

Desis in Hip Hop

Written by Robert ID2869

Thursday, 20 July 2006 11:19 -

The1shanti was undoubtedly the highlight of "Desis in Hip Hop," a showcase of South Asian rap artists hosted by MTV Desi on July 14 at the South Asian Journalists Association's 12th Annual Convention.

The1shanti flexed his skills on the mic performing selections from the "New Calcutta" mixtape, as well as international hits "Punjabi 5-0" and "Supafly Bindi." During an intimate question and answer session with SAJA journalists, the1shanti also discussed the future of hip hop and his own place in it.

"I stand at the crossroads between P. Diddy and Deepak Chopra," the1shanti said during the Q&A portion of the event. "I make music everyone can vibe to."

Introducing the language of hip hop to English and non-English-speaking audiences is a responsibility the1shanti embraced as frontman for the internationally renowned Dum Dum Project (DDP). With DDP, the1shanti has twice been MTV Asia's "Artist of the Month" as artists on Sony Asia.

"Hip hop's everywhere you look. It's the first genre of music that samples every global culture," the1shanti said. "It has always been a global phenomenon. It just took a minute for people from certain parts of the world to catch on."

"Desis in Hip Hop" represented the first formal introduction of South Asian rappers to South Asian media. The1shanti was featured on a panel, which also included Boston-based MC Kabir, and New York's Chee Malabar. Although the three rappers shared in common a South Asian background, each performed with his own distinctive flow and style.

The event was moderated by Basement Bhangra's DJ Rekha with input from Bad Boy Entertainment's Jay Gatzby. The program also featured snippets from "Brown Like That," a documentary about South Asians in hip hop directed by MTV producer Raeshem Nijhon.

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The showcase marked the1shanti's final performance promoting the "New Calcutta" mixtape, a collaborative vision of Flatbush Junction Recordings, hip urban clothing company Desi Threads and New York-based Komposit Entertainment fusing a trendsetting sense of fashion and groundbreaking sound in music to take South Asian culture in new directions. The "New Calcutta" mixtape can be downloaded in mp3 format for free at www.desithreads.com

In the coming months the1shanti will be gearing up for the fall release of his much-anticipated solo album, India Bambaataa. Upon the album's release, the1shanti will be embarking on a nationwide promotional tour, supported by Flatbush Junction.

About Flatbush Junction Recordings

Founded in the spring of 2005 as a subsidiary of Laskar Music, Flatbush Junction Recordings is an independent label working hand-in-hand with artists to help them achieve their own vision of music and an individualistic sound. India Bambaataa, the1shanti's debut album and a Flatbush Junction release, is slated to hit stores nationwide in early October. For more information on Flatbush Junction's artists, the1shanti and urban singer Marko Dutta, visit www.flatbushjunction.com