

Rap Icon Tupac Thru The Eyes Of Gobi

Written by Robert ID2068

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History and memories come in many facets. Most are familiar with the music and music videos of hip-hop cultures late rap icon Tupac Shakur. Titles like '2 of Amerikaz Most Wanted', 'How Do You Want It', and the most famous gangsta rap 'diss' song ever 'Hit Em Up', were made into videos and are enjoyed today as much as when they first came out nearly 10 years ago.

Behind those hip-hop and rap videos and behind the rap artist, actor, poet, and activist Tupac Shakur, you can find many people that Tupac touched and interacted with as business associates, friends and family.

Gobi is one of those people lucky enough to have called Tupac his business partner and friend. Gobi directed many of the Tupac videos we enjoy today.

Gobi has just released a book of images and words about his business partner and friend Tupac Shakur called 'Thru My Eyes' (Atria / Simon & Schuster).

Thru the eyes and thanks to the lens of Gobi we will be seeing for the first time many new pictures of Tupac Shakur, from an observation point we have never been able to see from before. We will read Gobi's commentary on his friend Tupac Shakur, words about the rap icon from someone who actually knew and loved the man.

You may already own a photo or two of Gobi's if you have bought the recently released 'The Rose Vol.2' album. Gobi provided the front and rear covers.

Afeni Shakur Davis wrote the very moving forward for Gobi's book. In the forward she says "This book is Gobi's way of honoring my son and sharing his experience. I thank you Gobi, for being my son's friend."

It is amazing that every time we speak to a person who's path in life was fortunate enough to cross the path of the late rap icon Tupac Shakur, the impression that Tupac made on them still resonates in their daily walk; even today 9 years after his passing.

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Gobi talks to ThugLifeArmy.com about his memories of his friendship with Tupac, with Tupac's mother, Afeni Shakur Davis, and how he met and grew to love Tupac and how that feeling was and is shared between them even today.

Gobi's book Thru My Eyes is available now and you can see a online promotional video on the book featuring Gobi by clicking [HERE](#) . (QuickTime format)

Part of the proceeds from the sales of this book will go to the Tupac Amaru Shakur Foundation (TASF). Please visit their web site [HERE](#) to learn more ways you can interact and help in the Foundations Projects.

We would like to thank Gobi for his time and for his fascinating insight into a period of his life that he holds very dear; the time he spent with his friend Tupac Shakur.

ThugLifeArmy – Thank you for taking time to speak with us. It is much appreciated.

Gobi – It's a pleasure.

ThugLifeArmy – Your name Gobi is very unique. What is your nationality?

Gobi – I was born in England, to a half English-half Iranian mother and I have a long Middle Eastern name. And my half Catholic half Jewish grandmother didn't like my long middle eastern name so my original name, which is ghobad became ghobi, which became gobi. And my full name is mohammad ghobad rahiminedjad gazvini ghobad which is a mouth full, and even more to spell. Gobi became my nickname in the family. And then after years of trying to figure out what I should call myself over here; cause it was never PC being Middle Eastern from the

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minute I got here. Cause the minute I got here the hostage crisis happened in Iran, so being Iranian was the last thing anyone wanted to deal with. So going to a conservative high school in Irvine California, I got the shit kicked out of me a lot for being an Iranian. So I like to say it was good foundation for all that I've accomplished thus far in my life.

ThugLifeArmy - I was surprised to see you were the director of the video for the 2004 vote video 'Wake Up Everybody'. Great video and a great song from Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes.

Gobi – Yes, I directed that video and the documentary that went along with it.

ThugLifeArmy - How did you manage to get all that talent together at one time?

Gobi – I really just showed up on set. Essentially what happened, America Coming Together reached out to all the talent and they absolutely wanted to do what ever they could to get the 'Bushites' out of office. I have produced about 250 music videos and some commercials over the years and my job was to make that video happen for no money. So it was really 6 shooting days with all those artists, based on their convenience around the country and no money. So what happened was each artist records a track, which took about 10 to 15 minuets. Then I had 10 to 15 minuets to set up lights and cameras and shoot them doing their verse a couple of times. We did that with each artist. I remember one day specifically we shot Missy Elliott in the morning in Miami and then flew to New York shot Wyclef that evening and then flew back to L.A. and shot a couple of artists the next day.

ThugLifeArmy – It took a week to do that video?

Gobi – Well, it took a week to shoot all the elements for that video.

ThugLifeArmy – We still have that video up on the site, I love that video.

Gobi – Yeah, that's one of my favorite ones. I wish to god you could get the Yoko Ono video,

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cause that one is one of the most beautiful videos I have ever seen but unfortunately it never got the play it should have got.

ThugLifeArmy – You have not just worked with Tupac but with many heavy hitters in the game like Snoop Dogg, Erykah Badu, Queen Latifah, Ice Cube, Breed and Mack-10. How does Tupac stick out in your mind compared to these other artists?

Gobi – Well, above and beyond the fact that he gave me my first break as a director and gave me the opportunity to do so, he thus far has been the most innovative being that I have ever had the pleasure of working with; in that he was a leader. He was an innovator, he was a risk taker, he pledged a non verbal allegiance to you. And as soon as you started working with him, you absolutely fell in love with him as a human being and wanted to do whatever you possibly could to help bring his dreams to fruition.

ThugLifeArmy – How did you first meet Tupac?

Gobi – I had a production company with Tracy Robinson and we came up basically producing videos for Mack 10, Ice Cube and all the artists that they were involved with. Tracy had been a production assistant on one of Pac's videos 'Pour out a little liquor', before he got incarcerated. I always like to say 'wrongly accused' of rape or whatever, that is because he always professed that he didn't do it and it was just another black man being taken down from a position of power. In any event, Tracy worked on his video and had let him know, thru that experience, that she was down for him and would do whatever he needed. When he got out of prison he sent Molly Monjauze, who has kinda been a foundation and a rock thru the whole process of what we know as Tupac postmortem up to this day. He sent her out to find Tracy, and since at that time I was Tracy's boyfriend, I came along with the package. I remember the first time I met him (2Pac) was at a Malibu beach house where Pac and the Outlawz were having a water gun fight. And it was September – October I think, and I remember I was wearing a long leather jacket. You know we all got a 'kid' in us. We all love having fun, and they were at it, and I just wanted to do whatever I could to get into the middle of that cause you know I'm a bit of a warrior myself. So I wanted to get involved in that water gun fight. I remember Pac got a call from Suge (Marion 'Suge' Knight) at the time and went off for a minute. And I just started touching the gun that Pac left on the table, hoping it would 'bait' someone to get me involved. I remember Napoleon started shooting at me and the next thing you know I was in the middle of it. Prior to this whole situation, before they got into the water gun fight, Molly had introduced me as Gobi and he (2Pac) had heard about me and he knew I was Tracy's partner and he had heard some good things about me. He even said 'You're Iranian huh?' And I said 'yeah'. And he said 'You know you got some fine, some fine ass women.' And at that moment I was like 'aw I love this guy, this

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guy is dope'. So the gun fight started, and then Pac went into the house and he came back. I remember I had put the collar up on my coat, and I was wearing a leather jacket so they really couldn't get me wet. But then all the Outlawz surrounded me and they were shooting me with their guns, but I was still shooting every single one of them as best as I possibly could. Then Pac came up and he broke the whole thing apart and he said 'That's what I'm talking about. That mutherfucker held his ground and was fighting all of you mutherfuckers even when you had him outnumbered; that's a crazy Iranian'. And that's where my moniker came from, and he always called me to the dying day he called me his 'Crazy Iranian'. And I always took pride to that for many reasons because I was loyal to him and saw his potential prophetic affect that he can have on all society's because I saw in him a true underdog that, aside from all adversities that the Creator could throw at him, he blossomed into that rose from concrete and was able to make something powerful out of himself. And I always say to people, without being sacrilegious, Jesus died at 33 and only a handful of people knew about Him. Pac died at 25 and was known worldwide. What are people going to think of Pac in a thousand years from now? And again I say he was 25, he had the world at his feet and he had so much going on, but I still think he was still just a kid. He was still naïve. He still made some wrong decisions. And deep down in side I kinda felt like, it could be delusions of grandeur on my part, but I never had a little brother. I never had a little homie, a boy in the family that I could be a mentor to. I kinda felt that maybe one day I would be close enough that I could help steer him towards the light as opposed to the darkness that was enveloping him.

ThugLifeArmy – Were you part of the Non-Stop Productions that Tupac and Johnny “J” started?

Gobi – No. Tupac had started a production company. I actually had a dba by the name of 24-7 Productions. And when I brought that to the table, he said 'I love it; that is going to be the name of our company'. So we had done a loc called 24-7 Productions. It was basically suppose to do all filmed productions for him. And then he had Euphania with Yasmine and Molly; but Tracy, myself and Pac were partners where he had 60% we had 40% of the company. Basically up to a week before he died we had 3 pictures we were shopping around town and everyone was excited. We basically had a 3 picture deal a week before he died.

ThugLifeArmy – What ever happened to those?

Gobi – They are still ideas that he wanted to do that hopefully that one day his mom will bring to fruition. But I will do my best in everything I do, including this script for the 'Live to Tell' project, that hopefully will be brought to the screen by next year, to make sure I live up to my bargain. He started me and I feel that I owe him a lot. And in every move that I make I try to honor his wishes as best as I think he would want them.

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ThugLifeArmy – I have read that you worked with Tupac the last 8 months of his life. (Gobi – yeah) That would be the Death Row Records era of his career. How was it working with all the Death Row Staff?

Gobi – I never really had interactions with the staff. Suge kicked me out of the trailer a couple times when he wanted to talk to Pac in the middle of some shots that I was trying to get Pac in. But it was scary; it was really really scary. It was the scariest part of my life; plain and simple. Being at the hospital when he got shot was probably the scariest period of my life, but dealing with Death Row and that sort of energy was the farthest thing from what I was use to coming from a loving Middle Eastern family. I mean my folks were afraid for me, everyone was afraid for me. It pretty much put an end to the relationship that I had with Tracy Robinson, going thru that whole situation. Death Row was just scary, it was just scary. I was bummed that he (2Pac) was involved with them. I wish he could have gotten out of his deal with them, and I wish he was still alive, because I truly feel he would have done a lot more. Not only as far as his own prosperity but I think for awareness and sharing and politically, spiritually; I think he would have done a lot for his own people – and he would have done a lot for mankind in general.

ThugLifeArmy – Do you still see Suge Knight around?

Gobi – No, I try to avoid him as much as possible. I got nothing to say with him. I wish him the best and may God bless him with peace.

ThugLifeArmy – The book 'Thru My Eyes' is said to have pictures and words from you on Tupac. What is the most powerful statement that you make in words in the book about Tupac?

Gobi – Pac said, in one of the last meetings I was with him, 'that if the powers that be built a community center in every ghetto in America, I would kiss Biggie Smalls on the cheek and force him to tour with me for free, until that happens the war is on.'

ThugLifeArmy – What period of time would you say he said that?

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Gobi – That was probably about a month or so before he died.

ThugLifeArmy – What would you say the biggest misconception is that the public believes about Tupac, since there is so much mis-information out there about Tupac?

Gobi – I think they define him, as they do most African Americans in this country, as thugs and as criminals and as violent people that have no redeeming quality what so ever. I think unfortunately the media, especially the Fox News's of the world; try to perpetuate fear amongst white and black. Because when you foster fear in-between people, the division allows them never to grow close and to never become powerful. And I think one way to keep the black man down is to keep the white man fearful of him. That's what I try to do in this book. I try to show 'shades' of Tupac that have never been exposed; his humor, his lovingness, his appreciation of women. I remember he use to say he loves women and he respects them but to him a bitch is still a bitch and hoe is still a hoe. I respect that because it's his philosophy, it's his philosophy.

ThugLifeArmy – I have had people tell me that they just don't like Tupac because they feel he was a racist.

Gobi – That is the farthest from the truth. My sister Marjan, who is a beautiful Iranian woman, was the last person in our crew to see him before he got shot. At that point she was one of my producers of the videos, she was in production with me, and he treated her with the most respect in the world. He treated her like a queen, and I saw him treat a lot of women as queens. He had his inner most circle of white people. Molly Monjauze is a little white girl who has been loyal to him since high school and still is to this point. She will correct me on a daily basis if I say something that is even slightly off the truth of what Tupac was, and I respect that.

ThugLifeArmy – Well my point would be Johnny "J" is Mexican, you're Iranian, look at Jon B; I mean Tupac had white people around him also. I just don't understand how a person could actually come up with that kind of comment about Tupac Shakur.

Gobi – Look, people either loved him or hated him. And the people that hated him, I would think 9 out of 10 times, was because they were either envious of him or jealous of him or didn't like black people; plain and simple. Because he was an innovator, he was a living genius. He didn't make the smartest moves, he made some really really dumb moves and got himself to a point

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where he had some 'Darth Vader's' around him. Had he lived a little longer, one of the last things I remember him saying was 'Gobi in 6 months no ones going to recognize me cause I'm going to act like such an adult. I am going to be so mature about my decisions and in fact one day I might run for mayor of Los Angeles, cause these mutherfuckers are all corrupt anyway.' Now that's not an ignorant being.

ThugLifeArmy – Well how many rappers have wrote a book of poetry?

Gobi – How many went to the Performing Arts and went to school and were classically trained as actors or dancers or whatever? How many of them were children of Black Panthers? How many of them were in the Panther youth?

ThugLifeArmy – How many of them could stand in front of the Malcolm X Grass Roots Movement and move an audience like that with a speech.

Gobi – Yeah, I truly believe from the time of Jesus, Mohammad, Moses, Buddha, the Creator always brought us prophets. In his own right Pac was prophetic, he just didn't come to realization. You in spreading your truth, me in spreading my truth – we all have the gene of propheticness in us. Physics will teach you that every breath you take in, you have a molecule of Jesus, you have a molecule of Einstein, and you have a molecule of Moses being inhaled at that moment. So even on a physics level we have a little prophet to us. It's wither we choose to exercise that, its wither we choose to allow our victim state to dictate what our actions are. And I have spent a good portion of my life being a victim, even in the last 10 years, even in the last 9 years since his passing. I was a 'why hasn't anyone recognized how important 'I' was'. 'Why hasn't anyone given 'me' money for all that I did?' 'How come 'I' lost out on everything that has been done thus far?' But the lesson doesn't come at the pace that we want it to. Sometimes it takes a lifetime; sometimes it takes many lifetimes for us to find what the truth is. But the fact that I'm alive and tomorrow morning, a book of photos and words are going to come out that I had something to do with, it's like the Creator is telling me 'Keep at it son, keep at it. You need to keep moving forward because you're doing good.'

ThugLifeArmy – As a friend of Tupac, how do you feel about some of the negativity that seems

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to surround his legacy?

Gobi – Ya know, we're trying to define his legacy in 9 years and again to define his legacy in such a short period of time; we are doing him a dis-service and we are doing the legacy a dis-service because the legacy is still being formulated. There are still many projects that haven't come out, that will come out that will add to and define what is left of him. I heard at one point that great peoples history is written by their contemporaries. There are many contemporaries of his that have yet to even say something. I personally could have been advised by many people to keep my mouth shut but I gotta tell the truth. The Creator put a film maker by his (2Pac) side right up to the moment he died. If I don't say something who the fuck is going to?

ThugLifeArmy – Where you in Vegas with him at the time?

Gobi – I was in Vegas waiting at Suge's club (Club 662), waiting for Pac and his entourage to show up; with my sister, her husband, Tracy Robinson and our crew. When Nate Dogg walked up to me and said Pac and Suge had been shot; and Tracy and I showed up at the hospital. Tracy was there for 3 days, I was there for 6 days, and I took it upon myself to set the grave yard shift for those 6 nights, I was there from 12 till 8 in the morning.

ThugLifeArmy – Kidada Jones had went to Las Vegas with him right?

Gobi - Kidada Jones and his cousin Jamala were on the phone crying their eyes out when we walked in. We ran into Suge's family and David Kenner.

ThugLifeArmy – Was Kidada there the whole week?

Gobi – I believe so, her mom even came out to visit her.

ThugLifeArmy – One thing I have to commend you on is having Amaru involved with your

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project with Afeni writing the forward for the book. Many times things are just put out there and it is good to see that you apparently approached her for her approval.

Gobi – Thank you. Ya know I think a lot of the people after Pac's passing felt, including myself for a long time, felt a sense of entitlement. The one thing that has always been true since his passing is that Pac's not around anymore; and having said that, I feel that no one has protected and fought for his (2Pac) legacy stronger than his mother has. My hat is off to her. I will respect her till the day I die, based on what she has done for her son and will continue to do for her son. She, like everyone else, is only human. And I say this in the book; she was the one that brought that seed to life. She is the one who fed him. She is the one that made him what he was, to a certain point. I have to give her her dues. People are very easy and quick to blame her for not doing things the way they feel Pac would have done them but Pac's not here anymore. I will always in everything that I do, not only Tupac related but things that have nothing to do with Tupac, I will always give her a portion of what I'm doing for her cause. Because she is a great woman and I think she has been unjustly judged by people, whether it's Pac fans or his friends or whatever. I don't profess to know what it is like to lose your son. I hope and pray that if I am blessed with a son, I never have to go thru that; cause that's fucked up to me. And for people to have judgment against her I think they are doing Tupac a dis-service; THAT'S HIS MOMMA.

ThugLifeArmy – Can you give us a 'teaser' of what she had to say in the forward about her son?

Gobi – "This book is Gobi's way of honoring my son and sharing his experiences. I thank you Gobi for being my son's friend."(From the forward to 'Thru My Eyes by Gobi. Words written by Afeni Shakur Davis). Also from Afeni Shakur Davis' forward "Gobi has his own special experience with my son and in sharing his perception offers a personal view of Tupac that warrants exposure."... "I thank you Gobi for being my son's friend in life and I appreciate the honor you bring to this project..." (All from the forward written by Afeni Shakur Davis).

ThugLifeArmy – Has Afeni got married? I see you refer to her as Afeni Shakur Davis.

Gobi – Yes, she is married to a Doctor Davis who is, I believe a reverend or in the church some way.

ThugLifeArmy – How long ago did she get married?

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Gobi – I'm not really sure, maybe a year ago or something. But yes that is how she would like to be referred to; Afeni Shakur Davis.

ThugLifeArmy – Thanks, it is good to know how she wishes to be addressed so we can show her, her due respect.

ThugLifeArmy – When videos were talked, did they pick the tracks and give them to you to come up with the idea for the video or did they have the idea for the video going in?

Gobi – Tupac had clear ideas of what he was looking for. Like on '2 of Amerikaz Most Wanted' the director that was slated to work on that video backed out 2 days before. I was producing it with Tracy and he backed out 2 days before and his justification was he didn't want to share credit with Pac, because it was Pac's treatment and he wanted his treatment brought to life. So Tracy went to Pac and said well this guy backed out but ya know Gobi wants to direct. And his response was 'Let the mutherfucker do it'. So my first directing gig ever was '2 of Amerikaz Most Wanted' with Snoop and Tupac. And it was his (2Pac) concept, and I basically brought him treatment, I planned the whole thing out and brought it visually to fruition and put it together and he took directing credit with me on it.

ThugLifeArmy – Is there a regular version of 'Hit Em Up' or are they all clean?

Gobi – I think they are all clean.

ThugLifeArmy – Which video did you enjoy doing the most?

Gobi – '2 of Amerikaz Most Wanted' was just a thrill because it was my first project and it was just so powerful. I couldn't stop myself from saying to both him and Snoop 'You guys are super stars; I see why you are making the millions.' And it was a shot that was going back and forth in a little mezzanine area and after we shot it they were doing the chorus "Ain't Nothing but a gangsta party, party" and I just absolutely loved it.

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ThugLifeArmy – Are there any videos that you did that are unreleased?

Gobi – Well I did ‘Life Goes On’, I personally did a video of the footage and the photos that I have myself and some snippets of some of his old videos that is a powerful video but it just never got released.

ThugLifeArmy – Who has it?

Gobi – I did it for the family. I have a copy of it.

ThugLifeArmy – Does Afeni own it?

Gobi – Yeah, I don’t really don’t have any ownership in it but I have the master to it, but I’m sure at some point hopefully I will be able to convince Afeni’s team to put it out on a series.

ThugLifeArmy – Do you ever think we will hear the ‘One Nation Project’ that Tupac put together? Had you done any work for that?

Gobi – Most of my footage is all that stuff in the studio, that’s what I filmed. I really can’t answer that for you because I really don’t have any involvement in the music.

ThugLifeArmy – But there was East Coast and West Coast performers there right?

Gobi – Oh yeah, Smith and Wesson, Buckshot, and a few others.

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ThugLifeArmy – The book is filled with pictures of Tupac. What is the most striking new picture we will be able to see in the book?

Gobi – I think the most striking series of photos were photos I took when he was on a bed waiting for set up and I basically just let the camera snap every few seconds. But every few seconds he changed what he was doing. He was just going thru a whole series of expressions and I call it 'The Gemini Sequence'. You'll never see photos like this of him. Most of the photos are very candid and his guard was down. One thing I was privy to was I could feel the level of trust he had for me and his guard was always down for me, it was just about fun.

ThugLifeArmy – So you were like his official photographer?

Gobi – I was his partner, I was his film partner and just happened to be directing music videos and taking pictures at the same time. I wasn't an official photographer no.

ThugLifeArmy – Are they black and white or color?

Gobi – Both.

ThugLifeArmy – How do you plan to keep them from being bootlegged on the net?

Gobi – At this point bootlegging always happens. If someone's going to buy the book and scan the photos and bootleg them, they are going to do it regardless of what I want, ya know what I mean. But I know the book sales will have a positive effect on The Performing Arts Center and I would hope that his fans honor him by putting money into what he believed in; which is The Performing Arts Center, and I think that is a just cause. It will only, it will foster a more positive and accurate legacy because his legacy is still coming about. Another person that I really want to try to get involved in what's going on now is Arvand. Arvand was the med student who taught the history and writing class at Berkley. He's the one who came up with the syllabus for that course. I'm trying to get at him to put that syllabus together again so Afeni Shakur Davis can have access to that and get it out there. Because no-one has broken down his lyrics, every word and every event that took place in Pac's adult life the way Arvand has. The guy is a

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general surgeon at the ER in RedLands right now. But he has a grasp and an interpretation of Pac that is second by none.

ThugLifeArmy – How deep was the relationship that you had with Tupac?

Gobi – I would say that I was only a step or two away from having a personal relationship with him. I was a trusted business partner and I was obviously a friend, because I think that comes hand and hand at a certain point. But it wasn't the kind of a relationship where he sat down and told me his troubles. But I felt very close to him and I felt, without ever expressing it to him, that I had to treat him like as my little brother.

ThugLifeArmy – Can you share one thing that may surprise people about the man Tupac Shakur?

Gobi – I just think he was very loyal and once he trusted you he stayed loyal to you until he was wronged by you. If you wronged him and then you became an enemy, but he was very very loyal. A lot of what he had said about people that wronged him I have to believe him, because I experienced him and how he treated me. I don't know if that makes sense to you but, ya know. He was a loving being, very loving. And he was accepting of everyone. He was not a racist. He was accepting of every creed or color human being. At the stage I interacted with him, he accepted all; white, black, blue, green, yellow. He may have had issues with certain people but he was the furthest thing from a racist.

ThugLifeArmy – Why did you decide now is the time for the book to come out?

Gobi – I put this book together 4 years ago. It's taken 4 years for it to come out.

ThugLifeArmy – Since it has been almost 10 years since Pac had passed, how have you filled in that time frame?

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Gobi – Well, I've still been a director for music videos. I have been involved with some charity work. I have done a lot of traveling around the world and basically getting ready for the next phase of life. I plan on making some amazing films, so that's what I plan on doing.

ThugLifeArmy – Do you still make music videos now?

Gobi – It's a little more rare. I really haven't been fighting for the music video thing as much. One of my dreams was to be a teacher when I was a kid and when I realized the power that a film maker can have, we have the potential of being teachers thru our film making. That's what really excites me about the potential of coming forward with it. I have been sitting on his (2Pac) script 'Live to Tell' and have been blessed with some financiers that are now in the midst of negotiating with his mom and hopefully by Christmas of next year that will be the first and only script ever written by him that comes to the big screen. I'm really proud of that potential.

ThugLifeArmy – Well the book is out and part of the proceeds go to TASF.

Gobi – Yes some of the proceeds go to the foundation.

ThugLifeArmy – We thank you for your time and wish you the best and much success with the book and in your walk in life. Please keep us informed on your projects. Thanks again it has been a pleasure.

Gobi – I appreciate it thank you. Have a beautiful day.

ThugLifeArmy – Thank you, Peace

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