

Hip-Hop MC Random More Than A Conscious Rap MC

Written by Robert ID1694

Thursday, 21 July 2005 00:47 -

A 27-year old Philadelphia native, hip-hop rap artist Random is a student of the culture. Raised by a single mother, a huge Motown and Philly International Records fan, Random's love affair with music started with Marvin Gaye. "I think my first favorite song was 'Mercy Mercy Me.' The passion in Marvin's words always stood out to me."

Years later, with the emergence of Hip-Hop culture in Philadelphia through artists such as Cool C, Steady B, Three Times Dope and others, Random's musical tastes shifted from R&B to Hip-Hop. "I remember what drew me to Hip-Hop was the soul element of it; when I could recognize a loop or a vocal sample from a soul hit, I went crazy."

As a teenager, Random's influences were the hip-hop and rap legends; Rakim, Kool G Rap, KRS-ONE, Run DMC, Big Daddy Kane, EPMD, Ice Cube and Slick Rick, among others, but it was mainly the unsung and often unheralded artists that piqued his interest. "I have a lot of love for Chubb Rock. He was one of those artists who never switched up. He stayed true to himself. He was conscious and could still rock a party on the same track." These artists got Random through his elementary and middle school years. But there was one emcee more than any that Random credits for most of his rhyiming inspiration.

"One day my cousin let me dub her LL Cool J tape, and I was hooked. I let my tape rock till my tape popped," Random says jokingly. Random credits LL Cool J's passion, swagger, versatility; and now longevity as his main reason for entering the hip-hop realm. "If I could have one-tenth the career L has, I'd be straight," Ran says. Although the desire was there in 1989, Random never actually wrote his first rhyme until 1993.

"I remember that summer like it was yesterday. Jon The Baptist and Cost (his first rhyme partners) were on my step and we all decided to write a verse, just for the heck of it." And so, the rest, as they say, is history.

"1993-94 was such a big time for hip hop- I call it the last golden age for the game. A lot of influential people dropped major albums around that time-- you had Nas, Big, A Tribe Called Quest, Wu-Tang, Snoop—I don't ever remember that many classics coming out at once like that since maybe '88. I think I just got caught up in the moment and decided this was something that I had to be a part of."

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Random's love for the game was evidenced in the following years. Without the money for studio time or expensive equipment, Random and The NET (Never Ending Talent) proceeded to record albums on handheld tape decks, karaoke machines, and later a 4-track analog recorders before landing a dream job as an in-house producer and engineer at Lab Addicts Studio in Philly in 2003, and dropping *"The Random Demo Project."*

In 2000, Random first met up with fellow RAHM Nation crew member and highly touted lyricist, Ohene, and O was so impressed that he invited Ran to join him in a gospel rap group who later split due to creative differences, but as they say, real, recognizes real. They maintained their friendship, and 3 years later, when the RAHM Nation Movement picked up steam, Random was an easy recruitment. "I always respected O, and the level of skill he brings to the table is phenomenal. I need that kind of inspiration around me; someone to encourage me to constantly improve. We just both needed some time to grow."

Along the way, Random picked up a new hobby that developed into a new passion: Beat making. "It's kinda cool, making beats," Ran says. "There's an unexplainable rush that overcomes me when other people want me to produce them. I think I'm more excited about their joints than they are. I used to just make beats for my own projects, and I never really expected to produce others. I just got tired of copping instrumental cd's and looping other people's beats together."

Call Random a producer, an engineer, an emcee, but just don't do it in that order. As he stated in a freestyle in 2002, *"Don't get it twisted, I been rappin' way before the beats/ CD burner, 4-track, put my music on the streets."* He says "No matter how much fun it is to produce, my first love will always be emceeing." His style can only be described as a strange hybrid of KRS's thought process, Nas' vivid imagery, Redman's sense of humor, and Big Daddy Kane's venomous flow. You never really know what to expect from Random in terms of concepts, beats or lyrics. I guess that's how he got his name.

"I was born to be a fighter," Random adds. His father, although absent from his life, is the Executive Director of the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration in Liberia. "It's in my blood. I can't just sit back and watch what's happening

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to my culture. That's what the new album is all about, taking Hip-Hop back."

His current project,

Archetype

, has received rave reviews from hip-hop purists and critics alike. He is releasing a new EP entitled "Fundamentals" in July 2005.

Now, 12 years, 10 independently distributed albums, and one Bachelor of Arts degree from Penn State University later; here stands what he believes to be the new and improved Random.

"The beats have stepped up, the rhymes have improved, but most importantly, the mind has grown. I feel like now I have a strong enough mind to take the game seriously. Like it says in the Bible, 'When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put **childish** ways behind me.' For about the first 5 years of rapping, I was an infant. I honestly never really thought that I was ready to reach the masses. I just didn't think the game wanted to hear another 'conscious emcee.' But now, I'm ready."

The question remains though, is the game ready?

Here is contact information for Random.

REAL NAME: Raheem Jameel Jarbo

ALIASES: Random, Random Beats, Big Ran

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FROM: Philadelphia

EXPERIENCE: MC since 1993, Producer since 2000, Studio Engineer since 2003

CONTACT: Random Beats Productions 267.258.1130 (<http://www.soundclick.com/randombeats>),

RAHM Nation Recordings (<http://www.rahmnation.org>) 215.251.4041

News for Random:

Album Release Party at Fiso Lounge 7/29: Random's Official "Fundamentals" release party will be held on Friday, July 29 at Fiso Lounge, 1437 South Street, Philadelphia. Perks include an open bar from 5-7, a free buffet from 6-8, and live performances from hot hip-hop artists and poets from the area. Admission is FREE with an RSVP to

[Random](#)

(
random2g@yahoo.com
). For more info on Fiso Lounge,
Click Here.

Fundamentally Sound: Random's newest endeavor, "*Fundamentals*," an 8-song theme EP, will be available for purchase/download July 26. Ran says, "it's a tribute to the last golden age of hip-hop, '93-'95. No gimmicks, just beats and rhymes."

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Ridin" On The Freeway: **On August 20, 2005,** Random will get his chance to shine, as one of the opening acts at Roc-a-Fella/Def Jam artist Freeway's album release party, sponsored by Tri-Global Entertainment. The event will be held at Rhythms Entertainment Complex, 4700 Wissahickon Avenue in Philadelphia. Tickets are \$25.00 at the door, but less in advance. Freeway's album, *"Free At Last"* is scheduled to hit record stores in August. to get more information on Freeway, visit www.philadelphiafreeway.com.

All this info and more can be found on Random's home site:

<http://www.soundclick.com/randombeats>

<http://artists.soundclick.com/random>