

## Where is Hip Hop Headed

Written by Robert ID4120

Tuesday, 08 January 2008 21:33 -

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As hip hop becomes more 'commercial' and more 'board room based' rather than street based, one has to ask 'Where is Hip Hop Headed'?

The era of hip hop being our 'street newspaper', keeping us informed of street matters and real life adventures of hood life seems to be over.

Record companies are feeling the pinch of low album sales. The only thing really selling is digital downloads; because consumers can pick and choose what cuts they want or feel are worthy of their dollar. Hip hop is being used to sell more corporate linked things – everything from hamburgers to cell phones and as they look at hip hop as an avenue for income, the hip hop community just falls for what is put in front of them and falls for the raping of the culture by the corporate world.

There are some artists who have not sold out to the corporate greed involved in hip hop today, in fact one has to look hard to find true hip hop with some sort of intelligent message.

There are those artists who have a message in their music, but they are few and far away from the corporate labels. The big labels are in their 'safe' box and feel it is in their best interest to keep producing the same sort of music and then trying to force feed it to the public as hip hop instead of the seemingly new genre they have created: 'Corporate Hip Slop'. Not real hip hop but more pop combined with a hip hop beat.

It is hard to imagine if a major label today would sign a Tupac (2Pac), NWA, Ice T or any of the controversial rap artists of yesteryear.

Corporate room hip hop has no feeling or relation to the true street. For example 2Pac sold albums because he understood the streets and he could communicate with the people from the street. Corporate hip hop sells partying in the club, spinning rims, bling and other things owned and sold by corporate America, it has become one big commercial for the retail corporate world.

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There is no real feeling or direction in the music they are offering today and that is why they have declining sales. Some younger people buy what the majors put out because they do not know any better.

Bob Marley used the genre of Reggae to keep people informed. It was the newspaper for the real truth of what was going on. And that is what hip hop should be: - the real life of so many turned into rhymes and communicated in the way that Bob Marley did with Reggae, to keep us informed and knowledgeable of what is really going on in our streets and hoods and what really effects us.

Hip Hop music is suppose to be a 'newspaper' of sorts - we can not trust the mainstream media to inform us of what is really happening, so we look to those who have the power of the mic to express what's going on. Example - NWA --- no one knew of Compton or what was going on there until NWA broke and gave us an update thru real talk – and we listened and we bought the music because it was real talk. Look at the Jena 6 songs that came out of that mess, a lot of them are true hood classics but none were pressed on a major label.

Some among the major labels will say that illegal downloading of music is the reason for their decrease in sales, when in fact it is the quality of what they are putting out that is the reason.

Sites like myspace give exposure to many great artists; artists who actually have some meaning behind their rhymes. For example take the artist Jasiri X. His 'FREE THE JENA 6' was named Hip-Hip Political Song of the Year by Legendary Hip-Hop Journalist Davey D. Why? Because it stood for something; it was not meaningless babble.

As thoughtless babble fills the air waves of mainstream radio stations and hoochie filled video flood the air waves, we are being programmed to believe everything is fine out here and everyone should just be having fun. In fact we are loosing youth to street violence everyday at an alarming rate. We are seeing police injustices and brutality on a wider scale. We are seeing drugs infiltrate our neighborhoods and guns becoming a part of 'designer' wear, and still we have nothing to think about except if we have watched and learned the Soulja Boy Tellem - How to Crank That instructional video.

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As we sit and watch the decline and the rape of the hip hop culture by corporate America we have to ask where is hip hop headed?