

Severe

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hip hop is that there are so many different styles, but the main ingredient was bringing people together just to have a good time. That's what we try to do with live shows, to present the best skill representation of DJ and Emcee, which is only two elements of the culture.

When I think about writing rhymes, I like to touch on autobiographical stuff, especially on the song Rose Blood, which is one long verse, which is all true things that have happened, and on the last joint, which is "Eyes Open," talk about societal and not necessarily political, but stuff that goes on and there's not much change that does happen even though a lot of leaders kind of preach that what's gonna happen.

TSN: How do you say that the local scene influences your music?

SS: I don't think the local scene influences me too much, specifically. I think there are a lot of good hip hop artists here,

but I wanna be heard on a bigger scale. I do pay attention to what is going on. Everyone on the album is a local emcee, and I feel they are the best representation of emcee coming out of Portland. You'd be surprised how many rappers are here.

I obviously know them all after doing shows here for a long time. It's hard to get a fan anymore because so many artists are hitting them up. We'll do a show and half the of the people in the crowd looking at you will be rappers. And it's not like they're going to be there really wanting to buy your music and support you. It's really tough.

For example Braille, he's on my album, he's been doing things for a really long time. He's really done it and made a living off it. He toured the world with James

Brown.

It's good to get the respect of local guys. That's what I really wanted to do on this album. Do what we've been doing and

TSN: How do you go about making the national scene? I guess that's a million dollar question.

SS: Yeah. I feel like I have got some national press. I send out my album and get reviews. I've gotten reviews from URB magazine and Okayplayer, which is a big company in partnership with great artists like The Roots and others. I don't know the big secret. It's hard work. Just keep pushing at it. I wish I had the answers. I just do this because I really like to do it.

I feel like it's something that's inside of me. My dad is actually a musician ... he's from Nicaragua, I'm a first generation American. Hearing his story and everything he did to make it to the US just to be a musician, he's actually a Latin and salsa and jazz musician. He's played with a number of big people throughout his career. I see the really cool story to it and then I see ... it's cool that he gets to do what he wants to do, but he's had to sacrifice a lot as far as having security and making tons of money.

TSN: Are you willing to make those same sacrifices?

SS: I'm really willing. I'm just hoping to find success. I think my music speaks for itself.

Check out Serge Severe on Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, CDBaby and Reverbnation.

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known for with this sound, but get people who I really appreciate and involve and who are willing without having to coerce them or pay them or anything. They just wanted to get down.

I guess that kind of contradicts myself saying I'm not influenced by the local guys, my initial thought is I'm trying to think outside the local scene. There's only so much you can do here. I kind of think that you have to get respect outside here before the local people will really jump on board.

TSN: Are you planning any national tours?

SS: We've done stuff here and there. Going back to SXSW in March. Third year in the row we've done it. California runs. Up north to Seattle. It's about connecting contacts and who you know. I think I know I want to tour smarter, make sure it's worth it. ...



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