

Cool Nutz Talks New Album, Sweden, History

The veteran Portland music mogul is releasing his new album 'Bars' on May 11

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Of The Skanner News

On his way to Sweden, Terrence “Cool Nutz” Scott expresses why he loves international touring and overseas fans.

“Their ears are still open,” he says. “Hip-hop listeners over here, they’re jaded. There’s also such a separation in the scene. ‘I listen to this or I listen to that or I’m into this kind of music.’ Over there, you can still catch somebody and they’re still fresh.

“There are artists from over here who are not popular in the U.S. anymore but are killing them over in Europe. You can go over there and reinvent yourself. You could be the second coming of MC Hammer.”

The veteran MC and Portland music mogul shares his insight on everything from Portland hip-hop history to the business side of music to growing the local rap scene. He will be releasing his latest album “Bars,” on May 11, which also happens to be his birthday.

“I’m always trying to stay aggressive in terms of the push of the music,” he says. “What better way than to give the listeners a gift on my birthday.”

With this new album, Scott says he’s trying to steer away from a mainstream sound. Featured artists include familiar faces like Bosko, Maniac Lok and Arjay, as well as new label mate Underrated.

One track titled “Young Mix-a-Lot” pays homage to Seattle rap icon Sir Mix-a-Lot. Scott says that Sir Mix-a-Lot was an inspiration to him because he was an example of how a Northwest artist could make it big.

“You watch movies like Shrek or Charlie’s Angels and his songs are still featured in those movies,” he says. “He’s somebody you could look at and say not only did he do it with ‘Baby Got Back’ or ‘Posse on Broadway’ but also from a longevity perspective, or even a business perspective, he was one of the first artists to tap into the ringtone game and stuff like that which was, from a business standpoint, breaking new ground for hip-hop artists.”

In terms of Portland, Scott says the U-Krew was undeniably the biggest thing going in the city’s hip-hop scene back in the day. They had videos on BET and were touring around the country. The group was inducted in the Oregon Music Hall of Fame last year.

As an aspiring artist, Scott says he was also inspired by everyone from more well-known groups like Five Fingers of Funk to other independent artists and peers like the Lifesavas, Sandpeople, Pros and Cons and POW.

One group in particular, Soul Rhythm Soldiers, played a major role in his development. He says they had a house in the neighborhood and he, Bosko and other artists would go there to hang out and discuss business strategies. Scott points to one member in particular, Carlos, as being instrumental in putting a lot of events together and building the early Portland hip-hop scene.

Scott tries to take on that same spirit through his other ventures in the music business, including his work as host of 107.5’s Northwest Breakout Show. The three hour program, which airs from 9-midnight on Sundays, showcases Northwest hip-hop artists while also playing selected national mainstream records and old school hip-hop favorites.

“Behind Jay-Z you’re going to hear Lifesavas,” says Scott. “Behind Atmosphere, you’re going to hear Sandpeople. I felt like, from a mainstream perspective, there’s nothing that would represent the music and validate it more than hearing it on commercial radio.”

He says that more so than ever, Portland has more artists that are ready to achieve success on a national level. In particular, he singles out Vinnie DeWayne, Luck-One, Cassow, Fli Boi Moe, Mikey Vegaz, Yung Mil and singer Aaron O’Brien.

Scott expresses frustration that more artists don’t take advantage of the radio show. He says many don’t realize that the show has a national reach and could be a valuable resource for gaining exposure. Scott says he listens to every song sent to him as long as it’s cleaned up for the radio. He also uses the show’s website to post playlists and artists’ videos. Artists interested in getting their music on the show can reach him directly at nwbsradio@gmail.com.

Scott also implores fans to support local music.

“Continue to have faith in all of our brands because we need the full support of our city behind us to push this as far as we can,” he says. “You can never have too much support, especially in your own hometown.”

Scott’s evolution as a businessman has allowed him to



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play a significant role in the development of many artists. He has gone from running his own label to tour management and promotion to consulting labels. Scott even did booking for the first five years of MusicFestNW.

As a result, he says he has learned a number of skills and opened many doors for himself so that he could maintain longevity and continue providing for himself and his family.

“I learned a long time ago, maybe eight years ago, I’m going to have to diversify what I do and try to have as many different

streams,” he says. “Also, capitalize on a lot of the things I’ve done to be able to create these opportunities. Like being able to have a name that carries weight. You can go to a company and say, ‘Hey I do these events. Would you want to partner up and have a creative partnership and sponsor the event? This will give you exposure and also give us more resources.’

“All of that spawned from me being Cool Nutz. I didn’t envision going to Sweden. International travel when we started rapping, that was far off. You had to be at a whole other level of the game to be like, ‘I’m going to France.’ You’d be happy you got a show at Eugene.”

“Bars” will be available for free download on Cool-Nutz.net on May 11.

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