



PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Portland emcee Mike Bars says he's just getting starting after getting global exposure with the release of his debut album '16 Bars.'

# "16 Bars"

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him transforming hit Frank Ocean ballad "Thinkin Bout You" into his own with the assist of autotune, reflecting on a painful split with an ex-girlfriend.

The ambidexterity of Bars' soundscapes is not lost on him. They are, in fact, part of his larger goal of pulling in a range of listeners.

"As an artist, I really wanna continue to be myself. And another thing I wanna do is infiltrate people's minds to the point where you can make a positive change in this world. That's something that would be really dope to me."

He points to "There Will Be Blood," the track that as of February has cracked over 400,000 views as an example. Both the video and song, which features Funk Volume emcee, SwizzZz, sees the two artists spitting lyrics that might even give Stephen King some inspi-

ration for his next book, or at the very least find him applauding the effort.

"I think it had a lot to do with the visuals," he says. "It's the fact that there's so much blood, people's heads chopped off and sh\*\* like that. I can't even watch sh\*\* like that. [But] since I was making it, and kinda saw what was happening behind the scenes [it was okay]. You know, we kinda did it to be funny, like the talking head on the table [laughs]."

With fans that now include folks from the North, West, East, and the South, and across the Atlantic in Europe, "Mike Bars" will almost surely be having more fans reaching out to him, like what happened at the Sizzle Pie that day.

In the meantime, the Portland artist is busy flying across the country, shooting visuals for different songs, looking at the possibly touring soon, and generally growing his brand and exposure.

To download 16 Bars for free go to [mikebars.com](http://mikebars.com). Also be sure to "like" Mike Bars' page on Facebook and follow the artist on Twitter @Mike Bars.

# Opportunity Shines

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uity goals.

As a former board chair of Home Forward and 12-year member of the

board, he led the charge for an agency name change that was more inclusive and welcoming than the Housing Authority of Portland.

To inspire others, he liked to share

his experience living in public housing as a child and learning the importance of setting goals as his parents successfully saved to buy a home.

Fittingly, the new Opportunity Center at Stephens Creek Crossing will honor his contributions to the community.

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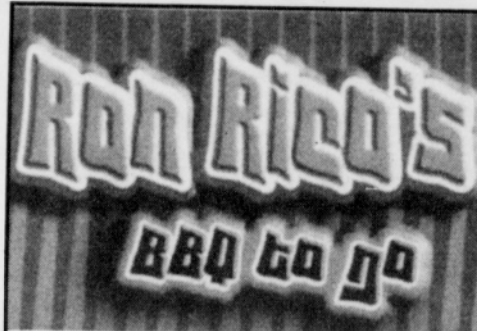


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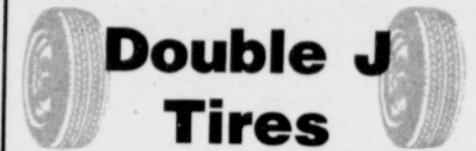
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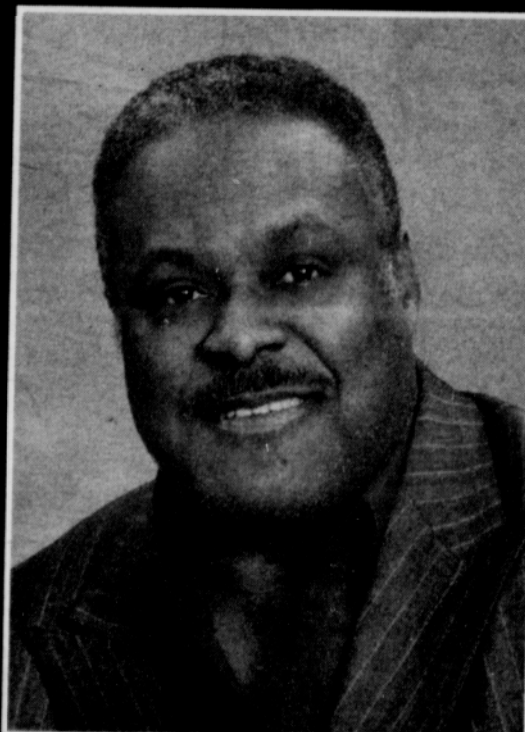
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