



Mississippi
Alberta
North Portland

METRO

Vancouver
East County
Beaverton



PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

With his first project titled "16 Bars," Portland's own rapper, songwriter and emcee Mike Bars, is drawing fans from across the country.

"16 Bars" Going WorldWide

Local emcee boasts global exposure following debut release

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH

Less than two minutes into a sit down interview, a fan rushed into the Sizzle Pie pizzeria off Burnside and approached our table; he wanted to shake the hand of emcee/songwriter Mike Bars.

The adulation might be expected considering Bars has racked up over 400,000 plus views on a 4-month-old video alone, and over 3,000 downloads on his 3-month-old

debut album.

"It's been happening more and more man, ya nah'm sayin' which is cool," he says as the fan leaves, adding with a crack, "and no, I did not pay that dude to come."

With his first project titled "16 Bars," Portland's own says he's only just getting started.

This album is fittingly 16-tracks (sans the Portland anthem bonus track, "P-town") and

came about as a result of Bars obsessing over another project he has been working on for nearly two years, titled "The Microphone."

"16 Bars was like a relief for me, you know what I'm saying—like a creative relief. I was so focused on The Microphone and doing everything that I was doing, that I didn't get to write anything new."

This output finds Bars exhibiting his often

eclectic range, spinning on the usual braggadocio-train that's expected from rappers, to moments of great humbleness and vulnerability.

One moment you'll find Bars rapping lyrics like "Foul mouthed, you Listerine/I'm a dish machine/Nasty, you like Mr. Clean/I spit supreme/With a 1000 an hour salary/That's why they kiss the crown not the ground when they bow down to me" on "Hit 'Em High" then next you can find

continued ▼ on page 15