

In Hip Hop Real Recognizes Real and XXL Loses Out

Written by Robert ID2965

Friday, 25 August 2006 02:59 -

In Hip Hop Real Recognizes Real and XXL Loses Out by Robert of ThugLifeArmy.com

When the 'bible' of hip hop, the Source Magazine commented on Eminem and some early recording he had made and other stances they took over the years, everyone was upset and it eventually took its toll on the hip hop publication.

So now it seems XXL has, or is trying to become, the leader in the hip hop based magazine field.

A recent article in XXL '2Pac Cross That Line Celebration or exploitation?' by Elliott Wilson may be one of the worse attempts at immortalizing one of the greatest figures to emerge in hip hop culture.

Tupac: his work and his stature as a man of conviction can stand on its own, but the remarks about Tupac's mother Afeni are flawed.

The article in the September issue, part one of a two part article to sell more magazines, starts off questioning why XXL decided to put Tupac on the cover again and they admit it is for numbers – so it is to get your money, not really honoring the homie Pac; not uncommon for something coming out of the 'east coast' when referencing Pac.

Then it is time for the 'boss man to face the music', this is where it gets to the mentality of a man 'lost in the woods'.

The writer addresses 10 topics that have "come up in discussions around the XXL offices"; what a lively group of haters they seem to be.

The first topic is "How exactly did Pac Become the hip hop Nations Choice for G.O.A.T.?"

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According to the article it starts with Makaveli which was released November 5, 1996, 2 months after Pac's assassination. What happened to the years and the 'classic' tracks and albums before that? Pac was in the running for G.O.A.T. way before the Makaveli The Don Killuminati: The 7 Day Theory album. Can anyone remember All Eyez on Me; a true classic album in hip hop. The album was certified 9x platinum by the RIAA. Tupac is listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the best-selling rap/hip-hop artist ever, having sold over 73 million albums worldwide, including over 44.5 million sales in the United States alone. Every Tupac album before the Makaveli album has went gold or platinum; the legacy did not start with the Makaveli album.

This topic continues with some more meaningless dribble and of course mentions "New York Giants' Biggie, Nas and Jay-Z.

The only meaningful clause in the first topic is that "it's the rappers that emerged I the late 90's and the new millennium that put 'Pac in the top position. His peers anointed him king and the fans cosigned".

I guess that is why in hip hop it is said 'Real Recognizes Real'.

Now we can move on to the second topic of this XXL feature – "With 'Pac dead and gone, are we allowed to question the motives and moves of his dear Mama?

What is this dude thinking? Who is to question another's motives and moves? This is the part that really got me about this so called 'feature'. This is Tupac's mother, an elder and someone is going to question her motives. Have you been keeping up with the TASF or the Tupac Center for the Arts projects?

As is stated in this article "Simply put, she's in charge of the legacy" - and many feel she is doing a terrific job at it.

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This topic brings up things they are really not spoke on by 'normal' people because we as the hip hop community are not privy to Tupac's private relationship with his mother, but we do have another 'classic' track Dear Mama which was released pre – Makaveli on Me Against the World on February 27, 1995.

“Where was she when her baby boy was signing his life away to Death Row Records? An ass-whuppin' by the one who gave him that life in the first place might have been needed back then”, states the 'feature. Maybe 'An ass-whuppin' by the one who gave that life in the first place to the writer of this 'feature' might be needed' for disrespecting or questioning an elder with the stature of Afeni Shakur.

Afeni Shakur and Mutulu Shakur and many in Pac's life gave him the knowledge to become the man that Tupac was, remember 'Real Recognizes Real'.

One surprise in this topic is the writer says that “the decision to have Eminem produce an entire album of her son's material? That's a never-forgiven action.”

Well actually, additional production was also done by Scott Storch, Red Spyda, and Raphael Saadiq so even though Afeni and Eminem are listed as the Executive Producers, Em did not produce the “entire” album.

I did not like that album either but who am I to judge the motives and actions behind it? Like this article by XXL stated “Simply put, she's (Afeni) in charge of the legacy”. There is no artist who puts out something everyone likes, there are always the haters.

This topic should have been left out and respect to an elder should have been shown.

Moving on to topic 3 it asks - Isn't There Just Way Too Much Posthumous 'Pac Material? And their answer is “Yup. And bet your bottom dollar, most of it ain't worth your hard-earned cash.”

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They mention and diss 1997's R U Still Down? (Remember Me) and 2001's Until the End of Time and move on to diss the spoken word Rose That Grew From Concrete album that was based on the poetry of Tupac.

So now it is topic 4 – Are There Any Posthumous 'Pac Songs Worth Listening To? This is an interesting topic as earlier the writer spoke on and said the Loyal to the Game album was "That's a never-forgiven action", but here they praise 'The Realist Killaz' track off that album with 50 cent; the bias is almost laughable.

They also mention the track 'Still Ballin' from the Better Dayz album featuring Trick Daddy.

And they give props to Tupac's 'Changes' which is on the Greatest Hits album, so they got 2 out of 3 right.

That brings us to the topic number 5 – Is it Wrong for 'Pac's Former Enemies to Record Songs with His Vocals?

Once again we have to go back to what was said by the writer of this XXL 'feature' in the beginning - "Simply put, she's (Afeni Shakur) in charge of the legacy".

Surprisingly Nas is the only one they go at in this topic. But 'Thugz Mansion' may be a way of moving on and as Pac said 'life goes on'. There are 2 versions of 'Thugz Mansion' so if your not feeling the one with Nas listen to the other.

I see this XXL 'feature' as just something to sell magazines and I would encourage (ask) everyone not to buy this junk. This is one reason I stopped buying hip hop publications. Twisted views and disrespect seem to be the norm now in these publications. Overlooking the impact that All Eyez on Me had and does have on hip hop is just ludicrous. That album was the shining star of the duo of Tupac and Johnny "J" in the studio, and an album that sells 9x platinum is one that should definitely be mentioned in any 'feature' on Tupac Shakur.

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You can read the article '2Pac Cross That Line Celebration or exploitation? YN pulls no punches as he tackles the key questions surrounding Tupac's legacy and its place in the rap game. - <http://xxlmag.com/online/?p=3903>

I would strongly urge Tupac fans not to buy the magazine for the cover. There are many pictures of Tupac out, and if you go to the link above you can read the full 'feature'.

In hip hop 'Real Recognizes Real' and in this instance XXL is not being 'Real' about a legendary icon in hip hop – Tupac Shakur.