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MUSIC FOR LIFE

9/11

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CORNELL
FOOTBALL

Is this the year?

THE ROOTS OF HIP HOP: AN INTERVIEW WITH GRANDMASTER-CAZ



RESPECT
Where It All Began
- Scratch & Gutter 1973

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VOLUME I
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COVER -6

In the late 1970s, Hip Hop was born. Zeke sits down with one of Hip Hop's founders, Grandmaster Caz, to discuss the origins of the genre. The rap game today is a lot different from how it started. Find out why.

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Sustainability on the Slope

Sustainability on the Slope is Slope Media Group's initiative to encourage environmentally friendly practices amongst the student body. Slope Radio will run a public service announcement every other hour to spread awareness on issues of sustainability. We aim to conserve energy, promote recycling, and, above all, keep Cornell a beautiful place. You can do your part: tune into SlopeRadio.com

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01 Kanye West drops Graduation – 09.11

Kanye's much anticipated third album hits stores and outsells everyone.

02 50 Cent drops Curtis (and retires from the rap game) – 09.11

50 brings back his rap career after too much vocal experimentation on The Massacre. He still doesn't outsell Kanye.

03 Grey's Anatomy Returns – 09.26

Girls, get ready. Dr. Grey returns in a few weeks for a fourth season.

04 Slope Radio Daily News launches – 09.10

The Cornell Chronicle will provide listeners with news briefs every hour on the hour.

05 Halo 3 hits stores - 09.25

Bungie's first person shooter releases the final chapter in its historic video game trilogy.

06 Cornell football faces Bucknell in season opener – 09.15

07 The Dalai Lama visits Cornell - 10.09

08 Sexcapades + SHAG = Good Sex – 09.10

09 Children go off to school wearing bulletproof backpacks – September


10 Dirty, Sexy, Money premieres on ABC – 09.26



Rumor: Applied Economics and Management will soon become Cornell's eighth independent school.

Bogus or Not Bogus: Um, probably bogus, but who cares, A.E.M. needs its own school anyway.

Submit your rumors: rumors@sloperadio.com



Concerts

SRM hopes you had the chance to catch The National show during orientation week. The concert was provided free by the Cornell Concert Commission, and took place on the Arts Quad on August 25th. The National, along with preliminary performer the White Rabbits, delivered an impassioned performance to a receptive crowd.

After dropping out of a graphic design program in Cincinnati, former classmates, Beringer (vox) and Scott Devendorf (bass), picked up Davendorf's brother and brothers Aaron and Bryce Dessner and moved to Brooklyn. Their talent has since separated them from most pop-oriented quintets. Eight years and four albums later, The National rocked Cornell, playing tracks from their recent album, *The Boxer*. Check out the video podcast of the show at sloperadio.com



Events

Good call to pack your bags and head (back) to the Slope. Many exciting events have taken place throughout Orientation Week. Here's a re-cap of some Slope Radio events:

8/22: Slope Radio held The 2nd Annual Beach Volleyball Tournament on North Campus

8/24: Slope Radio Covered the CU on the Slope Event

8/25: Slope Radio Covered Casino Night at Willard Straight

But the real buzz on campus is today's, September 10th, official 2007 launch of Slope Media Group. Slope TV, Slope Radio and Slope Radio Magazine have been launched simultaneously across the Cornell campus. So when you are looking for the hottest music news and concerts, be sure to check out the SRM events section. - Kristen O

Artist of the month



Amy Winehouse

Amy Winehouse is famous for two things: getting plastered and singing. They often happen together, and she is great at both. Recently though, she has cancelled tours in Nordic countries because she needs time to "rest" (Read: lay off the booze for a while.) I'm drunk right now, and I'm listening to her album, and I can say without reservation that there is no other state in which Winehouse would have her fans listen to her new album, *Back to Black*.

By no means is Ms. Winehouse new to the business. At 10, she debuted her daunting voice in a group called "Sweet 'n' Sour" that she founded and later described as "the little white Jewish Salt 'n' Pepa." She later perfected her lack of self-control at 13 by getting herself kicked out of the Sylvia Young Theatre School. Unlike most other celebrities she seems blatantly unconcerned with the type of media coverage she receives. In any case, we cannot deny that this deviant siren has started to lull American listeners.

Don't get me wrong, there is more to the recently married Ms. Winehouse than just her on stage antics. Her

album *Back to Black* went to #5 on the UK R&B charts before Universal decided to release it in the United States. Her new album runs the gamut of musical styles, all while showcasing just how strong the pipes are on this sultry Brit. Those of you interested in the woman behind the headlines should check out "Me & Mr. Jones," and "Tears dry on their own." While her hit *Rehab* has spawned numerous remixes, be sure to also check out the version of "You Know I'm No Good" with Ghostface Killah off his album *More Fish*. On these tracks, Winehouse demonstrates her versatility as a soul, swing AND R&B singer.

I must admit that even on the weaker tracks of the album, I am still captivated by the clear, thick SOPRANO that resonates throughout her work. There's no doubt about it: she's got a refreshing sound and it seems as though Amy Winehouse is here to stay.

Amy Winehouse – we raise our glass to you as artist of the month. - Alex A

06

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The Time is Now



Jeremy Siegfried

Cornell Football

After finishing an even .500 (5-5) last season, Cornell comes into this season with high hopes. The team leaders in rushing yards (Luke Siwula), passing yards (Nathan Ford), and receiving yards and receptions (Zac Canty) are all returning, and other key defensive players return as well.

Last season, the team was up and down, and aspect which was reflected in their record. Their main constants were Siwula and a stifling defense. Led in the secondary by cornerback Colin Nash and safety Tim Bax, Cornell was difficult to throw on. Nash, a converted wide receiver, seemed to be in the right place at the right time all year with major interceptions in key games against Albany, Harvard, and Colgate. Bax showed a knack for making plays in the clutch, with key interceptions and tackles to keep the Big Red in games. A stout run defense also helped tame opponents' offenses. However, the Big Red were simply too inexperienced to come away with the division title, which ended up in tie between Yale and Princeton, the latter of which Cornell actually defeated for its only loss of the year.

This year, many have predicted Yale to win the division. The New York Times recently made this prediction due to the return of running back Mike McLeod (2nd in rushing last year) and quarterback Matt Polhemus. Cornell has widely been picked to finish in fifth place, despite the fact that it returns so many



veterans comparable to schools like Yale. However, experience is a factor that no one can correctly assess. With leaders such as Ford, Siwula, Bax, and Nash (who all also show tremendous talent), Cornell is a force that cannot be discounted. They bring the needed experience to this team,



as well as past success. This could lead to upset victories over the likes of Yale and Penn. If, Cornell is taken lightly it is entirely possible that it may sneak up on people. This writer is not predicting a perfect season, or even a league championship. While the latter may be in the cards, it will be an enjoyable season. Cornell should surprise many as it will be well-prepared for all its opponents and may well have some surprises. My feeling is that Cornell will perform quite well out of the Ivies, repeating last years victories over Colgate and Albany, and will be at least .500 within the league this year. Ultimately, the Big Red will be above .500 in the league with victories over Columbia, Dartmouth, Brown, and Harvard. However, upsets over Yale and Penn are also not out of the question. Thus, my feeling is that Cornell will finish 6-4. That may be optimistic but I do not feel it is out of the question. The team can finish perfect, but as most do not this is highly unlikely. However, this will be quite an exciting season for Cornell football, and they should be the surprise of the league. **SRM**



THE ROOTS OF HIP HOP: AN INTERVIEW WITH GRANDMASTER-CAZ

Zeke Rediker

Summertime. Marcus Garvey Park. Harlem, New York City. Beats pound in the stereo. Grandmaster Caz stands behind two turntables, spinning the likes of James Brown and Boogie Down Productions. Break-dancers circle the stage, each waiting their turn to pop, lock, six-step and wind-mill along to the music. Caz periodically mutes the record to drop an acappella verse into the microphone, twisting his tongue to generate complex rhymes and rhythms. Other times he leans in closer to the mic, acknowledging audience members. He calls out the names of DJ Kool Herc and Afrika Bambaata, two of his fellow Hip Hop pioneers. The crowd claps its hands and stomps its feet, augmenting the reverberating baseline booming through the speakers. NYPD rolls by menacingly, yet grudgingly accepts the event's legitimacy. The community is out in force to support its musicians, and there is one hell of a party going on in the park.



ing." Young, black musicians were told to "take that sh*t to the park." It was a time when hip-hop wasn't even hip-hop, it was young people bringing creativity to the streets of Harlem and the Bronx. It was a time when Adidas Shelltoes, micro-phones, turntables, and spray cans offered a way to escape the daily violence of street life. It was a time of social progression, and it was the birth of a culture.

For nearly thirty years Grandmaster Caz and other grizzled hip hop legends have played an important role in helping to keep the hip hop culture true to its beginnings- and true to itself. Grandmaster Caz initially helped define the genre as a lead member the Cold Crush Brothers. Today, he keeps the tradition alive by bringing the party to the park. I recently had the chance to sit down with Caz at Marcus Garvey Park after he performed his set, and we spoke about the origins of Hip Hop Culture. I was quick to find out that these origins are a far cry from the current MO of Hip Hop - getting paid - and had a distinctly communal focus.

Hip Hop began with parties just like these during the late 1970s. Today, this type of non-commercial, neighborhood-based hip-hop is a rarity. Hip-hop's popularity has arrived in sync with its commercial viability. Guns, bitches, and money comprise the subject matter of most rappers. The money made from what was once a vibrant street culture has soared into the billions. In fact, it is hard to remember a time when hip-hop did not have marketing executives, advertising schemes, and international distribution. The high-rise offices of Def Jam and Arista Records now loom large on metropolitan skylines, yet these buildings did not always exist. During the late 1970s, hip-hop "wasn't even allowed in the build-

As the community-oriented approach to music grew up amidst the bedlam of the Bronx in the late 1970s. Much of the Bronx was in dire shape, and had been steadily worsening since the 1963 creation of the Cross Bronx Expressway. The Expressway divided the Bronx in half, isolating minority communities. Furthermore, South Bronx landlords found it more profitable to raze their properties and take the insurance money than collect low rent from tenants. They would often hire arsonists to do the job. Burning buildings became a common sight throughout the South Bronx. Grim housing conditions, crime, and poverty were rampant. As the community lay i

the phoenix of Hip Hop began its ascent. This creative expression of struggle in the 1970s brought communities together, and offered an alternative to drugs and violence. Hip Hop came to represent the agency of a people, who successfully transformed abhorrent living conditions into a successful cultural movement. People throughout the depressed neighborhoods of New York were eager to be part of something positive, and would turn out in droves to participate in Hip Hop's parties in public parks. The genre began to materialize. Caz recalls, "In my neighborhood, the 1970s Bronx, you heard music and you were like a rat behind the Pied Piper."

Grandmaster Caz himself was no exception. He describes his first encounter with Hip Hop: drawing the names of girls at his high school in graffiti lettering. He laughed as he recalled the delighted looks on their faces when they would see their names drawn in street style. Some months after his graffiti-catering to schoolgirls, Caz saw a DJ performance that completely changed his life. DJ Kool Herc, credited as the founder of Hip Hop, regularly threw shows in the park, plugging his DJ equipment into a street lamp to get power. Caz attended one of these parties and was immediately enthralled. In fact, he went and bought his own DJ equipment the next day. He began to DJ his own shows, and eventually

including Grandmaster Caz, would not be the ones to strike it rich. Instead, it was groups who bit their style and used their music to profit from the neighborhood-based cultural movement. In fact, Grandmaster Caz wrote one-third of the lyrics to the Sugarhill Gang's Rapper's Delight, yet was never credited for his contribution. But despite Hip Hop's brutal uprooting from the communities in which it had been nurtured, its style was still undeniable. It would come to gain millions of fans on every continent, and as Caz said well, "The music swept through the planet like wildfire."

Grandmaster Caz mentions that the unofficial fifth element of Hip Hop, style, is perhaps the most attractive component of the genre. Hip Hop was originally composed of four elements – emceeing, DJing, breakdancing, and graffiti – yet these are often forgotten. Hip Hop is no longer a street move-



"At first it was about grabbing talent. Now it's about grabbing anybody and applying the talent that has already been forged."

developed the skill to take his status – and Hip Hop – to the next level.

During certain DJ sets, Grandmaster Caz would enhance his routine by speaking and rapping into the microphone. He saw that the crowd responded wildly to these riffs, so he began using vocals more often. He soon became known for electrifying audiences during his performances and gained wide acclaim for his shows. These vocal interludes aided the development of rapping as a crucial component of Hip Hop, and soon most of the Bronx's prominent DJs had lyrical accompaniments. Grandmaster Flash had the Furious Five and Grand Wizzard Theodore had the Fantastic Five. Caz soon joined up with the Cold Crush Brothers, one of Hip Hop's first iconic groups. The people of the South Bronx followed the growing number of Hip Hop groups closely, and the relationship between artists and audiences became the heart of the movement. The grassroots competition kept the genre fresh, and it seemed that Hip Hop's capacities for innovation were limitless.

By the early 1980s, the world had embraced Hip Hop. The music industry recognized Hip Hop as a profitable venture, and began to ship its recordings all over the world. The community focus of the genre slowly began to break down, and many of its pioneers were left behind to observe the shark feeding frenzy that would shortly follow. Hip Hop's founders,

and any union between its original elements has dissolved. Production, e.g. beat-making, has come to replace DJing – another important aspect in the commercialization of Hip Hop. The beat is crucial because it animates the track, and is more effective at selling records than lyrics could ever be. The drive to sell records has shaped the genre in unprecedented ways, and Grandmaster Caz feels that in the process the community has been left behind. The music industry has cannibalized the genre in an effort to package and sell Hip Hop style to the world. Business owners took this style from the community, fed it to mainstream culture (white suburbia), and made massive amounts of money. Caz mentioned that the music industry is little more than a machine for making Hip Hop artists, and the music's authenticity has been lost in mass production. He said, "At first it was about grabbing talent. Now it's about grabbing anybody and applying the talent that has already been forged."

On his solo CD, Grandmaster Caz exclaims that for the past thirty years, he has "ate, slept, laughed, and wept" Hip Hop. He claims that Hip Hop is his child, but as she grew, she became so badly disfigured that he himself no longer recognized her. Yet today, Caz is not concerned about the money he could have made. He is more concerned with raising his child right, and keeping her uncorrupted. And thirty years after her conception, Grandmaster Caz still takes her to perform in the park. **SRM**



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PATRIOTISM AND MUSIC



Brittney Fordyce

American patriotism sky rocketed after September 11, 2001, a day that will forever live in infamy. No one argues the outrage that the attack ignited, however the surge of emotion that resulted rippled past any normal reaction. Based on American history, a post-Pearl Harbor type rejoinder seemed a logical response to such a crime. Still, six years later, the current number of Bush followers pales in comparison to those for FDR.

Nevertheless, political commentary on America's war on terror has appeared not only in political journals, but in music topping the charts. A mere six years after September 11, 2001, how many people have stopped to reflect on the horrific events that followed this fateful day? Sept. 11 and its ensuing wars have deeply impacted American popular culture. In our generation, music has developed a new relationship to politics.

The recent fusion of music and politics has generated a considerable amount of debate. The debate intensified after comments made by Dixie Chick, Natalie Maines, when she told an audience, "just so you know, [the Dixie Chicks are] ashamed the president of the United States is from Texas," at a concert in May of 2003. Bush supporters staged public rallies where they smashed the band's CDs. Moreover, this controversy has posed a deeper question for our generation: should consumers encourage musicians to incorporate politics into their work, or simply keep their work apolitical?

Music is an especially effective medium for delivering a message. Many people within our generation seem to think of one band when thinking about politically charged music: Rage Against the Machine. Also known as Rage or RATM, this Grammy-award winning band of the 90s not only experimented with the mixing of sounds, but also with revolutionary lyrics. Rage held a strong following of politically frustrated youth throughout their career and protested everything from local injustices to national Right-Wing politics.

People often write off political messages as a hip hop trend. Yet Alternative rock has also become a breeding ground for

political expression. Green Day, who once sang the grungy, catchy tunes that topped the Billboard Charts of the 90s (as well as the karaoke charts), now fill their songs with political messages. The music video for their song "Wake Me Up When September Ends" is filled with images of a young man going off to war and his crushed lover back home. The bridge in the song "Holiday" contains lyrics such as "Can I get another Amen? (Amen!) There's a flag wrapped around a score of men (Hey!) And gag a price tag bag on a monument." Despite its deep criticism of the war, the album, entitled "American Idiot," debuted at number one in 2003. The album was not only popularly received, but critically acclaimed as well.

Regardless of where the blame is laid, this trend of using music to broadcast a message began more than two generations ago. The Rolling Stones topped charts with their song "Sympathy For The Devil," which was recorded in June of 1968 and released later that year. A song to which everyone knows the lyrics is Billy Joel's "We Didn't Start the Fire." Joel mentions many aspects of war and hardship throughout history ("what else do I have to say?"). These lyrics are comparable to those of Green Day, even though they were recorded and released fourteen years earlier.

The list goes on for miles, especially with the surge of musicians who found their passion in the anti-Vietnam War Movement. From John Lennon to Janis Joplin and Don McLean, September 11, 2001 was not the day the music died. The proof lies in the musical collections of our parents.

In the end, the loudest voice in the crowd belongs to the consumers. In a nation where a body builder can become a governor (or "Govenator"), it all boils down to what the public chooses to believe. We must ask ourselves, though, what will happen in 2008 when Bush is out of office, and someone like...oh, Hilary Clinton becomes President of the United States? Bottom line: Is today's War in Iraq the new Vietnam War? And will musicians have the right to complain if the status quo changes dramatically with the next election? SRM

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