

Wu Tang's Shyheim Is Back - The Interview

Written by Westside ID53

Saturday, 25 September 2004 10:57 -

Shyheim, member of the infamous Wu Tang Clan has been very busy lately. Here is a young man who is just not sitting back waiting for his to come to him, he has a lot of things poppin. He is definitely more than just a rapper or a Hip Hop artist.

His online reality show is off the hook. Watching you can tell he enjoys his work and is taking it seriously. I would strongly recommend you check it out at www.shyheim.tv .

He has a new album (his 4th) coming out Aug. 24th on his own label Bottom Up Records/101 Distribution. The album 'The Greatest Story Never Told' has some great producers featured on it. Easy Mo Bee, RZA and DJ Quick are among the featured producers. The first single "21st Century Crisis" will be out in a few weeks.

If that was not enough to keep him busy Shyheim is also working on an autobiography.

Shyheim has experienced a lot in his short life. His life went from one of the youngest rappers in the game, to acting, to a jail sentence. But now he is back and he seems to be wasting no time catching up on all that he needs to do.

I had a chance to talk to this remarkable busy young man. I wanted to touch on all his recent activities and touch a lil on his past. I have to point out here that Shyheim taking time to talk to us, as busy as his schedule is, shows his commitment to his fans and to the people. Here is a man who is not waiting for you to come to him, he is bringing it all to you. So please check out his work.

I also asked Shyheim what his name means. His reply " Well, in the 5 Percent World , Shyheim means or in equal, Shyheim means equality". I found Shyheim to be a very intelligent and strong individual. It was a blessing talking to him. He is the kind of person you just feel comfortable talking to, and that is because he answers all questions and he just has a way of coming across 'real'.

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This interview touches on some good things. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did doing it.

I would like to thank Shyheim for taking time out of his busy schedule to talk to me and thank Joana Casas for setting it all up. So lets get started---

Robert – Thanks for taking time to talk to us. I appreciate it.

Shyheim – I appreciate it as well

Robert – First off the reality TV show. 'Real Talk'. I seen the first one and it's off the hook. It seems your approaching it seriously but your having fun with it. How did you come up with the idea to do it?

Shyheim – Oh, me and my family; The Brock Brothers, were sitting down one morning after a long drunk night, we eating cereal or what evea. Just brainstorming on different things to do, where I can get the people to get familiar with me. And then it was like, ya know it was the porn sites up; it was all different things so it was like how do you do this. So we did some research, find out how porn sites get up and how the make, they actually make big money. So I said wow if I can go worldwide with myself and let the people see me and get to understand me ya know I could do the same. I mean at the same time I'm promoting music ya know what I mean and hopefully one day it will become a real big big show so as it can go from the internet ya know what I'm saying to prime time television.

Robert – How has the response been so far?

Shyheim – Oh it's been great. It's been great, it's like never been done before. I'm pretty sure people are going ta try to copy it. But uh, ya know just remember who did it first.

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Robert – The Shyheim we see on that show; is that a true shot of who you really are in 3D?

Shyheim – Yea man, that's all it is its just rolling, ya know what I mean that's just me.

Robert – I mean your not putting on no front or nothing that's you right?

Shyheim – I mean, I can't be nobody else (Robert – I appreciate that). I mean I was born me, hear what I'm saying. It's the trials and tribulations that make up the character in me, ya know what I mean. We as people we pick up and learn different things for each other. So I'm everybody, a piece of me in everybody. If you see a piece of me within you then you can relate.

Robert – Any plans to take it to the major networks?

Shyheim – Umm, ya know when they holla at me, ya know what I'm saying. I mean I'm not going chasing and knocking on nobody's door. I believe, ya know, hard work and dedication and the positive energy that I put forth with it will come back to me.

Robert – It really seems that you're enjoying it. If you had to prioritize your activities, which would come first: the show or your rap?

Shyheim – Ah, well it's all in the same, cause as the shows rollin I'm doing my rap, ya know what I'm saying. The show's about life in general, the show is not always going to me just runnin around, hanging out and chillin with some chicks. Ya know, It gets deep, I'm going ta be reading books with people, getting peoples response on different things, Ya know what I'm saying; just to interact.

Robert – On the rap career, you have a new album 'The Greatest Story Never Told' dropping Aug. 24th, what can we expect out of that?

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Shyheim – You can expect ME. I can't give people anything but me, ya know what I'm saying. I can't sit here and say Oh my album is going ta be what someone expects, ya know what I'm saying. I don't have expectations cause when you put expectations on things, no matter what you get let down. Cause your looking for the height of things. Now I can just say ya know, I put my all into it, ya know what I mean, and if my all is not enough for someone then hey, I'll try again. Maybe my next album you're feelin but I just put my heart into it.

Robert – I know it features some great producers like Easy Mo Bee, Rza and DJ Quick, are there any feature artist on it?

Shyheim – Um, I try to keep it with new talent. Dudes that haven't had a shot ya know what I'm saying; that really have talent. I think people out there ya know, it's easy for me to go get well named people and put them on my album, but it's like for what? Ya know what I'm saying; your dream already came true as an artist. Let me help somebody else's dream come true.

Robert – Is there anyone in the game today that you would like to collaborate with that you haven't already?

Shyheim – Actually in the workings - me and Beanie Sigel. I like Beanie Sigel a lot ya know what I mean. I can feel his struggle.

Robert – You have been on both the East and West coast. Is there, in your opinion, a big difference in the sounds coming from the two different coasts?

Shyheim – Um, of course, there is a different life style. When I lived in Cali I was kinda subtle, ya know I seemed more relaxed. In New York everything fast and it moves so quick you got ta be on point. And when I came back it was kinda hard cause like you go in the store out there, ya know what I'm saying, everything is ya know it's kinda smooth. Ya come out here everybody's rushing, everything's moving real fast. So there was some catching up to do.

Robert – Is the love the same on both coasts?

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Shyheim – Um, Well I demand it so yea.

Robert – You have been in the game for a while. I mean in 1994 you had ‘ On and On’ hit the Billboard charts and you were only 15 yrs. old.

Shyheim – I didn’t understand it ya know what I’m saying. Me, I’m real spiritual so ya know Allah, He gave me a talent ya know what I’m saying. It could – why was it me? It could have been any other person ya know what I’m saying. He gave me a talent to say something. So I feel like that’s my duty.

Robert - Did you ever get to run into Tupac or Easy-E or Biggie back in the ‘golden dayz’ of rap?

Shyheim – Me, Tupac and Big we got a joint together, it’s called Live at The Garden’. Me, him, Big Daddy Kane. I got a chance to talk and converse with them dudes as a shorty, ya know what I’m saying, and um.

Robert – You cut a track called ‘Live at the Garden’?

Shyheim – Yea, ‘Live at the Garden’, it will be on my The Catalog Album.

Robert – With Pac and Biggie?

Shyheim – Yea, it’s crazy. I also got a joint on there with Big L

Robert – So did you find Tupac, Easy and Biggie different than the rappers we have today?

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Shyheim – I mean, I think they spoke from their heart. I mean everybody different within their self, ya know what I mean.

Robert – Well I mean don't ya think things have changed a little bit where like the social stance that NWA, KRS-1 and them guys from the west, they use to have a social stance on rap, ya know. Now, now that's gone more or less.

Shyheim – Cause it's a different time. It's different rules. Back when them dudes grew up they grew up with different principles, ya know what I mean, than the kids nowadays are growing up with. So their views were different on life. Ya know what I'm saying. Nowadays you don't have older brothers schooling the younger brothers what time it is.

Robert – But don't we still have the same problems that we had then?

Shyheim – Yea, but people rather ignore them because a lot of artist put the other thing in front of you – the bling. Ya know what I'm saying, the fancy living, ya know what I'm saying. That's my whole view where my album comes in. It's like I'm telling you yea – we can all be gangsta, we can all be wild ya know what I'm saying – we can do what ever we say we do – but there is another side to that story. When you got ta pay the price. And everything has a price in life. So, either it's an asset or a liability. Is the cost is going to be more than the gain?

Robert – You have a long time affiliation with the Wu Tang Clan, how did you first hook up with them?

Shyheim – Well them dudes is from my hood. We all from the same hood. Ya know what I'm saying. I knew them ever since I was like coming outside.

Robert – So you just sorta melted in with them huh?

Shyheim – yea, ya know them my dudes.

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Robert – It seems all of the Wu are doing solo ventures, are there still plans for future Wu Tang albums?

Shyheim – Yea there's going ta be an album together. Actually I'm going ta be on the album.

Robert – Is that going to drop anytime soon? Maybe this year?

Shyheim – I don't know, that's RZA's dealings. Ya know what I mean; I'm just waiting for the phone call.

Robert – You have done a lot of acting roles, is that an area you are presently seeking out or is your main focus now your music and the TV show?

Shyheim – Well naw because it's like um, when I first did the acting thing like Hip Hop was my uh, my first stepping-stone that was my foundation and then I went on to do that. So coming back into the game I must take the same steps. Knowledge, wisdom to get understanding, so I'm going to work hard on my music and that's going to open the doors to everything else.

Robert – I heard you are working on an autobiography also titled 'The Greatest Story Never Told' to.

Shyheim – Well that's something that I actually started working on when I was away. Cause you know I went back and thought about my life as a whole, from the outside lookin in and just wrote about it.

Robert – So it's going to be a true account of your life and not a storyline?

Shyheim – Yea it's going to be my life. It's going ta be a story but my life within a story.

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Robert – When can we expect it to come out?

Shyheim – I'm not actually done with it yet. I didn't get a chance to actually finish it. It's still in the works. But it's like a lot of feelings that I have, I'm just waiting for it to come out and I can put it down on paper

Robert – You're 26 now and already have had a life full of up's and down's. but I just have to ask – A few months back you were on the cover of the Source magazine. Along with other artist who have found themselves in trouble with the law. Suge Knight, Slick Rick, ODB, and Flesh – n – Bones to name a few. With all you had going in your career, how did it come about that you got hung up like that?

Shyheim – Because career was just something I did, I just rapped for fun. Ya know what I mean . I didn't understand how serious it was, ya know I looked up to different things in life. I wanted to be thought of as, ya know what I'm saying. I thought it was kool to hold guns and to have my freedom snatched away from me. And then once I had my freedom snatched away from me it was like nothing can replace this. We grateful to just walk around and go to the store get something to drink when we want, ya know what I mean.

Robert – Yea, I've been there. I know what you're talking about.

Shyheim – We grateful for that so that's what I just try to tell people man; be grateful for that, be grateful to spend time with your loved one's, ya know.

Robert – Well it seems that the time you spent in lock down has really charged up your batteries and you are coming out poppin, and I congratulate you on that. At least your spirit wasn't broke ya know.

Shyheim – Thank you, thank you – I think that's what happens a lot man to a lot of artists, they get their spirit broke and they just can't get back to it.

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Robert – Do you see a reason why all these guys are, are; it seems they go platinum and they got money and then all of the sudden they are hung up and ya know lost in the system ya know.

Shyheim – Cause it was set up. See a lot of us don't know that this is planned already. Ya know, this shit is planned. Not only for rappers but for any of you, the society. You fuck up you pay a penalty. It's ABC – Fuck Up Pay A Penalty. And we were taught that since we were young, I think growin up we lost the regular values.

Robert – Well do you think all these cases are true cases?

Shyheim – I mean, I don't know. I can't say what's true and what's not, I wasn't there, But what I can say is this that we as people should be careful of the situations we put ourselves in because if we didn't put ourselves in none of these situations, people just don't go up and make up anything, ya know what I mean.

Robert – Well I really give it to ya cause they didn't break your spirit; I really appreciate you for that.

Shyheim – Thank you

Robert – There are a lot of different opinions on rap and the Hip Hop culture today. They range from it's dead, to it's stagnate, to it's really poppin; Where do you see the status of Rap and The Hip Hop culture today?

Shyheim – Uh, I don't pay it no mind. I don't pay it no mind cause it's like it would kinda like down rule my style, ya know what I mean.

Robert – Well I mean Hip Hop is something we live right?

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Shyheim – Yea, it's something we live within ourselves. Ya know what I'm saying, ya dig when you take it to that level it's like I am hip-hop. So hip hop it's not the same so what I got, what made me get into hip-hop was my pain ya know what I'm saying. And growing up to be fly and stuff like that and be creative. That's what hip-hop is to me. So what else is going on in the hip-hop world, I don't pay attention to it. It's like in real life; I worry about me and my family. Everything outside of that it's like we all in the same world but we all live differently.

Robert – But don't ya feel that if you're a rapper, rap is part of hip-hop – don't you have to know what your competition, more or less, is up to?

Shyheim – That's them, they aren't competition to me. I say that because I'm in competition with myself not nobody else. It's how far I can push myself and how better I can get within myself. I'm not interested in somebody else. There's a lot of dudes out listening and I could say Ok they kool, I can understand their vision. But I'm not in competition with anyone.

Robert – Having lived on both the East and West coasts; do you feel that has affected the music you write?

Shyheim – Uh, wow I mean I've seen different things, so I would say yea. I would say yea because I seen things in LA that was different than the things in New York, and Yea.

Robert – So do you like New York? Is it home to ya?

Shyheim – I love New York. This is where I was born and raised at. This will always be home Staten Island New York.

Robert – Is the feeling different from coast to coast or is the music there no matter where you are?

Shyheim – Well when I was in LA I made more kool out music. When I'm home in New York I

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make more pain music, so I don't leave New York when I'm recording my albums. I record in New York.

Robert – If Shyheim was not blessed with the talents you have to be able to rap and act; what do you see yourself doing now instead?

Shyheim – Wow, man I'd be lucky to say that I'm alive, ya know. Cause a lot of dudes my age that I grew up with that didn't have it, ya know that's where they at. I can see myself very easily being amongst the dead or amongst the one's that are in prison for the rest of their life. Ya know I had a little hole but I had something ta grab onto, and ya know and dream about. So I think that's what kept me grounded.

Robert – So lets recap--- a tv show, a new album dropping Aug. 24th, the biography in the works – what else is in the future for Shyheim?

Shyheim – Well ya know I got the label Bottom Up Records; I got a group called The Embassy, that was featured on my previous album and my lil cousin L.E.O . I'm just working on their stuff ya know what I mean. Once the ball gets rolling I'll introduce them to the world and they can shine.

Robert - Can we expect a tour or maybe some videos off the new album?

Shyheim – Oh well a tour I don't know cause I'm still on parole right now so I'm trying to work things out with them people.

Robert – How long is that for?

Shyheim – Well I'm on parole till Nov. 2006, so I mean ya know I'm doing good , I'm not getting in no trouble so hopefully they will loosen up on me.

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Robert – Got any shout outs that ya want to give?

Shyheim – I'd like to say to everybody that's incarcerated – Hold Your Head Up, ya know what I mean and they can write me. Thanks for the support. To everybody that supports me and those that don't know of me, just give me a listen—just hear me out

Robert – Well I am glad to see you are in such great spirits and that things look well for you. We wish all the best and hey I appreciate your time

Shyheim – Alright – Thank you

Robert – Thank You man – Peace

Shyheim – Alright --Peace

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