

Asylum Records Partners Up

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Asylum Records, Warner Music Group's (WMG) newly established division designed to provide a variety of services to urban independent music labels and artists, announced it has signed multi-faceted agreements with three independent labels from across the country. Under the agreements, effective immediately, Asylum Records will provide marketing, distribution and sales services to Houston-based Rap-a-lot and Swisha House/Swisha Blast Records, as well as to Memphis-based Hypnotize Minds music labels.

Said Todd Moscovitz, president, Asylum Records, "We are thrilled to be working with these three dynamic labels. Our goal is to maximize every opportunity for our label partners by working closely with them to provide resources uniquely tailored to their individual artist rosters. Each of these labels represents a combination of outstanding music and first-rate executive talent which marks an exciting beginning for Asylum."

Asylum will market and distribute the entire catalog from the established hip-hop rap powerhouse Rap-a-lot's critically acclaimed artists, including: Geto Boys (latest album to be released later this month), Scarface, Z-Ro, Devin tha Dude, Yukmouth and UTP. Rap-a-lot, founded by James Prince in 1986, boasts a strong history with 11 gold and platinum records, and has been honored on several occasions by Billboard magazine as both the Independent Rhythm and Blues as well as Rap label of the year.

The already successful Hypnotize Minds was founded by DJ Paul and Juicy J of the group Three Six Mafia. The duo began producing artists out of Memphis, in 1992, creating the origins of a musical movement known as "Crunk." Hypnotize Minds released their first nationally distributed album in 1995. The label is home to Lil Wyte, whose latest album "Phinally Phamous" currently distributed by Asylum was released on October 19, 2004, and Three Six Mafia protégé Frayser Boy.

Swisha House/Swisha Blast Records had its origins within one of Houston's most popular rap groups Swisha House Clique to create a home for freestyle rap artist from the north side of Houston. Their plan came to fruition in 1999 with the release of the first album on Swisha Blast Records. Their roster features Mike Jones, Paul Wall, Michael Watts, Archie Lee and The Future.