

Father of Hip-Hop Journalism Makes Urban Art Film

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Tuesday, 18 July 2006 15:20 -

Urban filmmaker Barry Michael Cooper, who wrote the first published piece on Hip-Hop ("Buckaroos of the Boogaloo") in 1980 for the Village Voice and laid down the blueprint for Hip-Hop gangster movies by penning the screenplays for New Jack City, Sugar Hill and Above the Rim, is currently promoting his new digital urban art film BLOOD ON THE WALL\$.

The movie follows the story of Cooper Michaels -- a writer who claims to have helped invent hip-hop journalism in the early 1990s and who has fallen on hard times since. Michaels (played by Cooper) gets a magazine assignment to find out the story behind a mulatto artist and Jay-Z fanatic from Baltimore named Swiss Williams, who, while on a gallery visit in New York, shoots and kills a rising art dealer before turning the gun on himself.

In the August issue of NUANCE Magazine, Cooper explains why the main character (Swiss) calls himself the "Jay-Z of the art world."

"He's one of the top three greatest rappers of all time," says Cooper of Jay-Z. "Jay, Biggie and Tupac (2Pac) He's in that upper echelon because there's a shame to what he talks about. He's ashamed of what he did. People ain't listening to Jay-Z. This dude is a poet. He's like Baldwin. Listen to "Allure" on The Black Album. I had tears in my eyes. There's nobody else like Jay-Z right now -- nobody."

Elsewhere in the interview, Cooper, who is putting the finishing touches on a Andre Harrell biography, defends Kanye West's decision to put President Bush on blast and explains why he thinks Hip-Hop is suffering from a form of Stockholm Syndrome.

Cooper says he intends to release BLOOD ON THE WALL\$, which was an official selection at HBO's 9th Annual American Black Film Festival, online with a planned one month run at Google Video. To read Part 1 of NUANCE Magazine's interview with Barry Michael Cooper, visit <http://www.nuancemag.com>