

Xzibit Urges Artists to Try Harder

Written by Gza Genius ID403
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□ Xzibit

International hip-hop star Xzibit urged artists on Wednesday to try harder to communicate through their music, saying they should stop glorifying violence and get back to being the voice of rebellion and protest.

"Hip hop went through a total stage of positivity and then it transformed into gangster rap and then it got commercial," said the singer and host of MTV car-makeover show "Pimp My Ride."

"Hopefully it goes back to that positive side where we can start communicating and saying something through our music," he told [Reuters](#) Television ahead of the MTV Europe Awards, which Xzibit will present in Rome on Thursday night.

The Los Angeles-based rapper said hip hop and rap were traditionally "the voice of rebellion, the voice of protest," but that radio and music companies had made it difficult to break out of the current tendency to glorify violence and power.

"When you can choose to play a record that says pop your ass or a record that has some kind of positive message or knowledgeable subject, it's easier to accept the ignorance than put out something that has some thought process to it," he said.

In its current phase, hip hop generates \$2.8 billion in CD sales annually, according to the Recording Industry Association of America, and has become extremely influential in America.

"The guy who just does ignorant music wins the awards and gets the millions of music sales and that becomes defeating after a while," said Xzibit, relaxing on a sofa in custom-made MTV

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tents on the outskirts of Rome.

"That's kind of what's forcing people to come out copying the same people over and over again."

Xzibit, real name Alvin Joyner, kicked off his solo career in 1996 with the album "At the Speed of Life."

Defying the gangster rap trend, he was one of a number of hip hop artists to take a political stand in the run-up to the U.S. elections this year, denouncing President Bush.

His new album "Weapons of Mass Destruction" will be released in December. "As an artist you have to find a way to get your message into your music," Xzibit said.