

## **Our Own "Westside" (aka-Robert) Is Interviewed by TheRapChamber**

I'd like to thank Morty over at TheRapChamber and let you guys know this was a real experience. Check it out and holla with your input-----Peace & Believe in Better Dayz-----Robert - aka - Westside

**Morty:** Thanks to my man Brother RB for choppin' it up with me here at The Rap Chamber.com. Robert when you look at hip-hop 10 years ago and compare it to what it is now, what do you see?

**RB:** Well I see a decline of the street element of hip hop and rap. The east coast influence of the bling bling type rap is not a good thing for the way of living we call hip hop

**Morty:** No doubt. Bling-bling is selling out. But blaming the east coast for it, isn't that a bit too harsh?

**RB:** Not really. It was different back in the day. Straight out of Compton and raps like that brought awareness to social problems and the need for change. "In Da Club" and "Air Force Ones" brings nuttin to the table except a false reading of life is a party and I can tell ya it's not. So many brothers get hung up in believing that the bling and the material things promoted by east coast sound, is what is important. They get hung up in the system, and are lost in it for years.

**Morty:** I agree, good time raps have no content, and the hip-hop community cannot benefit from that. But I think we need to be more specific with who we target. You gotta give east coast emcees like Nas, Mos Def, Talib Kweli, Wu-Tang Clan, etc their props.

**RB:** Yes I would agree, but if those groups would take a stand and try to turn the game around, it would be best for all. The groups you mention get limited "air" play. And one reason for that is they are not really team players, like those "good time' groups. Don't get me wrong, there is a place for good time music, but what is more important; the fact that brothas are dying every day from street violence and drugs? Or that you can pull this girl or you got this ride? Back in the day there was a balance of work out there. The work out there now is one sided.

**Morty:** Exactly, and what's more is that when you see these rappers on TV flashing their money

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Written by Westside ID47

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and their cars, they give hip-hop that image. People watching this will assume hip-hop is all about money. The message which existed through the music of N.W.A. and Public Enemy no longer exists, because so many people have forgotten what hip-hop is really all about

**RB:** The false image of today's hip hop is just that –false. The cars and stuff you see in those videos don't belong to those guys; it is rented, but the assumption that if you rap you got money is put out there.

**Morty:** Exactly, it's all a facade. Another problem is the way a lot of rappers portray women, black women in particular. Dressing them up in bikinis and thongs and throwing them in a hip-hop video again creates a bad image of not only hip-hop, but also black women.

**RB:** The images we see today are not true hip hop. You could really say these guys are not really hip hop artists. Hip hop is a way or life. It is the way we live. Rap is what hip hoppers do, there is a difference. As far as the sistas go---those who do the videos put themselves there. The strong black, and sistas of all colors deserve respect---they are the future and without them we as a society die.

**Morty:** And notice how it's mostly the new school artists who give hip-hop this biased image. There aren't a lot of the old school artists who give in to the commercial and false urges of misrepresenting hip-hop.

**RB:** That's true, except for Snoop. If we look at the old school videos we see real hip hop. N.W.A., Public Enemy those were videos. "Afro Puffs", not a hoochie video, but a good video.

**Morty:** Now Robert, you happen to be an expert on the west coast hip-hop scene. How do you feel it's evolved since the good ol' days of N.W.A., The D.O.C., 2Pac, Ice Cube, etc?

**RB:** There is a lot of talent on the west coast. Look at the Westside Connection album that just dropped, it is doing good because peeps are starving for good music. I see Kurupt's album coming but the air play will keep it from being big. Gail Gotti is dropping an album, Extra Large just dropped. The artists are so so many but the air play is not there for them, because the MTV, BET and VH-1 programmers are all east coast based peeps.

**Morty:** Yea I agree, people think that a lot of west coast artists are just looking to recreate N.W.A.'s message and purpose. I love a lot of west coast hip-hop, a more recent album which I really enjoyed was WC's Ghetto Heisman. I just close my eyes and you can picture the sunshine and the streets. That's real hip-hop. What I've been more disappointed with recently however, is Snoop Dogg. I was very disappointed with Paid Tha Cost To Be Da Bo\$\$\$. His work with the Neptunes instead of Dr.Dre was a setback, and then his lyrics seemed to have lost touch.

**RB:** I lost Snoop when he left Death Row. Most of DPG have got problems. Daz, and Snoop are just out there. I don't relate to nothing they are doing. But there are Mack 10, Nate Dogg, Spice 1; these are real artists.

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**Morty:** Yea I agree. And I'm looking forward to hearing what Aftermath's latest signing The Game has to offer. From what I've heard he has skills and quite a story to tell. His upcoming album, Nigga Witta Attitude is set to drop in June.

**RB:** I heard some tracks off the DJ Whoo Kid Mix Tape that he is on. I agree he can spit, and he is from Compton. So ya see even the G-Unit is starting to add a lil west side into the mix.

**Morty:** Yea which is very positive, however I'd prefer to see The Game as far as way from 50 as possible. Another west coast artist which I have extreme love for is Xzibit. He's an excellent lyricist and keeps it real.

**RB:** I would like to see Lloyd Banks get away from 50 too. Now he ain't west but he can spit. I like him a lot, has skill.

**Morty:** Yea I'm with you on that one, it's just sad to see he's caught up in the money game aswell. Another west coast I'd like to talk to you about is Dr.Dre. There's been a lot of drama around Aftermath this year. From the loss of Rakim, to a rumor of signing Ice Cube, to Mel-Man leaving. What's your opinion on the matter?

**RB:** I really don't see [Ice] Cube going there. I know it looks like it is a sure thing, but something is up there. The loss of Rakim was a big hit for them, but they did not treat him right. Dre is doing some stuff, like working with Burt Bacharach or some stuff like that. I don't get where he's going...

**Morty:** Yea I agree. Dre doesn't talk to the media a lot, and therefore I think there is a lot of confusion and misunderstanding when it comes to Aftermath. He's a musical genius though, and I'm looking forward to Detox.

**RB:** Do you think Dre and Eminem really are as tight as they seem? Or do you feel since the big deal over the Resurrection work by Eminem, which I did not agree with, maybe things are not so good in Shadyville?

**Morty:** I think there are some hard times for Eminem and Dr.Dre. With The Source trying to knock them over, there's a lot of pressure on them. However, I believe Eminem is an incredible talent, both as an emcee and as a producer. As for Dre, I don't think he's capable of running a label, but he's a musical genius.

**RB:** How did you feel about "Running (Dying To Live)"? Did you see that that was not 2Pac's style of music and although it turned out to be ok, the look at it from the start was why not a west coast producer who knew Pac's beats and style?

**Morty:** I think it was a great track. The beat was incredible, although Eminem was not a producer who knew Pac's style. But remember Pac's mother approved of it, and besides who else would you have to produce it?

**RB:** I would have liked to see Johnny J , Hurt M Badd, or even Dre produce it. That was not a

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Pac beat. It was a cool track but not for a movie about Pac. And as for Afeni approving it; I feel she must have handlers. She has made some mistakes I feel, but she has done a lot of good to carry 2Pac's name and legacy ahead.

**Morty:** Yea you're right. I think if they'd have put Hurt M Badd, Johnny J and also Ronnie King to work on a beat together, perhaps with Eminem, the outcome would have been better, more 2Pac and more personal.

**RB:** It's funny you bring up Ronnie King, I interviewed him and asked about all the re-mixes of Tupac. He said he loves to see it. That surprised me because I don't like it.

**Morty:** Hehe yea that's funny. I'd expect him to be upset or annoyed about it, because as a close friend of Pac he didn't take any part in the Resurrection project. I think that was a mistake, I had hoped for something more personal than what it became. I had hoped for the people who knew and worked with Pac to get together on this soundtrack.

**RB:** Ronnie King did work on Better Dayz, and some of the things we talked about gave me a better understanding of how something like that goes down. You said Afeni approved "Runnin'", well remember she also approved "Thugz Mansion(NY)" with Nas. That was one that didn't make sense at all, I mean because Nas and Pac were not really friendly at the end.

**Morty:** Yea I agree, and even though I think that was a beautiful collaboration, I think that the people who have created these albums and remixes should've been people who worked with 2Pac. That way I think the fans could relate more to it.

**RB:** True. Look at it, there is only so far you can go. Look at Darren Varges's Nuu Mixxes Klassics; a flop.

**Morty:** Yea exactly, it's hard to recreate the music of a man who no longer lives if you weren't around him. Now that we're speaking of 2Pac, I think that he's a perfect example of what the hip-hop community is in need of. He's a leader, someone who isn't afraid to speak out.

**RB:** 2Pac was our generations Malcolm X...I truly believe that. I wrote about that.

**Morty:** Yea and you raised some extremely good points in that article. But until the day comes when hip-hop grows a man with the characteristics of 2Pac, I guess all we can do is hope and try to support the hip-hop which is left.

**RB:** The hip hop we have left? I am afraid that if the hip hop community does not come together and say enough is enough, then we as a community will be split forever. You know 2Pac had less than \$100 000 in the bank when he died. And he was a star.

**Morty:** I didn't know that...

**RB:** He did not own his own house, Death Row owned the house he lived in it. He spent most of his presidents on the needy, and Afeni carries on those charities even today.

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**Morty:** Wow I didn't even know. I think there are lot of unknown facts about him. I agree that the hip-hop community doesn't come together, with all the rivalries, personal interests and ego's, the community is being destroyed not from the outside, but from the within. The hate has got to stop. We've lost enough soldiers.

**RB:** There are those who give back today, but they are seldom mentioned. People like Luda and David Banner do good work, but get no mention. The press wants to twist the image of the hip hop scene so they only report the violence. Sells more papers and add space.

**Morty:** Exactly. Everyone loves a good story about how another rapper has been murdered. And that's what they want to happen. It's like Laurence Fishburne preaches about in Boyz-n-tha-Hood. They want to destroy hip-hop by using the artists themselves, turning rappers against rappers. The hip-hop community should get together and get rid of those who cannot represent it, and fight against people like Bill O'Reilly.

**RB:** I reviewed the dvd "The Battle for L.A.". That is real hip hop right there. There is a dvd that shows real street battles in the way they are meant to be. And the talent there is tight. Rap and hip hop needs a saviour, I don't know who but there is definately a need for one....bring it back to where it is suppose to be.

**Morty:** Yea exactly. Someone needs to come and set things straight. Thanks for your time Robert, it's been a learning experience.

**RB:** We'll do it again soon I hope. Thanks for asking me.

Brother RB is the owner and webmaster of the 2Pac site [Thug Life Army.com](http://Thug Life Army.com) . Go Check "em out.