



TENNESSEE HIP HOP: ISAIAH RASHAD PUTS A SPIN ON THE CLASSICS

Isaiah Rashad has honed the flows across hip hop's many eras and has put a contemporary twist on his craft. The established yet fresh face has collaborated with some of the genre's mainstream innovative names like Kendrick Lamar and SZA; his sound, however, rests in a league of its own.

Rashad's Chattanooga, Tennessee, roots show in his raspy syllables, which stretch with the undeniable drawl of a Southerner. He tends to confront themes of addiction, raising his two youngsters and milestones known only to the black experience. He unfolds his own empowering identity through rhyme, homage to the roots of hip hop itself.

Don't be fooled by the seemingly typical themes of the genre in his music, though. Rashad pulls spoken-word influences from various points in hip hop's timeline, all the while changing his vocal tone and bluntness to the topic of his lyrical indulgence. His vocal cords stretch between velvety and rich to a tightened, whiny range.

Big label Top Dawg Records of Los Angeles picked up on Rashad's talent and signed the Southern story slinger in 2013. By 2016, he released *The Sun's Tirade*, the full-length follow up to his 2014 EP *Cilvia Demo*. Since releasing the album, he's been touring the nation, and his career has been steadily picking up speed.

Evidently his momentum caught up with little old Eugene, considering his sold out, upcoming show with fellow hip-hop artists Lance Skiiiwalker and Jay IDK 8pm Monday, March 20, at WOW Hall. Don't be a stranger, though, and go check out Rashad's ever expansive and experimental music at soundcloud.com/isaiah_rashad. — *Kelsey Anne Rankin*

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