

Hip Hop's Righteous Black Guerrilla - Askari X

Written by Minister of Information JR ID3274

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Righteous Black Guerrilla: an interview with Askari X by the Minister of Information JR

A.E.M. s/c Askari X has been a political hip hop rap legend since his debut album "Ward of the State" that was released in the early 90's, when he was 16 years old. In '96, Sacramento rapper C-Bo was sent by 2Pac (Tupac) to find Askari X for the "All Eyez on Me" project, but with incarcerations and Pac (Tupac) being assassinated the song that they were all supposed to do, never came to fruition.

With the meteoric rise of the RBG's headed by the East Coast based dead prez, many in the rap world outside of the West Coast never knew that Ansar Tracy, founded the RBG's, which in the west stands for Righteous Black Guerrillas in the early 90's, and Askari, Brotha Moe, and Ansar Lamumba Wakill were the founding members. Now in his 30's, and after being locked down in various California concentration camps, Askari X is back on the streets recording for his new album. Check him out as we talk to about his reflections on society since he has been locked down behind enemy lines, the hip hop hyphy movement, as well as what motivated him to do political music. Peep Askari in his own words in his first interview since he was unleashed, less than a month ago. Peep him...

MOI JR: When you've been away 3 years and looking at the Town, and looking at the Bay Area where we as a people are at, what did you see? What were some of your observations as you were in the bubble that we call the United States concentration camps?

Askari: First I saw wit" my third eye, so I already knew where it was headed, but at the same time, its really about keeping your ear to the street, keeping your ear to prophesy, and you can see that different waves or vibrations is going to come in off of the ether plane from the Creators realm that's going to cause us to tap into other aspects of culture, like dreadlocks and the tribal hyphyness that we see, or the crunk dances, and everything else that comes in with it. Kwame Nkrumah, I believe, he said that it was called the dialectics of historical materialism, how the ebb and flow of Black people's existence dictates when the revolution can be more of a success in the minds of the people. So I knew it was going to take on changes and renewals, because Hip Hop is alive.

MOI JR: You've been on the scene since you were 16 years old. You are rather young to be a Hip Hop legend from this area. How do you see this Bay Area hyphy music? How do you look at

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it as somebody who is older than the hyphy crowd, where the hyphy crowd is like your little brother's age or maybe even younger than that. How do you see this cultural formation that is forming right here in the Bay Area called hyphy, being a political rapper?

Askari: You know, well the Creator has me see it like this here, the Panther movement was started by brothas in their teens. Lil' Bobby Hutton was like 16 or 17, Huey Newton was like 21, Fred Hampton Sr was like 21, you know what I mean? So it's really just staying in line with history. So the hyphy movement is nothing to be hyphy because all that that means is to be real amped up and tuned in about what you're doing rather it's yoking at the side show or you're having fun, or you're just representing something, and doing it in a manner that is just off the hook or its real animated. It's hyphy, that's what hyphy is so it doesn't make a difference if youngstas get hyphy, because they're going to keep it hyphy, that's what being a youth is about. As far as the elders and the warriors, those of us that's of warrior age, we maintain the hyphyness, and the elders who been done established order within the hyphyness, we know what it is all about. It looks dangerous to the devil or the European, but it is nothing to us because we're up in it. So it's all good.

MOI JR: What motivated you to be a political rapper? You came out at a time where a lot of rappers like 3xCrazy, Rappin' Ron, the Delinquents, and that was like the crew that you were among when you came to the table. They rap about very similar things, and your message is similar yet different. How did you develop that?

Askari: Well, from what I recall what everybody from that time was rapping about was what they went through. So what Rappin' Ron and the rest of the brothas was rappin' about...I was going through group homes and juvenile incarceration, so that's really what came out in my lyrics. Then there was also consciousness there because I began dealing wit' my true nature which is Islam. So you had the condition that I was facing, mixed wit' political awareness and spiritual awareness; political awareness through the African People's Socialist Party, the Uhuru Movement that was nationally stationed in Oakland during the time. They're in Florida now. That's where me and Chairman Fred Hampton Jr began to get together and other people were also in the mist, Chairman Omali Yishitela, the local party Chairman Biko Lamumba RIP, but all praises due to the Creator because Master Wallace D. Fard Muhammad and especially for the Messenger the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad that it all comes together how it is supposed to happen. So what I'm rappin' about now is the same thing, what I'm going through or what I feel, you know what I mean? Or what I know, what I see, and I done had enough time to put it together so it's just time to present it to the people.

MOI JR: What influence did organizations like the African People's Socialist Party, the Uhuru

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Movement, as well as your religious affiliation with the Ansar El Muhammads have? You have always been connected; you've always had an organizational structure behind you? What is the importance of structure? And what impact have those affiliations had on your life?

Askari: Well like you said, that is a structure and it adds degrees of civilization or civility or the ability to articulate ideas and to be able to have ideas presented to you to be able to study and go over and strive to master and have some effect or input in the whole matter especially when it is raising the consciousness of our people, then you got to have it, in order to give it. So all praises due to Allah, Master Wallace D. Fard Muhammad especially for the Messenger the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad because that's how we got it, through different so-called organizations and religious orders and the streets is another right of passage that we graduate from, into who we are as we present ourselves to the people.

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