

music has the depth, clarity and honesty that she gives hers.

RA: You have a voice that sounds trained and seasoned, but at the same time, raw. Where does that talent come from?

M: I actually was rhyiming before I was singing—rhyiming for about 11 years, singing since 1996. I don't have any vocal training, I just try to reach into my soul and express the emotion behind the vision.

RA: How much work does it take to fit together an album with so many producers? You've got Shock G, A-Plus, Spontaneous and Chops. How do you get all of them to give you the sound you want?

M: Putting together this album was fairly easy in terms of production. I had the vision and concept for the album before I had a deal, so I knew the vibe I was looking for. I would listen to beats and they struck me—then we collaborated. I was already good friends with a lot of the producers—and all the producers were beautiful to work with. I heard so many banging beats, but if it didn't go with my concept [of what I envisioned for the music], I had to pass.

RA: I see a Shock G connection from Digital Underground's *Who Got The Gravy* album when you played the DU Goddess. How did that happen?

M: I wanted to work with Shock forever. We hooked up through Tyranny, but I was already cool with Money B, Clee and Dotrix. The first time, Shock and I collaborated on a Billie Holiday song called "Gloomy Sunday" for the soundtrack to *The Funeral*. That was the first time I ever sang. Time passed and DU became less like a crew and more like a family. I got to go out and tour with DU for the better part of a year and Shock set me up lovely. He's one of the most pure artists I know.

RA: You've got a few things going for you. Rapping skills, singing talent, connections to the industry, and BEAUTY! What's your plan for the next couple years?

M: Thank you! For now, I plan to tour for as long as I can to promote the album and build with the people who are listening. I would definitely like to do some acting—I did that when

I was younger. I would also like to do some speaking with youth. Whatever comes my way, I'll be open and appreciative. At some point I want to produce and manage. One day I'll definitely put some work in on the business side.

RA: Imagine yourself creating a "Mystic Tour." What would be your perfect tour lineup?

M: Mos Def, Outkast, Slum Village, Bahamadia, Planet Asia, Phil Tha Agony and Zion I. I don't know, I could do it so many ways. I really just want to be out with positive, progressive artists. No drama!

RA: If you had to make an album outside of hip hop, what type of album would it be?

M: That's a hard thought—maybe some Drum 'n Bass or Trip Hop. I wish I could sing in Spanish; I'd make a straight Latin album.

RA: What would you like to let the people who are about to buy your album know before they go out and pick it up?

M: I'd like for people to know my album is a very personal and honest album. The world is a cold place and I hope that my music can bring people some peace.

MISSION: ONE

Mission:

Insiduous.com / Missionhip-hop.com



Mission's album release party @ the Gabah in L.A.

Mission:, a live hip hop band from the Bay Area by way of Boston's Berklee College of Music, seems it is actually on a mission to put out some genre-mixing music. The group is one of the few that embrace the "play-your-own-instrument" aspect of a traditional live band (think The Roots or Black Eyed Peas). The added creativity takes hold of its hip hop backbone to make the dipping into a jazzy drum 'n bass arena sounds like a natural progression. The crew leaves me

required audio

BY JOEL MARASIGAN

> FORGET ABOUT KEEPING IT REAL, TRY KEEPING IT RIGHT



with the same “now-THAT-was-cool” feeling I get when I listen to The Mountain Brothers. *One* is an album that puts some of its previously released EP stuff, like its hit “Contagious,” together with some of its new ish. The re-releases are a moot point if you haven’t ever seen a Mission: tape, just know that you’ve got the best music it’s put out. The music is straight dope, bouncing from the “snare and kick” tempos of stereotypical smooth hip hop (“Mission: 2,” “Transit,” “Last Night”) to its jazz-influenced drum ‘n bass tracks (“Now I shine,” “Chocolate Milk and Apricots,” and untitled track 19). For Mission:., the dope beats and rhymes create the initial head bobbing but it’s the music, especially the energy of the live element, that will take hold and carry you through the emotions they help open. I got a chance to get to bassist Ethan Lull Parsonage, A.K.A Headnodic, about Mission:.. Peep the interview.

Required Audio: How many people are in Mission? Who are they and what do they do?

Mission: Six people are Mission:.. Raashan Ahmad and Moe Pope - MCs, Keys - Kat Ouano, Max Mcveety - Drums, Headnodic - Bass & Production, Woodstock - Samplers & Production

RA: What did the Berklee School of Music do for Mission:..?

M: The whole Boston scene was really important to us. Being surrounded by so many musicians made us all search for our own voice. Boston is a compact enough city to squish every band, MC, producer, painter, DJ, and musician into a tight scene that affects every artist within it. California is more spread out— as is the scene—and it offered us a quieter place to explore each other in the band as musicians, and further develop distinction in our own voices, but this time with less influence from others. Both areas are valuable, but I think each of us misses Boston for their own reasons.

RA: I hear different influences of music in your stuff. Stuff like Jazz, Drum n’ bass as well as classical. Where does that reach come from?

M: It actually does come from Jazz, Drum & Bass, and classical etc. We listen to all types of music, and feel that hip-hop is the one form that can encompass them all—more than any other genre. So we are a hip hop band. But at the same time we are classical musicians, jazz musicians, Drum & Bass DJs, and are trying to incorporate these elements into our music in the rawest form. Hopefully in the end, we can turn some hip hop heads onto the beauty of live music with our shows. And turn skeptics on to hip hop. My mom just bought D’Angelo—and that’s really cool, if you knew my mom.

RA: If you were to leave for a tour tomorrow, what would be your perfect tour lineup?

M: Mission:., MMW, Fishbone, Ozomatli, People Under the Stairs, D’Angelo, Black Star—all opening up for the Tribe Called Quest reunion tour.

RA: *Import Tuner* is an import car magazine. What would your car look like?

M: I can’t drive. I never got my license—but I always liked the A-Team’s van!

RA: Where will we see Mission: in the next year?

M: We should be in your CD player, on your turntable and in your Walkman—and hopefully at a club near you.

EVENT SHOTS AUDIOTISTIC - LONG BEACH, CA



Black Eyed Peas: Taboo & Will.I.Am

Jurassic 5's Chali 2Na

Supernatural

DJ Rhettmatic surveys the crowd

Iriscience of Dilated Peoples

UPCOMING RELEASES

JULY	
Jermaine Dupri	Tha Liks Loud
Timbaland & Magoo	Soundbombing 3
Violators V2.0	
AUGUST	
Phil da Agony	Likwit Crew Presents
REQUIRED AUDIO! presents Mark Luv	
<i>f/ Dilated Peoples, Jurassic 5, Quasimoto, the Demigodz, DJ Cheapshot of Styles of Beyond, the Busdriver, and more!</i>	
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER	
Slum Village	Styles Of Beyond
Bahamadia	Choclair
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IT'S SO DOPE, YOU'LL FAIL YOUR PISS TEST	