out.

Robert - Why wasn't there a national drop for the book when it first came out?

JT – Because I did it independently and I never distributed a book. So I paid for the book, I wrote the book, I'm starring in the book and when you all the way independent that's the best way, so that's the way I choose to do it. That way I could keep full control of it.

Robert - In October of 2003 Hon. Min. Louis Farrakhan said in an interview with Ja Rule " Hip-Hop is being threatened today—the future of it," Min. Farrakhan told Ja, "And I don't want to see you lose your life or 50 Cent lose his life, or any of the rappers lose their life. I think we've paid a price now to go to a higher level." What do you see that higher level to be?

JT – The higher level , in not trying to say what he's saying (Hon. Min. Louis Farrakhan) but to add some input:

The higher level is to take the hip-hop form and use it in an elevated way to benefit the people supporting it, the people that's on the bottom.

The higher level is taking your fame and using it in a positive way to expand people's minds, to help the person that's just looking at you as a fan, but to now in some form or fashion engage them in a positive way so they can get the benefit. That's what 'Black Wall Street' is for me. That's were me using a company and a company's name that has a purpose behind it; to uplift the people that support me. It's to uplift the people that are out here that want to help themselves.

A higher plane of activity is taking your funds and building things with it; as opposed to just

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building up entourages, cars and necklaces. Or just fancy home's that nobody is never in. See what I mean? A lot of these guys got these homes and nobody ain't even in them; hey empty. With all these big rooms, TV's, bathrooms, and ain't nobody even using the shit. So that's my input on that.

Robert – You know how the media is and how they twist things: What kind of man is Hon. Min. Louis Farrakhan in person, in 3D? I mean what is he really like?

JT – Honorable, humble, straight forward, no cut, no chaser; The highest and best intentions for the people that he's representing and the people that he's speaking to.

Robert – So most of what we hear from the main stream media is like twisted right?

JT – It's like them painting a picture of George Bush in the most negative light. What would you say that is for? To achieve our objective right? (right). So when they paint a picture and go out their way, they are trying to achieve an objective. Which is to have you looking in another direction, or looking with a twisted eye; so you don't get close enough to get the benefit no matter what color you are. And that is the truth.

Robert – What influence has the Muslim religion had on your life?

JT – Aw man that's the foundation of my independency, and the foundation of me having purpose behind the things that I do. It's like once you find your aim and purpose you move differently than the average person. Or you move different than just someone out here in the world.

Rpnert – Does it make you approach your position in the rap game differently than lets say a main stream artist?

JT – Yes, it makes me approach it with more responsibility and with a better motive behind my

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activities, behind my moves. It makes me evaluate it better. As opposed to just doing it strictly for just dollars and cents.

Robert - You have said you wrote the book in 12 days – do you produce music and beats at that same rate to?

JT – I wrote it in 14 days. Ya know what, actually I do. The beats come with in minutes and hours, depending on the inspiration. The words come with in minutes because we free style the lyrics. When we think of a topic in our mind and then; it's something sorta like Jay-Z said he's writing without using pen and pad. That's really just free styling. But it is a more organized free style, more of a way to say your lyrics over the beat, what ever the beat is inspiring you how to say it. So you match your words according to a melody.

Robert - Which area of all that you do is most enjoyable to you: rapping, the business end or the writer in you?

JT – I think it's a good combination of both. When I think of a business move and I sort it out in my mind and I see the execution of it because of an opportunity I see in front of me; Ok let's say like the Game situation. Here's a project that I had in my catalog for some years now. And then 2 years later I'm making the most money off of this project that I did made off any projects in a long time, as far as one album and then now another album and then another album, all because of the millions of dollars that someone else has spent on someone that I believed in first.

So no matter how bad he talk about me, he can never take that away. Ya feel me? Cause I believed in ya first, no matter how mad ya might be, about what ever your mad about. Cause what started the whole situation is lack of communication. You can't have a deal with somebody and not communicate with them. And then go somewhere else, get another deal, forget about the deal you had going on and think that person is not going to capitalize off their situation also.

Robert – Did he (Game) have anything signed with you?

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JT – Yep. What he had signed off on was a work for hire agreement. And that means that he recorded those songs for my company. He didn't record them songs for him to take nowhere else. They were recorded strictly for Get Low Entertainment.

Robert – Did you ever get a chance to work with Tupac?

JT – I only worked with Tupac when he directed the video 'Ghetto Theme' from Mac Mall, and I stared in that video with him and Mac Mall. (Watch the video 'Ghetto Theme' [HERE](#)).

Robert – You never spit with him?

JT – I never did no lyrics with him no.

Robert – Was there a reason why you never caught up with him?

JT – Well actually Rappin' 4-Tay did a song with him on 'All Eyez On Me' when he got out of jail, but we kinda had fell out; Fillmore fell out with Tupac and a few other dudes, and Richie Rich one time back in 1991 I believe. And ever since then there was never no bonding or nothing. Ya know he knew who I was, I knew who he was but that was pretty much where it stopped.

Robert – Who are the artist (past and present) that you listen to? If I look in your CD case who you have in there?

JT – I got a dude named Messy Marv who just came out with an album. I'm bumpin his shit right now, checking it out. I'm listening actually to an artist named Bluechip, a new artist that's featured on Game's album. And I'm listening to my new album. I'm evaluating my new album 'The Main Event', and that's kinda like where I'm at with it.

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Robert – What about Balance and the New Bay people are ya hip to any of them?

JT – Yea I'm hip to them dudes. I take my hat off to all them guys. The whole New Bay for trying to establish their own identity, I ain't mad.

Robert – Who are some of the artist out now that you are noticing? Be them independent or main stream.

JT – As far as noticing how?

Robert – That have skillz?

JT – Bluechip, a female named Nina B out of Brooklyn New York, and a artist from Hollis Queens named Lord Nez. These are some hot people that I got my eyes on right now that they aren't fully signed with Get Low but I'm promoting them, and maybe I might be signing some new artist. I'm really not into signing artist like that right now; I'd rather sign projects, so I'm obligated to the project as opposed to obligated to the artist. I make the artist get obligated to the project equally like me.

Robert – So instead of signing an artist you'll go and just want to produce a project right?

JT – Yea, like one or two albums with them. And then that way if they blow up big one day, I always got them albums with me. And if they want to keep recording albums with me and they like how we doing we just keep going until something big happens.

Robert – Is there anyone out there you would like to work with, that maybe your not working with?

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JT – I mean in truth, I'm working on a project with Young Buck right now, a DVD that's coming soon., called 'On The Road To Platinum'. Ya know there are really no artist I am trying to work with at this time. I'm really working on myself right now.

Robert - What are some upcoming projects fans can anticipate you working on, and releasing?

JT – The new JT album called 'The Main Event' and a Krush Groove movie called 'The Krush Groove' . 'JT The Bigga Figga presents Krush Groove 2005 – A New Era'. I'm working on that, I play young Russell Simmons.

Robert – Do you have a release date for your album?

JT – Not really, not yet.

Robert – If you were not blessed to be in the music game or the writing game – what do you see yourself doing instead?

JT – I would be involved in distribution of some sort. Not so much retail sales, even though I wouldn't berate that, but it would be sales for sure. Because sales and distribution of what ever product; like once you learn the method and you get a hold of a product, that's why the drug game was something that was pushed off our neighbors because it was a for sure business. People would get involved with it, so for all those years the crack cocaine business and the marijuana, and cocaine and just dope or whatever else people wanted in the neighborhood, ya know there was always a way to do it; somebody would do it because there was a demand.

So at a young age I found that wasn't for me because all I did was went to jail trying to participate in that game up here.

But I took that knowledge and applied it to the music, so if I wasn't doing music I would probably be selling cars. I would definetly be trying to have my own business of some sort. I would have

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my own company because making your own income is the only way your going to feel right. If I had to work a job I would be humble enough to work one but that wouldn't be my choice; and I'm thankful that when I did have to apply for them I never could get them.

Robert – Where you born in the Bay Area?

JT – San Francisco, Fillmore.

Robert – Is that where you stil stay?

JT – Naw, I stay in Hayward California now.

Robert – Is there anything we missed that needs to be addressed?

JT – My message really and truthfully is independent artist get money, CEO's if you invest in an artist make sure you got your contracts signed properly, producers find you a hot artist and you already got beats, then you will become a label that much quicker. And Get Money people – that's it.

Robert – So we can expect a new album for ya, another Game album from ya, an updated book from ya, a DVD and a whole bunch of other stuff roght?

JT – Aw yea man, we got the JT conglomeration, it's a corperation so there are many many things to offer. And one of my biggest goals is the Black Wall Street Business University School; school and studio. So be on the look out for that sometime in 2005.

Robert - Any Shout outs?

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JT – I got a shout out for Betsy Bolte out there the publicity lady, ya feel me (Robert – Yea she is great people), I got a shout out Brian Shafton and them Bob Grossi; for the whole team basically that got JT The Bigga Figga eating right now.

Robert – Well I appreciate your time.

JT – No problem man, anything for the people.

Robert – Well ya proved it, you are for the people and I appreciate you very much.

JT – Man it's all love. People like you are the ones that keep me going, so I don't take you for granted.

Robert – Well anything ya need, ya know all ya have to do is holla at me.

JT – Hey, definitely man and I'm going ta make sure I keep in touch and keep ya updated.

Robert – Hey the best to ya and my prayers are with you. Thanks again. As Salaam Alaikum

JT – Walaikum Assalam my brother to you and yours.

Robert – Thank you very much for your time.

JT – Alright now , peace.

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Robert – Peace.

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