

Interview with Godmother of West Coast Hip Hop Medusa

Written by Davey D ID4239

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Breakdown FM w/ Davey D sat down with Medusa, who many of you as part of the legendary pioneering group Feline Science.

This Godmother of west coast Hip Hop took us down memory lane and spoke in great detail about her early days when she was popper in the group Groovathon. She talked about the Funk era which gave rise to west coast Hip Hop and she breaks down what it was like during LA's Golden era at the Good Life Cafe.

In Part 2 of our interview with Medusa we start off by talking about the difference between spoken word and emceeing. We later morphed into a discussion about emceeing techniques including the skill it takes to truly ride the rhythm. Medusa also spoke about the challenge many emcees have in terms of keeping their egos in check. Far too often emcees overshadow the beats that are provided to them.

We talked about battling and Medusa let us know how she had to test lyrical skillz against a few of her Good Life comrades. Her most memorable battle came against Peace from Freestyle Fellowship. She beat him.

Medusa also broke down the challenges one faces doing the independent hustle. She feels the grind is necessary but a good thing in the end. The trick to being successful is to be consistent.

We talked about the Good Life Cafe and how it was spawning ground for West Coast freestylers out of the LA area and sought to see if the Upper Room here in the Bay Area ever hit the radar. Medusa said she was aware of the legendary hotspot which gave birth to Hip Hop theater, but she never got a chance to visit.

During our interview we talked about Medusa and her back up band and her larger group Feline Science. She said it's important to use band versus just two turntables, because it allows so much more freedom. She also noted that since she came out of the 'funk era' she longed to fuse her love of hip hop and funk together.

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With respect to Feline Science-who are her back up vocalists, she said that came about after she was rejected to be a member of a group called 'Masked Men'. Years later she realized she wasn't being rejected, but instead being encouraged to start her own group which would and did become an entity on to itself. Everyone who got down with Feline Science both men and women all took on cat names with Medusa being 'Top Cat'.

We concluded that portion of the interview by talking about the way the music industry has seemingly only given a platform to one female emcee at a time. Much of this has to do with so called critics claiming that listeners can't really tell the differences between female emcees. It's an idea that Medusa soundly dismissed.

We concluded the interview with Medusa talking about how women need to go about striking a balance between maintaining control of their art, but being willing to confidently work with folks and giving way to other ideas and perspectives when working on a project. Medusa talked about how being so rigid and controlling may have led to her not being able to work with Dr Dre. In retrospect there was a way to maintain ones credibility and still turn over control to a dope producer.

Part 1

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