

Interview with DJ Quik

Written by Robert ID488

Wednesday, 01 December 2004 21:33 -

DJ Quik

In 1991 the west coast gangsta rap scene was introduced to DJ Quik. Quik became a main player in west coast rap and hip hop. At 20 years old his debut album was very successful and was the start of a west coast legend.

Working with almost everybody in the music field DJ Quik has, with help from a solid growing fan base, made his mark not only in west coast music history but in the music industry itself.

His production skills and mic skills make him an all around artist that can do it all.

Being from Compton he grew up along side greats in the rap game like Dr. Dre, Ice Cube, Eazy-E, MC Eiht, and Above the Law. He has worked with icon rapper Tupac Shakur, and other rappers Xzibit, Kurupt, Truth Hurts, Eight Ball & MJG, Rakim all heavy weights.

He works with today's hit makers too like Ludacris and Chingy and others. He has proven his

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skills are ever lasting and he stays on top of the pack.

I had a chance to talk to DJ Quik and I have to say he is one of the most articulate rap artist I have had the pleasure to speak with. Just talking to him you know you are speaking to someone who is intelligent and has his priorities all in order.

Quik gives a lil history and a lil insight of things to come. This was truly an enjoyment to do. Even I might have had a 'twisted' view of this man until I had this opportunity to speak to him. Sometimes the image we have is not the reality. And I can honestly tell you that in reality DJ Quik is a intelligent well thought out and a well rounded individual. Check this out and watch for his album in the first quarter of 2005. We will keep you up on when it drops.--Enjoy

Robert – Thanks for taking time for us.

DJ Quik – No problem.

Robert – Your 34 yrs. old now, what are you most comfortable with now a days: writing, rappin' or producing?

DJ Quik – All of it. Producing is the hot shit though.

Robert – Do you enjoy that better than anything else though?

DJ Quik – Yeah, actually I do.

Robert – Do you still do shows where you DJ?

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DJ Quik – No, but I think I might do it this week end at the House of Blues (in Los Angles)

Robert - Are you planning on continuing your music, or focus more on the business aspect of rap?

DJ Quik – My forte is the music. But obviously if ya don't keep up with the business, then your kinda doing it for nothing. So I do plan on being well off doing, maximizing what I do now. I heard Jimmy Kimmel describe being in your thirties in hip-hop is like the equivalent to being 300 yrs. old; almost like a dinosaur. But when I look at Twista, who I had the opportunity to tour with back in 1991 or 1992, it's a beautiful thing. It gives me affirmation that if you love it and you try to stay current then people will respond, even with Dr. Dre, DJ Pool, so.

Robert – It seems that you have worked with everybody in the industry. Is there anyone out that you haven't worked with that you would like to hook up with?

DJ Quik – I like Lauryn Hill, I'm glad she's back. I'm glad the Fugees are working it out and getting back together. I think it would be kool to help her at least let me do some drum stuff for her; scratch on one of her tracks or something.

Robert – What was your reaction after Petey Pablo said those comments about You and Nate Dogg, and the west?

DJ Quik – You heard about that?

Robert – Oh yea, I think everybody has.

DJ Quik – Did he make it where umm, did he say something even afterwards after he said it at the club?

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Robert – He said it on stage.

DJ Quik – Really? Well the good thing is he got booed for saying that shit.

Robert – Yea everybody on the west didn't take it very nicely.

DJ Quik – Right. I think umm,ya know I worked with Petey and didn't know he was that kind of guy but ya know; maybe had I not worked with him, he probably wouldn't have said none of that shit. I don't know why. I also think it was also because of the company he keeps these days to.

Robert – Does he have any one on one thing against Nate or?

DJ Quik – I don't know but a , I don't want to give it to much energy. It must mean I'm doing something right.

Robert - Did you get hooked up with Eazy-E and Dre because you knew them from being raised in Compton?

DJ Quik – No, actually I didn't hook up with Eazy till after my album came out. Cause I would have liked to have signed to a west coast label back then. But Profile showed interest, so we ended up doing a deal with Profile. Ya know I had a record that I did and my boy shopped it with Profile and they signed me. And when the video came out it was like they saw that; I'm not saying that Dre and them took notice; but we came out and we went platinum So I think that meant something. I think that it proved that Compton was a hot bed for talent at that point. But I ended up meeting Easy after my album came out, and we talked about me even signing over there, and he even tried to get me out of my Profile deal, sign me over there; offered a million dollars and Profile was like no we aren't having it. Sent him a cease and desist order and all this shit, so .

Robert – Did you ever drop any tracks on Funky Enough Records for Suge Knight?

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DJ Quik – No, but I, that's funny cause I use ta work over there at Funky Enough. The DOC label with this dude named Thomas Kline, I go that far back with him. I was just doing production, helping them with production or what ever.

Robert – That was really the first 'Row' label right?

DJ Quik – A, I guess so.

Robert – I know early on you were signed to Profile Records but were you ever signed to Ruthless or Death Row?

DJ Quik – No. Suge couldn't get me out of that contract.

Robert – So all the things you did at Death Row, how'd you work that?

DJ Quik – I was just freelance. I was just like a producer for hire, an engineer for hire.

Robert – After Eazy-E, Tupac and Biggie passed, did you sit back and re-evaluate picking the rap game as a career?

DJ Quik – I sure did. As a matter of fact it wasn't until after BIG passed and stupid rumors went around that I had something to do with it, and it's like I'm not a killer man , I'm a musician, I'm a DJ we got like a different heart. Ya know back then when rappin' was fun, and we could immolate being gangstas; ya know Dr. Dre made the hardest gangsta rap records in the world, that didn't necessarily make him a gangsta. It was all like ya know : character, we were all in character. But when BIG got killed it was like now the gangsta shit really superseded the music., and that was just backwards. It was just crazy how the game flip flopped. Of course I did re-evaluate. It just wasn't fun any more at that point. It still ain't as much fun as it was before

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those people died.

Robert – Well do the ‘beefs’ mean more to ya now then they use to? If someone has ‘beef’ with you , do you take it more seriously now then you use to?

DJ Quik – Yea I guess you could say that. Especially this thing with Petey Pablo. I mean I don’t see Petey Pablo as no super great writer or rapper, and I’ve been in the game way longer than he has and I cover a lot more ground in the industry than he does; so to me ya know it’s like fuck em. It really ain’t that big a deal to me, ya know he’s..It’s water under the bridge to me , he’s a small fish.

Robert – It is rumored that you have a few un-released tracks over at Death Row and also at Ruthless. Among these are Tupac’s ‘Words to my First Born; (DJ Quik’s 1st remix’), and the og version of ‘Late Night’. How many tracks would you say that you have un-released just at Ruthless and Death Row?

DJ Quik – Maybe 4 or 5 or something, something small. Like I didn’t get a chance to really stretch out and do a lot of work and archive a lot of things.

Robert – Since your in that end of it, let me ask ya - was it not a common thing to keep copies of what ya do in the studio? Is that why there is so much unreleased stuff that’s out there? It’s like Tupac; he has oodles of unreleased stuff, but would ya think who ever produced it or..

DJ Quik – Would have copies for themselves? Well it depends on what the agreement was with the label. Like if you didn’t have it written to where you could take copies of the music or at least split the masters and have a copy of the masters yourself ; like a back up, then ya know that would be the case. But in my situation with them they always owned the masters. And if I did take a copy it was just a reference copy. Just like a two track to listen to, to fix up if I had to go to the studio the next day, just like homework.

Robert – Well a studio producer like lets say Hurt M Badd, he really never owned anything? I mean Suge owned everything?

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DJ Quik – Yea, Suge had everything on lock.

Robert – So they are just employees?

DJ Quik – Right. Well I think some producers tape their sessions. Like Merrill Pro Tools you can dump the sessions and divide them so you could have a whole session of the master and one can go to who ever owns it or who ever signed the artist, or who ever has a vested interest in the artist. So now you can ya know, like now I do a lot of archiving and I keep all the masters now. I learned that from Suge.

Robert – What are the lasting memories you have of working with both Eazy-E and Tupac? What did you learn from them?

DJ Quik – Well I learned from Eric that shrewdness works for when you want to end up with the lions share of the money. And I learned from Tupac that if you totally just open up, the light will shine right thru you. You'll be illuminated because ya let the bull shit roll off your back and if you have to beef, ya know everything he did, he did like a thousand percent. I mean he was like a motorcycle fully wide open; but he was also bright. Ya know what I mean; he was like illuminated. Uninhibited and that is what I learned from him to be uninhibited. But Eazy taught me to be more steel trap, ya know what I mean; and be totally about the business so it's kinda two conflicting, they left two different energies on me; for lack of a better analogy. Really opposite of each other.

Robert – How long where you around Tupac. I mean he was only on the west coast like what 9 months?

DJ Quik – Naw naw; I mean I toured with him and Digital Underground to back in '92- '93 when the Humpty Dance was on. Back when he use to date Yo Yo, ya know.

Robert - How did you come about working with Ludacris on the track "Spur of the Moment", and

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did you produce that record?

DJ Quik – Actually Ludacris brought the track in, I just rapped on it.

Robert – How did you hook up with him?

DJ Quik – He reached out. It was like Quik we going to do a track with Ludacris. I was like hell yea I like Ludacris ya know, I'm a fan. I'm a DJ, I play these peoples records when I get down ya know.

Robert – I know you did a few appearances with The Game. Are you planning on doing any collaborations with him?

DJ Quik – Yea yea, we got some stuff in the vault.

Robert – You weren't just showing luv cause he is from Compton?

DJ Quik – No , it was sorta kinda,. I was just pretty much just showing luv cause he's from Compton, I mean because in Compton we don't have that ya know there really wasn't any talent coming out of there for awhile. Like it was almost like 'where is the next wave'? We were the first wave. Ya know NWA, myself, Second to None, and it's like even Comptons Most Wanted; it was just like everybody was coming out of there. Before ya knew it , it was over and there was nothing coming out of there. So when I heard Game I was excited. I wanted to lend my expertise and my knowledge of the game to him, to help him advance.

Robert – There is a rumor about Suge, Russell Simmons and J Prince merging to make a power move in the industry, do u think anything of that? And would u like to see such a merge?

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DJ Quik – Um I don't know. What ever's positive. I mean, I see Suge talking about God now in his interviews. So I wonder if it's real. I wonder if he's authentic with it and if he can control his habits, in stead of just getting shit kicked up and keeping the controversy going. It's funny cause when you look in Suge's eyes, sometimes you don't see the monster that everybody else see's. Sometimes you see that the man actually does have a heart. He's really a smart brilliant guy ya know.

Robert – Well he had to be; like him or hate him he built a large black business. So like ya got ta have respect for the man.

DJ Quik – A billion dollar black business. He's a brilliant dude.

Robert – You have been on a lot of sound tracks. Can we look for any new ones to be coming along?

DJ Quik – I don't know. I haven't been dabbling in that element of the music lately, in sound tracks or what not. But I'm always game to lend my talents to stuff like that. If the opportunities presents themselves then I am going to take advantage of it; especially if they're good.

Robert – I think it has been 2003 since you dropped the DVD 'Visualism'.

DJ Quik – Yea

Robert – First a Comment:

You said,in the 'Visualism' DVD "If I can't keep doing my music, theres no point to go on". With that said, I think the fanz always anticipate new Quik material, and really want you to continue with your music, because so much music has fallen apart, but yours never seemed to. you always have sum style and authentic music, and we appreciate that as a fan of true west coast rap. I just wanted to throw that in.

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DJ Quik – Thank you man. And that's why I'm in here in the studio in front of a new fangled FL9000 J series console playing strings enjoying my self cause it's still fun to be funky. I mean just coming out of New York, like I spent the last month or so in New York, in Manhattan just getting an energy; there's a vibe in New York. And I was able to record like some good shit off that – live drums, real drummers, real bad ass musicians, ya know just share my talents with people and learn from people and come back here and apply it to this record I'm doing right now, going to be a funky record.

Robert - Can we expect any DVD's soon?

DJ Quik – Probably so, I mean the funny thing about my DVD, like looking at it; it was crazy when I did the commentary over dub, I did it with a real sober outlook at the same time doing introspect; while I was watching it. And I realized that I just had too many people around me that didn't have my best interest at heart. But whenever I looked at them, whenever I made eye contact with them the facade was on. Soon as I turned my back they were back into character, and my DVD 'Visualism' gave me the opportunity to have eyes in the back of my head, if you will; to see what was going on behind me. So after our DVD came out I realized that I had to fire everybody and start over. Cause I was going to keep going down n down n down, selling less and less records, and loving the game less and less. So I had to do something extreme, and I did.

Robert – Is that when things sorta changed between you and Dre? After the change of everyone around you?

DJ Quik – I know that a lot of the relationships I have now with people are because I don't have a thousand people in my entourage anymore and all these mouths that I have to feed, all these nay sayers and negative balls of energy that just start fights and get drunk and try to fuck over women and ya know I don't have that shit around me anymore. It's like now I'm really on my respect chase more so than the paper chase. Some things I didn't get a chance to optimize when I had the newness, when I was like a new face and had the most impact, I really didn't maximize because of my naiveté. Now I'm in my early thirty's and I feel the urge, the importance to leave my mark now, more so than just make records. It's like now I want to leave like a sound. Like Dre has a soundya know what I mean? And I think I have a sound to but mine is more traditional R&B soul funk, But now I'm like branching out. I love classical and I merge classical with just raw hip-hop nasty drum bottoming. Even the mic'en techniques that I use when I mic drums now is like different than just somebody coming in and putting up a 'they got

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real drums on a hip-hop record like Quest Luv ', it's not quite like that. It's like we do some real exaggerated drum sounds using real old fashion equipment. Like I want a Beatles sound, ya know what I mean. I want a real warm, big, third dimensional, crispy, clean, creative energy on my music now. And that's what I'm going for.

Robert – What is the name of your record label?

DJ Quik – Mad Science Recordings.

Robert – The new album; is it still titled 'Quik is Still the Name'?

DJ Quik – No, I am going to be more creative than that. I ain't going to go into the past. That was like a work title. Just so I could not forget where I came from. Just keeping that in the air, ya know.

Robert – So do you have a name for it yet?

DJ Quik – No. The name usually comes after I sit back and listen to the whole record. The name always comes at the end of the record for some reason, the title.

Robert – It is to release in late January on your label?

DJ Quik – Probably late January; hopefully before March.

Robert - Is that going to be a national drop with a distribution deal?

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DJ Quik – Yeah, yeah. Warner Brothers. It will be nice, it's not going to be independent again. I mean obviously what I went thru with the Bungalo situation; I got so totally screwed that I didn't stand a chance. I didn't realize just how hard it was to put out records without the proper set up marketing, and with out people believing in the album at the label; as opposed to just trying to get a quick buck to piggy back off your record and go on to something else. I got used pretty much. Bungalo's a piece of shit. On the record – Bungalo's garabge. It's a front for criminals.

Robert – What can we expect from the album?

DJ Quik – Expect a bunch of collaborations with people that you never, expect me to not just sound like a west coast rapper. Expect me to be lyrically adept, and inspired by other things other than just bitches and broads and rollin up and down the 101 freeway in a low ryda. Expect the unexpected it's a real funky record. Real creative, ya know. Working with a lot of kool new musicians, real accomplished musicians, so with out being to musical and try to make like some soupy musical album; it's funky raw real bones but it's a lot of theory.

Robert – The track 'What They Think' feat./ Natt Dogg; is that on there?

DJ Quik – Yea, that's going to be on there.

Did you like that record?

Robert – Oh yea, yea, I liked that.

DJ Quik – Thank you. It's funny that record. I wasn't taking shots at anybody. My thing, my direction for that song, me personally was that coming from where I'm from you hear a lot of the people that buy records; you hear like what we call word on the streets. You hear a lot of peoples opinions behind closed doors and off the record, and my thing was like wow; how could you guys really feel that way about these people like the way you all feel about the southerners;; their accent is stupid and this and that and the east coast don't like west coast music and this and that. So what my thing was instead of just trying to be 'politically correct' and just keep going, as if I didn't hear any of this stuff; my thing was like to expose all the nay sayers. And

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how I'm rappin is just how I heard people talking. So I put them out there, like this is how ya all feel – this is how they all going ta know you all feel. That's why I said this is what they think of you.

Robert – What other feed back have you got on that song?

DJ Quik – 85% of 100 people liked that song. 15% of the people hated it because they took it personal. And if mutha fuckas is gonna smoke weed, get high get drunk and talk about people, and then wake up the next morning mad at me cause I used what they said verbatim in a song, then they should not have said the shit, and they shouldn't let their real feelings show, when they get drunk.

Robert – Can ya tell us some of the other artist you have featured on the album so far?

DJ Quik – Chingy is on there, we did a real good song. Real creative shit. We're doing character records as opposed to just calabing. Doing in character songs. My artist Shawn Anthony, he's a southern boy from Baton Rouge La.. He's real lyrical. He's like a literary genius. The boy writes like a no other.

Robert – Is all the production by you?

DJ Quik – Yes, I produced the whole thing.

Robert – Do you plan any video for the new album?

DJ Quik – Yea, we got video's planned. I mean it's funny now that I got a label situation I have the opportunity to go bigger than I have ever gone. Like all my stuff in the past was done on a budget of an artist. On Profiling there was a lot of things they just wouldn't do, or I couldn't get em to do. And it was made worse when I went to Arista after they had inherited my contract, when they assumed Profile; we just could never get on one page. So all of my imaging suffered.

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But now we got plans to be totally visual this time.

Robert – What is your favorite track on the new album and why?

DJ Quik – Yea it is a song called 'Get Down On The Ground'. Like the police hollering when they tell ya know pull ya over. I also got this song called 'Indiscretions in the Back of a Limo' with T.I. that I really like. It's southern but it's funky as west coast funk with a southern draw.

Robert - How are your solo artist on Bungalo recordz coming along? Album wise.

DJ Quick – No I don't. Not at all.

Robert – I hear you have a new artist on your label. What can you tell us about him?

DJ Quik – Well that's who I was talking about; Shawn Anthony. Shawn Anthony is like I don't know , his voice is like butter. People love his voice as soon as they hear it. And his album is real dark. It's like well thought out, it's real a range, it's classical in feel but it's like the tempos are up and when there are down tempos, he's laying it to them tracks lyrically. And his stories are vivid and visual. You can almost see what he's saying immediately. It's like, he's a great story teller and that's something that we lack these days. It's really dark, it's like dark.

Robert – When is his album coming out?

DJ Quik – Immediately after mine.

Robert – What else can we expect from DJ Quick in the future?

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DJ Quik – Well film score. I would love to get into film score. I had an opportunity to work with Marcus Miller and Chris Rock for his movie 'Head of State' that came out a couple of years ago, and just get on the inside and learn. Like Dream Works gave me an opportunity and I took it and I was realhappy about it, I still am. So hopefully I can underwrite somebody's movie , music wise.

Robert – If you were not blessed with all the musical talents you have, what do you see DJ Quik, the kid from Compton doing today instead?

DJ Quik – Without music? Oh I'd be dead. I would have got killed in a gang shoot out along time ago.

Robert – You really believe that?

DJ Quik – I know so. That's how Compton does. Compton eats it's young.

Robert – Any tour or show plans the fans should watch for?

DJ Quik – Yea, we are at the House of Blues in LA the 6th of this month (December).

As far as tours go I don't know. I's love to go out there with Game though. Just help like be a musical director or DJ or what not. I'd love to go out and represent. That dude is really talented and fresh. I like that. I like his energy.

Robert – Any shout outs or anything we missed?

DJ Quik – I'd like to shout out to RapNewsDirect for coming and getting it directly from me. I want to shout out my son little Dave. Keep focusing. Work harder, don't be afraid to try. And if

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you have ANY problems come to daddy, ya know what I mean.

Robert – Anything ya need to get out there while you're here?

DJ Quik – Nope except the fact that um, I don't know ; Petey Pablo took that record personal and I feel sorry for him. But a, ya know; Fuck em. Fuck em, I'm glad he feels that way. He shouldn't have gave me so much attention.

Robert – Well I'd like to thank you again for your time and please keep us up on what's poppin with DJ Quik and crew.

DJ Quik – K Bro

Robert – Peace

DJ Quik – Take care

Watch for Quik's new album the first part of 2005.

We will keep you posted.

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