

## BET and Quality Hip-Hop Representation

Written by Robert ID1621  
Sunday, 03 July 2005 05:38 -

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The other night at the BET Awards, Jada Pinkett Smith said she had three 'rules'. The rules were mostly aimed at the hip-hop and rap artists but were much needed for everyone. Some took them as 'funny' but they made sense and were right on point.

One of them was for artists not to come up and 'thank God' if they could not perform their craft in church; but of course a few who did not fall in that category (Destiny's Child) did.

Jada Pinkett Smith has always been a stand out in a crowd. An actress, musically inclined, fashion designer, she is an author of children's books, and involved in many things and she is beautiful – outside and in.

It is easy to see why she and Will Smith are married and do much for society at large.

When I think of Jada Pinkett Smith – I remember the video that has her and Tupac Shakur doing a song together. She was one of Tupac's classmates at North Carolina School of the Arts and was one of his closest friends and that is one reason it is easy to see her and Will Smith married and happy. They married on 31st December 1997.

Will Smith is the modern day Tupac Shakur, in a way. Of course there are those who just remember Will Smith for acting or as "The Fresh Prince Of Bel - Air".

Politically minded, an activist of sorts, a rapper with skills, an actor – everything that Tupac was; with out the 'thug' influence. Not saying that Will Smith is a push over, far from it (Remember Ali?), but it is that he is not 'stressed' the way Tupac was 'stressed'.

Will Smith is 'accepted' by many – as Tupac was. The big difference is that the main stream press is always there to support him (Will Smith) and not to 'twist' him in the way they did and do Tupac Shakur.

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Unlike other rap and hip-hop artists today; when other rap artists 'diss' Will, he uses his intelligence against them, not his anger, fists and guns to get his point across.

Besides who can really go against Will Smith? He has been in the 'business' for more than a minute; with over 9 albums out. Will Smith's new album should show everyone what Will Smith is all about. That album is more than a drop – it is a statement with much being said on it that needs to be said.

Those who have overlooked his latest 'Lost and Found' CD because they remember Will as the 'Fresh Prince' need to take a close look at this CD and hear what Will Smith has to offer. His core values make him a respectable figure in hip-hop culture today.

Jada brought up something that others would not have mentioned but she addresses something a lot of us notice.

So much 'false Christianity' everywhere, even in the music field.

Christian means 'Christ Like'. Thanking God because you won best rap video or best hip-hop duo is really sort of ridiculous. God does not 'bless' things He does not agree with, and if these artists would read the bible and understand it they would see that maybe that 'blessing' of winning with their 'hoochie' based, drug based or whatever other non Christian activity video is not of God. I doubt if God has time to make sure that a rapper or a hip-hop artist is recognized for their 'sinful' activities.

Now this is not intended to be 'preaching', as then this would fall into the category that Will Smith addresses on his track Ms. Holy Roller off his new CD, but it is intended to show that hip-hop is about being real. Keeping it real has got lost in the 'new' era of hip-hop. Not only are most of the artists who 'thank God', really just trying to justify what they are doing in some way, but they should know that a 'christian' is known by the 'fruit' they produce.

The BET awards this year were amazing in a lot of ways. We got to see a lot of great acts and some great people mentioned for the work they do and have done.

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We saw some deserving artists overlooked and some of the regulars getting the awards. We saw artists like Floetry, Jill Scott, Mos Def, Black Eyed Peas and others passed over. We did get to see The Fugees reunited, beautiful Toni Braxton performing, Stevie Wonder dancing and an amazing performance by Gladys Knight as she accepted a well deserved Life Time Achievement Award.

We also saw Denzel Washington and his wife, Pauletta, being awarded the Humanitarian Award honoring the couple's charitable endeavors and compassionate acts.

So not only did we see some of the best the music industry has to offer, we saw that there are two awards that will most likely go to this years hosts in the future. It is apparent that Will and Jada Pinkett Smith will receive the Life Time Achievement award and most likely Humanitarian Award in the future.

If we could give an award for the best selection of a host or hosts needed for the hip-hop culture at this time, it would go to BET for asking Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith to take on this year's task at the BET awards.

They are the image that the hip-hop culture needs to display now, more than ever.

With all the arrogance and so called violence lately in but a few 'camps' in the rap and hip-hop arena, the pick of the Smiths' for this years hosts was right on time.

Hip-hop culture is growing and our voice is getting louder. Imagine how much growth potential there would be in the culture without all the violence. Imagine how loud our voice could be if we acted as a culture who was civil and intelligent.

We need more intelligent, thought provoking, role model people from the hip-hop culture in the forefront to show that hip-hop culture is more than 'gangsta rap' violence and mis-representation of our women.

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BET, Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith deserve a 'Big Up' for making the fans and those in the hip-hop culture, proud to be part of that culture.

Putting intelligent thought and demeanor out from such high quality individuals as the Smiths' will let all know that hip-hop is not really dead or failing. It may be misunderstood, but with a showing of a strong intelligent black female and a strong intelligent black male, we all know and see that hip-hop culture is alive and well and still on the move in the right direction.

Let's keep it real and promote a good image for the hip-hop culture. One that we all can be proud of and will promote future growth and acceptance for the culture we all love.