



## Required Audio Interview

# CHRIS & NEEF: THE YOUNG GUNZ

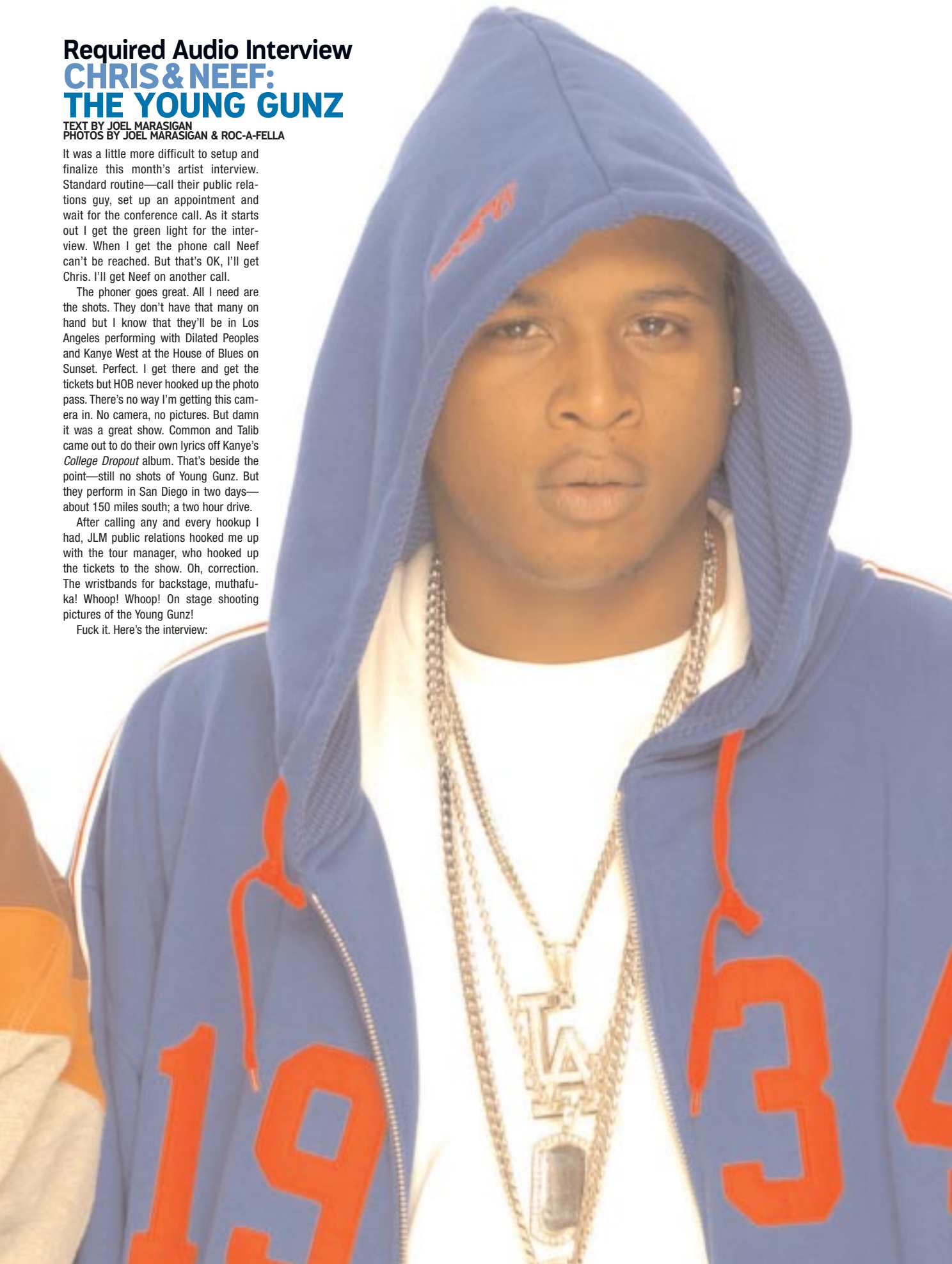
TEXT BY JOEL MARASIGAN  
PHOTOS BY JOEL MARASIGAN & ROC-A-FELLA

It was a little more difficult to setup and finalize this month's artist interview. Standard routine—call their public relations guy, set up an appointment and wait for the conference call. As it starts out I get the green light for the interview. When I get the phone call Neef can't be reached. But that's OK, I'll get Chris. I'll get Neef on another call.

The phoner goes great. All I need are the shots. They don't have that many on hand but I know that they'll be in Los Angeles performing with Dilated Peoples and Kanye West at the House of Blues on Sunset. Perfect. I get there and get the tickets but HOB never hooked up the photo pass. There's no way I'm getting this camera in. No camera, no pictures. But damn it was a great show. Common and Talib came out to do their own lyrics off Kanye's *College Dropout* album. That's beside the point—still no shots of Young Gunz. But they perform in San Diego in two days—about 150 miles south; a two hour drive.

After calling any and every hookup I had, JLM public relations hooked me up with the tour manager, who hooked up the tickets to the show. Oh, correction. The wristbands for backstage, muthafu-ka! Whoop! Whoop! On stage shooting pictures of the Young Gunz!

Fuck it. Here's the interview:





**VITALS**

**A.K.A.**  
Chris: "Gunna," "C," "Young"  
Neef: "Buck," "Star Buck," "Neef Buck"

**AGE**  
20

**SIGN**  
Chris: Pisces; Neef: Aries

**STATUS**  
Bachelors

**YEARS ON MIC**  
Rhyming since 15-years old

**REPRESENTING**  
Philly

**LABEL**  
Roc-a-fella; Soon to be "G.I.F.I." - Get in where you fit in.

**WEBSITE**  
YoungGunz.com; Rocafella.com

**FAVORITE DISH**  
Chris: Fried chicken, mashed potatoes  
Neef: Seafood (shrimp!) and steak

**NBA FINALS PREDICTION**  
Chris: I like Philly but you know L.A. Bryant is stepping it up. That's my homie so I'm rootin' for him.

**FORMULA FOR THE PERFECT BLUNT**  
Grab some of that top paper shit from the smoke shop. Or ask snoop!

**The Billboard Rap Chart you only had Kanye and Twista charting above you—how did you guys feel about your #3 debut?**

Lovely man. It feels good. Kanye and Twista? That's family right there. Twista ain't official Roc-a-fella but he's family too.

**You're Roc-a-fella's next generation.**

We're gonna hold it down as long as we can but we're trying to start our own label, G.I.F.I. (Get in where you fit in). I don't know how long our contract is so I don't know how long they're gonna be around.

**I noticed that a lot of the ladies are in love with y'all. I'm sure you've noticed it as well.**

Ah man! That's lovely too! It's a crazy feel-

ing. It makes us feel like we should work harder when they show that love. It makes our moms proud. And you know all the ladies follow the fellas that makes it even better.

**You've no doubt had fans before but is it different now?**

<Excited> Yeah, man. Now it's official with the ladies!

**With all this newfound fame how do you deal with all these groupies?**

<Gives a shy, modest laugh> Hey, I call them friends! It's true the ladies love us though. Were young and fresh to def and ahead of our time. We've been dealing with the ladies before our rap thing, but the ladies just went crazy when we put the *No*

*Better Love* record out. We showed a different side of us. I think they like it.

**Was the concept of the album directed for the ladies?**

Well, not really. The concept of it was "tough luv." It's about how Neef and me came up. Tough love is correction—a punishment. After all is said and done, at the end of the day, it's all business. On some albums you need to come at the ladies because they're the ones buying it. Official! No bootleggin'! I gotta give the ladies at least half—at least six joints.

**What else are you listening to?**

R&B of course, but when I'm with Dame (Damon Dash) they'll be listening to all types of pop music.

**Now you're walkin' down the street and everyone knows you!**

It's all love in the hood. We got some haters though—they show us teeth but as soon as we turn our backs it's a different story. In other cities the fans go crazy. We've got all these people asking to us for an autograph.

**Different cities is right. You've got 25 dates in about a month. I've seen "Da Band" and how emotional they got. Is that how it goes with you and Neef?**

We might have a few words but that'll be that. We never really got into an argument. When we go out on the road it's just him and me—and my DJ, the security, and maybe a homie—there's really no confusion between us—we not trying to make a





bunch of new friends. We don't need none of that extra drama.

**Who are you touring with?**

Young Gunz and Kanye West—it's the College Tour. It's gonna be stupid; gonna be bananas! The Roc the Mic tour is right after that. Management told us to keep

our summer clear cause we're going back on the road.

**Young Gunz are one of a few rap duo's. A lot of them don't last. Is there a formula for YGz?**

We're gonna stay together. Period. That's why it's called tough love. It's all just

business. Nobody can come between us.

**That "Tough Luv" cut seemed to change both your perspectives.**

Yeah! We're family ahead of all business stuff. He [Neef] started me on this. We're like blood.

**While you were in the studio Neef was in the street. Is he done with all that?**

Yeah. He definitely got his head straight.

**What's the worst things that happened to you guys?**

We didn't know the business. They got a lot of stuff over on us. We would have had an



album out a long time ago if we knew what we know now.

**Would it have been the same?**

If they put the promotions behind it, it would have done well. Promotions are REALLY important.

**EI-P produced your cut “Can’t Stop Won’t Stop”?**

Yeah, he’s outta Detroit. I just saw him out in New York. Yeah we’re gonna need a few of them joints—some more of them party bangers!

**What’s your formula for a hit single?**

Right now it’s a bangin’ beat and a catchy hook. That’s what they want right now. The people are not really listening to the verses right now.

**A couple of guys [Chad and Ryan] did more than half the album.**

They’re from Philly. They’re my in-house producers. He works with a lot of people, like The Diplomats. He’s got his stuff out to everybody. But, that’s alright. People gotta eat. As long as we stay eye-to-eye on what the Young Gunz are doing it’s all good.

**You have a lot of samples on the album. From Luther Vandross to Hall and Oats.**

Samples killed us. Out of Chad’s nine joints six of them use samples—we paid something like 90,000. And, that “No Better

Love” cut? It’s like 80 percent on samples.

**So, what are you doing with your new-found wealth besides paying for samples? Saving it—every last bit of it!**

**Do you have a movie in the works?**

*State Property 2* It’s out in October or November. It’s a Dame Dash Film.

**You’ve been rapping for five years now. What are some of your rules for the game?**

One, you definitely have to have your lawyer and your accountant straight. That’s personal but it’s very important. I put them together as number one. Two, you have to show loyalty to your family. Don’t do anything outside of it. You don’t want it done to you. And three, do what you have to do at the radio stations. Even though you might not like a couple out there—handle your business. You gotta do the show and keep a smile on your face at all times.

**Have you got a plan for your next five years?**

We’re gonna be CEOs on our own label. A clothing line, maybe more movies. Wherever rap takes us and as long as the change is right.

**So is business rule 4080 still true?**

Yeah! I swear to God. It’s 95-percent business and five-percent rap. These cocksuckers don’t care nothing about you dog.