

10th Anniversary of Hip-Hop Icon Tupac Shakur Death

Written by John ID3009

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Today marks the day when ten years ago, the legendary hip-hop and rap artist Tupac Shakur (2Pac) was taken from us after being gunned down in Las Vegas. What follows below are my thoughts on a legend that has been a massive part of my life.

What first got me into hip-hop and the whole rap scene was the album 'Doggystyle' by the west coast rapper Snoop Doggy Dogg. Upon hearing the album, its beatz and the lyrics that it contained I was instantly hooked on the music. But listening to the music was not enough for me. I needed to know where this music came from, where its roots lay and what it all stood for. I began looking into the whole Black Panther movement, reading what Malcolm X used to preach, even listening to music such as Marvin Gaye and Stevie Wonder.

Within my research, there was a name that kept coming to the forefront.

The name was Tupac Amaru Shakur. I went to the local record store and bought Tupac's first hip-hop album '2Pacalypse Now'. It was something that I had never heard before. The press and media were claiming that Tupac (2Pac) was a gangsta rapper. But to me he wasn't. His lyrics stood for what he had seen whilst growing up on this earth, he wanted to show people the real truth and make them aware that we needed change. He was the voice of the hip-hop generation and what the hip-hop culture is all about.

Tupac was once asked what he was best known for and his response was 'my big mouth'. He was right he did have a big mouth and at times this got him into trouble either with the law or other fellow rappers. But even when this was the case; you always knew that his heart was in the right place. Later on in Tupac's career he was asked the same question, his answer this time was 'surviving, I hope I'm known for surviving'. I wish this was still true, then Tupac could still be with us today, showing us guidance and the way forward.

The thing with Tupac was that he was so diverse. That is what I like about him the most. If you are in a bad and angry mood, you can put on 'Holla If Ya Hear Me' from the album 'Strictly For My N.I.G.G.A.Z' and you relate to the song and somehow it lifts your anger and takes it away from you. Or maybe your sad and depressed, you could throw on 'Brenda's Got A Baby' taken from Tupac's first album, and you realise listening to the lyrics that things aren't too bad and you could be in a worse situation. That was the thing with Tupac, you could relate to him. It's not like today's rappers who are rapping about platinum crosses encrusted in diamonds and driving

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round in Bentleys. You can't relate to that. Hip-Hop is big business now. These rappers are being used as tools to make money. But when you look at Tupac, you could see in his eyes that this really mattered to him and he wanted to help change things.

'All Eyez On Me' was then released after Tupac had left jail. It was the first of its kind; a hip-hop and rap album containing two discs. There was a song on it for everyone, from the thugs, to the single parent women. Whether you were from the west coast or the east coast you could find a track to relate to. The production was perfect for Tupac, whether a hard hitting bass drum produced by Daz Dillinger or a melodic track produced by my favorite Johnny "J". The album had everything on it.

Shortly after Tupac was taken from us, 'The Don Killuminati: The 7 Day Theory' was released for the public. Again this showed a different side of Tupac. Some great tracks on there that even when listened to now are still relevant today. That was another thing with Tupac. He was before his time. His tracks still have a place in society now, a place in history. That's why I think more and more people are starting to listen to Tupac even after his passing

I often sit and wonder what the world would be like if Tupac was still with us. Would we have the artists that are here today? Would there still be major poverty on the streets? Would everyone be treated as equals and no hierarchy in place? I am not saying that Tupac would solve all the problems that we have here on this earth, but I am sure that he would be making it more publicly known and then someone may take a stand and actually change something.

I look forward to the release of the new Tupac album due out very soon and just pray that this album is a true reflection of Tupac and is not a mis-representation. What the public needs to hear is the real Tupac, the way that he recorded it with the producers that he worked with. What we don't need is today's artists being mixed with Tupac's lyrics and producers working on the project that never knew Tupac.

So this is my dedication to a legend that was taken from us before his time. I want him to know that my thoughts are always with him and to rest in peace, we will continue to keep the legacy alive. Rest in peace, Mr. Tupac Amaru Shakur. God bless the dead.