

Oregon's Rap Scene On the Rise

Following Music's Local Black History from the 1980's to the Present

BY ROBERT BACOTE, A.K.A. MACKIN' ROB FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Hip Hop in Oregon has been around since the mid-1970's, continuing into the new millennium with a growing number of local artists adding to its musical evolution.

In the music's early years, bands and artists like Pleasure, Shock,

Funk, using a lot of live drums and bass guitars. Nowadays, keyboards are used more to make production beats easier by working off of a drum machine.

Oregon Hip Hop really took off around 1985 when break dancing was in. A group called U-Krew from the Pacific Northwest were a popular singing group

with a new twist on Rap. They were well

land "on the map." Two of the group's members, Hakim and J-Mack, went on to do live shows all over the world with Magic Mike from Communication Plus. Both of them also produce their own radio shows that give the local artists a chance to play their music to a large listening audience. Hakim's show can be heard on Z100, Saturday evenings and J-Mack premieres on Jammin' 95.5, Saturday nights after the Big Snoop Dogg show.

With the evolution of Hip Hop, Music DJ's became important. The DJ's would scratch and spin the records, adding to the performance of the music artist. Great Hip Hop DJ's emerging from Portland were DJ Giant, DJ Kay Dee, DJ Chill and DJ Wicket.

In the early 1990's, Rap changed in style to a street level of music. That's when Terrence Scott, a.k.a. Cool Nutz of Jus Family Records became "the man" of Northeast Portland. He formed a record label, using his own method of street distributions to market his music throughout Portland. Scott took Rap to another level, promoting local talents like Isaya, Bosko, G-



Local Artists from left: Bosko, Mackin' Rob and Terrence Scott (of Cool Nutz).

Kenny G and Jeff Lorber Fusion Band brought us what's called Brand New Era of Hip Hop

known for their Rhythm and Blues songs which were adapted for national play, putting Port-

Icons and Myths at Heathman Hotel

A Multi-Artist Exhibit for Black History Month

Recent etchings by Atlanta-based artist Radcliffe Bailey are currently on view in the mezzanine gallery at the Heathman Hotel, in celebration of Black History Month. Curated by the Elizabeth Leach Gallery, the exhibit runs through March 3 and showcases six pieces by Bailey, a mixed media piece by Edmond Bereal, and color photographs of Africa by Seattle artist Robert Lyons. The exhibit is free, and is part of the Heathman Hotel's continuing commitment to the Portland arts community.

Icons and Myths

Bailey's style includes creating large-scale and technically impressive prints that contain up to 13 plates each. The plates are printed in a diptych format on a single piece of rag printing paper. Bailey's works feature vibrant colors and a variety of etching

techniques, including chine colle, photogravure and drypoint. Bailey is also known for using a central photographic image to pull an assemblage of elements into a unified whole, while also weaving together inspirational material from traditional African American cultures. Two of Bailey's latest pieces, "Tobacco Blues" and "By the River," reference vintage landscape photography.

Another Africa

The exhibit also showcases Robert Lyon's color photography, previously featured in the 1998 book "Another Africa." Lyons and essayist Chinua Achebe spoke about the book during their appearance in the 1998 Portland Arts and Lectures series. Lyons' photographs are included in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

The Heathman's Relationship with the Arts

Located in downtown Portland, in the heart of the city's cultural district, the hotel maintains strong partnerships with local arts and culture organizations, including the Portland Art Museum and the Portland Center for the Performing Arts. For its support of the arts in the community, the Heathman Hotel was the recipient of a Business in the Arts Award of Excellence from the Committee for Business in the Arts and Forbes Magazine in 1997. Most recently, the Heathman received the Northwest Business Committee for the Arts Breakfast of Champion Award. For more information on the featured artists, contact the Elizabeth Leach Gallery at 503/224-0521.

ISM, Bleek and Maniac Lok through his record label. Besides promoting Rap shows, Terrence Scott started the "POH HOP Festival" which continues yearly as a summer tradition.

Oregon's Hip Hop music is still going strong. Through the years, its evolution has proven that it is here to stay in one form or another. With so many new and talented artists struggling in this state to make a name for

themselves, they need your support. You may just see your hometown favorites on MTV or BET. Keep Hip Hop Alive!

Robert Bacote, a.k.a. Mackin' Rob of Up' North Records/Millennium Sound Enterprises recently released a new CD entitled "Oregon'izd."

He will be giving a lecture on the origin of Oregon rappers on Wednesday, Feb. 28, from 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. in Rm. 122 of Terrell Hall at the PCC Cascade Campus.

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