

# **MC Eiht interview published at MurderDog.com**

**MC Eiht interview by: Scott Bejda**

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**You were only getting \$5,000 for albums and Unknown was getting the rest?**

Yeah, he was getting \$200,000 budgets to do Compton's Most Wanted records. He had the production deal.

**How did he get the deal?**

He went into the label acting like "These is my cats." So they gave him the deal.

**Was he even part of the group?**

No. He was just the nigga that the record company needed. We at the time were just young babies. They needed someone to represent as far as to who was going to take charge for this group. Who was going to sign the contracts? Who was going to cash the checks? I was only seventeen. Slip was older, but all he knew how to do was be a DJ and run a sound company. We didn't know nothing about \$200,000 deals. I was used to getting \$5,000.

**That was totally fucked up**

When it would come time for me to do a record, Unknown would give me a check for \$5,000. He would say "There's going to be more on the back end," but there never was a back end. I did two albums and wrote all of that.

**Did you want to go in there and jack his shit up?**

At first I didn't because I didn't know shit. I didn't know anything. Then a nigga would come to me and offer me \$30,000 for a commercial, I knew something was up.

**Did you see any royalties?**

The first album came out and I didn't see any royalties. The second album came out and I didn't see any royalties. Three months after the records came out, I would be sitting at home broke. Something is not right. Every time I would go to the studio Unknown would have a brand new Benz, or motorcycle. Out of about 15 beats he was only doing two or three. The majority of the production came from DJ Slip.

**Was DJ Slip getting paid for his production?**

Slip was getting less than what I was getting. Slip is a big nigga. This nigga is like seven feet, three hundred and something pounds. I'm telling this nigga you need to speak up. It's like the same shit with Cube. Cube was going "I'm writing all the songs and I'm still driving a Suzuki and living at home". Eazy is living in a big house. That was me. Everything on the first 4, Or 5 albums nobody wrote but me. I wrote every lyric. So I went and did the commercial for St. Ides and they gave me about \$25,000.

**What did you do with the money?**

I went and put down on a Benz. I thought" shit, if you're gonna have a Benz, then so am I". Then he started to get jealous. He was asking me" where did I get the money"? Cause he knew I wasn't making no money. The nigga talked shit because I did a St. Ides commercial.

### **Why did he have a problem with you trying to make money for yourself?**

He knew that if he was able to control that, he would've kept twenty grand and gave me five grand. That's how he would've did it. He would've said "St. Ides is only offering you \$10,000". He would've only gave me \$5,000 up front. They would've gave him \$25,000 and he would've kept \$20,000. That's how greedy Unknown was. I started to get suspicious. Right around that time Unknown had signed a publishing deal for Compton's Most Wanted. This deal was through MCA. He took us all out to a restaurant one night. It was me, him and Slip. He said this "Eiht, I just signed a publishing deal. You are going to get about \$9,000. Slip, you are going to get about \$3,500." He tells me I would get about \$6,000 of it at first. He gives me a check for \$5,000. He gives Slip a check for \$3,500. So we went to the studio. Niggaz was happy. We had some money in our pockets. So the nigga gets drunk and leaves his check book in the studio. The next day Slip calls me. He says "Unknown left his check book here."

### **Did yall look through it?**

I was already suspicious anyway. I told the nigga to look through it. He didn't want to do it. I said look through it. He looked through it and called me back. He said, Guess how much that nigga got for the publishing deal? I said how much? He said \$70,000. It was right there in plain English. It said MCA: \$70,000 for publishing. I told the nigga to give it to his dad and tell his dad to make a copy of it. Cause you knew as soon as the nigga woke up he was going to go to the studio and get his checkbook. I told him to tell his pops to photo copy the whole damn thing. That was what he did. He had copies, 7 proof. That was when my balls got big. I ain't taking it no more. So we went out to the bank to cash some checks. The nigga tells me that he is going to take a thousand dollars out of my money.

### **What for?**

He said it was for a portable DAT player. It was for when we go on the road. I said "No, you ain't taking shit out of my money, fuck that." I not going to buy no \$800 portable DAT player. I got other shit to do with my money. We were going back and forth. The nigga calls me stupid. I said "Yeah, I'm stupid." From that day on I went and got my own lawyer.

### **What about having a part in the publishing deal, was he still involved?**

Epic got rid of Orpheus and they were getting ready to pick a nigga up directly. I told Epic "I'm not going to do this record if he was involved." I was about to start working on "Music to Drive By". They complained back and forth. It was a bunch of bullshit. In the meantime I started filming *Menace II Society*. I had got the part in the movie. They knew I was getting ready to do this movie. They knew this movie was going to propel me. They decided to let me and Unknown spilt the money for production on the next record. Instead of me getting my normal \$5,000 I got \$30,000. This way I could go and do my own thing. I was tired of this nigga doing his little production. I was tired of him saying what goes on the record. He ain't the one rappin'. He ain't the one that people see. I wanted some say so. So they included my production company on the credits. They also made me one of the executive producers. I was still unhappy because I couldn't get rid of this nigga. This nigga just juked me out of \$30,000 because I was supposed to get 80% of that publishing deal. I was writing all of the lyrics. He wasn't writing no songs. Why was he getting publishing money. We finish the album and it comes out. It sells 400,000 copies. Epic was happy. They wanted to start working on the next record. I was like no way. *Menace II Society* was getting ready to come out.

### **How did you finally get rid of Unknown?**

*Menace II Society* had just came out. I told them that I wont do no more records. I said I will just act. I said I'm not going to cut another record with Unknown. *Menace II Society* came out and the movie was so popular. The single for the movie was platinum. The song "Straight Up Menace" was blowing up the soundtrack. They knew that I wasn't gonna play ball no more. So they got rid of Unknown. That was when I took over as executive producer. That was when I was able to take control. I was getting that \$200,000 up front to cut a record. It still didn't matter because they never promoted shit.

### **Why did they treat you like that?**

I don't know. "We Come Strapped" sold 700,000 copies. That's was by word of mouth. That was because of the movie. If the movie never came out then I would've still been stick in that two or three hundred thousand dollar bracket. Independently that would be lovely. When you are on a major label 200,000 copies ain't shit. You got to divide, recoup, payback manufacturing costs. Before you know it you don't have any money. I fought with Epic from 1993 until 1997. I couldn't get shit out of them. "Music to Drive By" sold 300,000 copies. We come strapped sold 700,000 copies. The album after that "Death Threatz" was pulled off the shelves.

### **Why did they pull the record?**

Sony offered the record to consumers at a set price for two weeks. It was to try to get everybody to rush in and buy in bulk. They were going to offer the record to one stops for \$6 for two weeks. The shit started to shoot out of the where house and they couldn't control it. Then they wanted to renegotiate on the deal that they cut. After a week they wanted to bump the price back up to the regular price. The one stops said no. They said you offered us a deal. Now that they were out selling on the deal they wanted to go back on the deal. The stores refused to do it. So they said fuck it and stopped selling it to the stores.

### **Basically you were the one who got fucked?**

They pulled the record because the buyers wouldn't agree to buy the record at full price when they still had a week to go on the deal. Sony told me the record wasn't in stores because there was a problem with the record.

### **What did they mean by problem?**

They said something was actually wrong with it. They said there was a glitch in it, or they had to slap a sticker on it. They were just lying. I would talk to all the stores. They would tell me there was nothing wrong with the record. They said when they would call to get their pieces at that price they would tell the stores there is no piece. I can't hold the customers up and tell them the record got pushed back two more weeks.

### **How many units did the record sell before it got pulled?**

We got up to 300,000 units before they pulled. Ever since then I have been independent. I can do what I want. I can control my own destiny. I can say what the fuck I want. I get all the loot. I don't have to sell 100,000 or 200,000. I can sell 25,000 or 50,000. On this new album "Veteran's Day", I'm going out like a fucking politician. I'm going to all the mom's & pop's, I'm making all the little stops, all the little towns like I used to do. I'm shaking hands and kissing babies. I'm letting all the stores know that I'm not one of these big headed artists. I want the people that walk in here to buy my record know that this new MC Eiht record is hot. I want the customer to walk in and say what's hot? I want you to say this new MC Eiht. That's my goal. I'm not Jay-Z. I can't pay a nigga \$2,000,000 to work this album. You can pay some one two million to work your album but the fans still want to see you. You think they just want to see you sitting next to your girlfriend at a basketball game. You think they just want to see you at an awards show. The fans want to see you come walk in the store when he just spent his fifteen dollars.

### **And without twenty bodyguards rushing your ass.**

I ain't never been into body guards. I would rather get two or three of my homies then to have to pay someone \$200 a day, for what? You can get shot just like I can.

### **And if they are homies, they got your back anyway.**

It is more acceptable by people. It don't make people feel so uncomfortable. There will be niggaz that just wanna blow one with you. They wanna smoke one with you. Or even just to say what's up?

Niggaz gonna feel intimidated if you are walking around with body guards with ear pieces like they work for the president. They will be like " Ah, this nigga is high profile. We ain't going to be able to get to him". On this nigga's records he is representin' like he is a true robin hood.

### **How do you stay humble verses all the stuck up rappers?**

I go off of faith. Yeah I cuss and smoke. But I go off of faith. I can't control none of this shit. I know about having faith and being patient. And I know about not worrying too much. If you spend too much time worrying, you could of spent that time on something else. I don't spent time on worrying. I don't worry if a record company is seeing how much I'm sell. I don't worry if a record company is going to give me a David Banner deal. I don't worry about that. I just keep making music. I will go to the studio and make a song that will never come out just for the hell of it. I might keep it for my CD player so I can bump it. I might give it to the niggaz in the hood so they can bump it. I ain't worrying about the money. I just made an original song for the love of it. Even if a nigga told me that I couldn't rap no more and you have to get a regular job. I would still be hitting the studio making music.

### **Will you and DJ Quik ever make any songs together?**

I have been in the studio with Quik. We did a song about two years ago. Quik was working on a sound track for this independent movie called "100 Kilos". It was the Freeway Rick story. We did a song together for that. He did the production and I was on the song rapping. Mausberg was on the song too, so was I think Hi-C. Deals were still going on. They probably fucked Quik over and didn't pay him his money, so he kept all the tracks.

### **So the beef is over with you and Quik?**

Yeah, we cool. I seen Quik and we have shook hands. We have done interviews together and everything. It hasn't got to the place to where the consumers or the fans would like to see it as far as us making a record or being on tour together. We handled the beef how it is done on the streets. It's not on records or none of that shit anymore. It's cool now.

### **I remember when you two were beefing, how did it all start?**

We used to go at it back then. I don't know how it started for him but on my end it started when I had my second album out. I had a song called "Def Wish". On the song I had the phrase that say "Biting me quick, will only mean you get my dick sucked quick". I never knew nothing about no DJ Quik, but there was an actual DJ Quik. He was a Blood affiliate and I was a Crip affiliate and we were both from Compton. People hyped it to say that he was dissing you. Quik had already been dissing me. I was already an established artist. I had two albums and videos. I considered myself in the game. He was trying to get in the game. He had been putting out underground tapes. Since his Blood affiliation it was natural to go after the Crip niggaz. He made a street tape dissing Eazy because Eazy was affiliated with the Crips. He also made songs dissing Compton's Most Wanted. That was a way for him to symbolize with his Blood homies. It was a way for him to say fuck them Crip niggaz. That's how the beef started on his end.

### **If you hadn't heard of Quik, how did you know about the underground diss records?**

I have never heard of this. My DJ Mike-T who was a Blood got a copy of the tape. He played it for me. This was after the Def Wish song was already out. Naturally people were going to take that tape and my song and combine the two. People were like " Oh he dissed you on a street tape and you turned around and dissed him on the record". It all got blown way out. Then he made a comment on his next record and I made a comment on my next record. It went crazy for awhile. I did a video about him.

### **How did you come up with the idea for the card board cut out of Quik in your video?**

Profile was marketing his next album "Way 2 Fonky" and they had those posters out. They had the card board cut outs. I got ready to do the Def Wish 2 video and I said " we got to get one of those". We had Sony order one. My love for gangsta rap was just in me. You got to have a passion. If have to

realize that you might not get paid for some of this shit. You got to have love for it. Sometimes this shit might be charity. Sometimes I might have to give this shit away. I might not make a dollar off of it. Now everybody that touches it is going to make money off of it. I have never heard a record company say that they have not made a profit off of me.

### **You are saying that there all other rewards than just moola?**

As long as it can reach a few people by word of mouth and as long as they know I'm still in the game. That's all that it is about. As long as they know I'm still representin'. I do projects like the Spice 1 project. There might be niggaz up north that don't know I'm still in the game. Let me go and do a record with Spice 1 and capture some of his fans. As the business aspect I got my man that lives in New Mexico. Maybe I can capture some of those fans too. People go by word of mouth. A lot of these 13 to 25 year olds go off of what they hear on radio, or see on the video. A true MC Eiht fan is going to be the only one following MC Eiht. A muthafucka could like MC Eiht, but get distracted by the next nigga. You are not going to know unless it is corporate. I'm independent and I'm going to get into a bus and hit all the independent stores. I'm going to make sure that this project is a significant independent project. It's not just me throwing something together just to get a few bucks. I want this to be known as a hard album.

### **How did you come up with the title "Veteran's Day"?**

I'm a vet in this game for the last fifteen years. I even got another record coming out called "Tony Smalls: Smokin the City". That's an alias of MC Eiht. It is just to do other shit. On that record I got Young Buck, Spice-1, Daz, Kokaine, Game and Skip from UTP. I got a lot of people on that record. That was just a record I did when I was going out and rubbing shoulders with niggaz. I call that my spare of the moment record. I also got this group on there called "Strong Arm". It's two young niggaz from Watts and Compton. The Tony Smalls record is to get a lot of anger off my chest. And to expose these new niggaz from Compton who are going to be going through their own experiences. The Tony Smalls album is basically a blow it out your ass album.

### **Tell me more about "Veteran's Day", what's that about?**

This album is all me. I didn't want this album to be cluttered up by guest appearances. I wanted to take it back to hearing Eiht. I want you to hear that Eiht has crafted his skill and his keeping up with his time. I still wanted you to remember that old stuff how we used to get down back in the days. I want you to appreciate this new album. I coming with Barry White samples, and that old Eiht. Niggaz are trying to venture away from that. Another that I'm addressing is how niggaz say "geah, geah, geah." I'm the first nigga to say that and I'm going to be the last.

### **Who is doing the production on the new album?**

It is produced by me and Chill. An original member of Compton's Most Wanted. We try to keep it all original. There are about 14 tracks on the album.

### **What happened with the Hoo Bangin' deal?**

Not to hate on muthafuckaz, but I'm making it a point not to hold my tongue on shit that bothers me. The story behind Hoo Bangin' was it wasn't organized. It was a label that came into some money and that was it. Mack 10 came into some money for the stuff he was doing with West Side Connection and the good record that I think he did which was Based on a true story. From there Priority offered him a label deal. We get to that point once we sell a certain amount of records. They offered him a deal which was Hoo Bangin'. His first project was the compilation called the recipe. He had the Comrads, Soultry and CJ Mac. I thought that it was already going to be messed up. The label was a start up label and he had already signed seven acts. How are you going to really concentrate on breaking records and getting your label out there when you have seven acts complaining about shit. You got me, COG, Soultry, Boo Capone, Technique and CJ Mac. He had eight or nine acts on his label and nobody put a record out yet.

### **Who was the first one to come out?**

The Comrads were supposed to come out first but they got bumped back because of COG. COG was supposed to come out but they got bumped back because I came in. Niggaz was signed to Hoo Bangin for two years and haven't put a record out when I put my first record out with Hoo Bangin'. It was all unorganized. I didn't get to go on a promo tour when my record came out. That killed it right there, I wasn't getting the same radio attention that other Priority artists were at that time. As it being Mack's label then he should of voiced what happened to his artists. Fuck it, if my video is getting played ten times a day, then my artists should at least get their video played five times a day. That don't look good. I ain't got no publicist or no promo tour. I was not getting interviews. What was going on? Then it was all falling apart because people were wanting to leave. Mack wasn't being able to be reached. He was changing his numbers.

### **He wouldn't even talk to his artists?**

It would take him about two weeks to even respond. It would be like if niggaz gave me five million for this label and I'm going to be like "Fuck it". I'm going to give them a little change and then yall have to do what yall have to do. He didn't have to worry about me because he knew I was going to complete a record. I was like once this is completed what are we going to do? I had the first single which was "Automatic". That was hot and people was playing it. Niggaz was feeling it and the video. They didn't take it to the next level. They was like "Fuck it".

### **Why would you have done another record?**

It came time to do another record and I was complaining. What I was saying is, is it going to be like the first time? Niggaz was telling me that they were going to do this for me and going to do that for me. I have been through the game before. You don't have to promise me shit. Just work my record. Give me an opportunity like you would like to have. You got my record coming out next week and I don't even have posters or pictures to sign.

### **He started off as an artist, you would think he wouldn't do this**

Thank you. You want me to go on this promo tour and every where I get no one even knows we are coming. That's fucked up. Then I'm on the road with no posters to sign. I have nothing to give the people. I'm on the road for four day. What am I doing? The when I call to complain you tell me that you don't know what is going on. How can you not know? This is your label. Then I'm sharing posters with the Comrads. One side is me and one side is them. What the fuck is that?

### **Couldn't the label afford to give each artist their own add?**

I couldn't understand that. Why am I sharing adds with the Comrads and CJ Mac. On one side you were promoting one thing, then on the other side of the page you were promoting fifteen other things. That don't work for me. I'm an artist by myself. I got my own entity. I'm not a new comer to where you can stick me with fifteen other guys. Nigga you can send me out by myself and niggaz is gonna know who I am.

### **With that kind of budget he could of done that with everybody.**

You see that's the point. When you get a budget and spend it on other shit, then sometimes it happens. I have known niggaz who got budgets and turned around and bought a two million dollar house. Then turn around and put the other million towards eighty acts. That's not going to work.

### **You got a lot of experience with negativity.**

I got a lot of experience in being fucked. That's what I got a lot of experience in. If a nigga gave me two million dollars right now, Yeah I might go and buy me an all right car, but I'm not going to spend two million dollars before I get started on finishing my project. I know that this two million dollars is for

the project. It's not for you to go buy a Hummer and platinum watches. It's not for you to spend \$10,000 on a new wardrobe.

**It sounds like you could run one hell of a label.**

All I'm waiting for is the opportunity. Longevity is the key. I have been putting out a record every other year since 1989. What other artist can say they have done that with out major million dollar sales. Niggaz get killed in this game. If you put out one or two projects that don't break, you are done.

**You are on the level of a Too \$hort.**

Thank you. Too \$hort has been selling gold and platinum records. Not me. Eiht ain't been selling gold records every time he puts a record out. I still put one out every year on the strength. I know the MC Eiht fans are still out there. From the first record to the last I have sold over 15,000,000 records of MC Eiht product. There is 15,000,000 people that have a CD of MC Eiht some where in their collection. If not all of them, then one that is a fan. If I can reach these people like I need to instead of having that attitude like "I ain't gonna sign these autographs." I used to be like that too. When a nigga got a little bit of money and moved to the hills and had the five bed room. I had the 500 sitting in the drive way. I had my boat and my gated community. If a nigga was going to give me money to do a concert I was like "What airline, because if it is not first class then I'm not going". That's some bull shit. When this nigga is trying to pay you \$7500, so what if he is trying to stick you on South West airlines. Get on that South West plane and go get that seventy five hundred dollars. I got out of that shit. Right now niggaz can call me and say "Eiht can you do a verse for \$1,000"? Yep, bring it on. I'm 33 years old and I have kids. It's not about me no more. It's about them. I got to do shit for them. What ever I have to do that is on and up and up scale to where I ain't got to be facing no ten years in prison, or I have to catch a slug in my back, fuck it. Some times I eat big plates. Some times niggaz want to give me \$5,000 for a hook. Some times niggaz will say "All I got is \$500, can you spit me up some bars"? Yes, I can do it. You know why? Because that \$500 is going to feed my kids for a few days. Rather than telling him I can't do that. Why not? I know I got value, but still fuck that shit. I would rather give a nigga a verse for \$500 and see him next and he is cool with me. Verses me telling him no I cant do it and having him see me tomorrow thinking that I'm a big headed nigga.

**On the new album, do you think you will get your props?**

I got a lot of records. You know when Source be doing their little award shows? I watch them and wonder if I look up and one day somebody will say " Lets recognize MC Eiht, that nigga has been making records for the last 20 years". He might not be on the scale to where he is selling five and ten million copies on one record, but look at the longevity and look at the love he puts into his music. Can't nobody discourage him, because he has been doing this so long. And then on this scale, the majority of the time he don't get paid. Let's think about that. Think about all the projects that he does where he doesn't make a check. Let's recognize that, because he is still able to give us quality music.

**That's so real, because I remember when Snoop's 2<sup>nd</sup> didn't do what he wanted it to he said "Fuck the fans."**

I like Snoop and he's my homey. The 2<sup>nd</sup> record after Doggy Style was garbage. The Dog father was garbage. That's my opinion as a fan, not as a nigga who hate's Snoop, cause I love Snoop. TO come off of Doggy Style and to go to Dog Father, it was garbage. Like you said" fuck the fan's, I don't need anybody. I'm Snoop Dogg. I can make a hit off of a garbage beat". No you can't. That's that brain washing that you want to convince people because of your name. That's how a majority of niggaz today sell records, because of their name. All you got to do is put out one ok song and a video. Once you do that people will run out and buy that album. People are confused today.

**What can we expect on this "Veteran's Day" album?**

You can expect that MC Eiht shit from 1989 until 1993. I'm coming with songs that make a nigga feel like I'm making a point and not just doing something. I'm not going to talk about some girl shaking her ass in jeans, or what platinum watch I got on. That shit is done. I'm so sick of that shit. Real gangstaz

don't talk about what they got. They don't talk about it, they be about it. You niggaz is flossy. What about these high fashion niggaz? Who said it was OK to where pink?

### **Like Outkast?**

Outkast is expression, but Cam'Ron with pink furs, boots and hats. That's some garbage. I don't give a fuck what anybody says. Let me turn around two years ago walking into the Source awards with a pink jersey on, a pink hat and a pink rag hanging out of my pocket.

### **People would say what the fuck happened to MC Eiht?**

Thank You. That's why the game ain't about what you say no more. It's about fashion. It's about what the girl's like. Niggaz ain't got no heart in their music. When I make music I listen to it. If it don't make my head bump, then I'm not doing it. I'm the first critic. I'm not one of those egotistical niggaz, because I don't like every thing I do. On this album I try to go back to the shit that people know Eiht for. I ain't trying to get fancy now days with all the high shit. Everybody trying to sound like Lil' Jon on their records. I'm not going into the trends. I'm going to stay true to what I have been doing since 1988-1989. Everybody else is doing it and it's ok. Trick Daddy is a thug and it's OK. 50 Cent a thug, Baby and them is thuggin' and it's OK.

### **If someone from the West Coast is thuggin, it's not cool.**

No, it's not OK. You guy's are gangsters.

### **Don't you feel the West Coast only got blamed for Pac and Biggie's deaths?**

There you go. It's because our life style has been associated with so many tragedies that it tends to make the American public naive. Niggaz are bangin everywhere. Like in New York, Cam'ron and them say they are Bloods. From where? I have been going to New York before there was a Cam'ron and a Dip set. I have been going there since 1990, I ain't never seen a gang, never. I have seen niggaz run in packs and some gangs. There's the Latin Kings and different crews. As far as people wearing red rags and people wearing blue rags. Cam'ron is in the video having red rags all over the tires. That shit is beyond me, because real Bloods don't get down like that. I sit around real Blood niggaz every day. Niggaz ain't walking around with bandana coats on. Nigga get out of here. That's fashion statements for them niggaz. They are not used to it and they are intrigued by it. We were doing that shit thirty years ago. Now everybody is wearing bandanas. You niggaz are hard, but you got on pink. Little kids 13 and 14 who are listening to our music don't know what we were going through 15 years ago. They weren't even here. So, how can they associate? Shit, if Cam'ron is wearing red in one video and pink in another then it must be cool.

They got niggaz in LA wearing that shit. That is where I draw the line. Anytime a nigga walks into my studio with pink on I send him out of there. You niggaz is killing me how you are copy cats. Just a year ago you would've not seen one nigga in California walking around with nothing pink on. I'm true to this. I hit the streets of Compton every day.

### **Back in the day if I would come out wearing pink, I would've got my ass stomped.**

Niggaz would've thrown rocks at you and laughed you back home. Let a female tell you something and all these pimp daddy's who think they are the man, a nigga is runnin with it. If a bitch says "Oh, baby wear pink and you will be the man". Next thing you know niggaz is painting their cars pink.

### **How do you feel about all these pimp cups?**

I'm not with that. Down South, yall do yall thing. That's some Down South shit. Just like I say, niggaz shouldn't step on our trends. You shouldn't wear khakis with bandanas. Let us have our trend. And in New York, yall ain't never been about association. Stay off of that shit. Just like niggaz in LA don't wear Timbo's unlaced and big winter coats in the summer. We don't do that. Everybody has got their own style. I don't bite off of nobody's style. Like some niggaz got pimp cups on the West Coast. Some



niggaz in the east wear bandanas. You will never see me bite. Be your own man. Be your own symbol. Represent your town the way you represent it. You start giving your community a bad rep when you start doing shit out of the ordinary. We didn't do that last year, so why are we doing it now?

### **Tell me about the album that you did with Spice-1, how did that come about?**

Me and Spice have been cool for years. We have been cool since back in the Menace II Society days. We have always talked about doing something together after doing a couple songs together back in the day. We did the Murda Show together. We did 1990 sick together. Then we did a couple of songs on other people's projects. With me moving a lot and doing projects I bumped into some of Spice's people. We got a mutual friend in Sacramento. They were calling me and telling me that Spice was trying to get into contact with me. I called him and he said he wanted to do this project between me and him. I was with it. I flew up to Sacramento. I got a copy the other day and it sounds pretty good. Spice really put his foot down. I guess that happens when you feel that you are in competition. Because I always like to step up my game when I'm focused and I fuck with other artists. I think this project is going to make a lot of noise. This is a real good album.

### **Are people going to be surprised?**

Oh yeah people are going to be surprised. I know Spice and know how he works. When I listened to the record I was real surprised. Spice has stepped his rap game up. I'm a Spice fan and sometimes Spice would give me songs and I would be like "oh Spice, what is this one". On this record I ain't got no complaints about my nigga. My nigga stepped up to the plate. I try to listen to it as if I was a fan myself instead of being part of it. I listen to it and let other people hear it. A lot of people have said this is the best that they have heard Spice rap. I'm confident in this project. Even though it's an independent project I think it will open up a lot of doors for him and me. It should be out in like July or something. I just flew down there. Niggaz said they had some bread for me. I listened to the tracks and I picked 14 out of thirty. Some of the songs I had one verse and some of the songs I had two verses. I did two solos and I split the rest verse for verse.

### **Then this is a duet album?**

Yes, this is a duet album. It's called the "Pioneers". It reminds me of that Dillinger and Young Gotti record. That Daz and Kurupt record. That was the one that they put out independently. When you got that record you thought it was going to be just a typical Daz and Kurupt record. When you listened to it and banged the beats, that's one of my favorite albums. It's a long record and it was like they were not stressing about shit. I'm not stressing about sample clearances and this and that. I'm just going to get in here get high, get drunk, feel good and make some music. I'm going to make music that the true homies can appreciate. If my fans capture that then it's all good. They were searching for names on what to call it. We came up with the name Pioneers. I thought the Pioneers would be really good. Then when they saw me and Spice on the cover they would know. I consider Spice a pioneer in his element where he comes from. The East Bay and from records like 187 Proof. Just like I have my trade mark "Geah, he has Blou". That's my nigga right there. The record is going to be real good. What ever I can do to support, I'm going to do. I'm on the muthafucka. There is some good music that is on the record. The record shouldn't be slept on.

### **If anyone that loves MC Eiht, or Spice 1 would want to have this**

This is a record that people should have in their collect. It's the quality of two niggaz coming together who appreciate each other and making some good quality songs. It's not all just about that shoot 'em up bang bang. We got records that you can groove to and party to. Spice got a song on there that I love like a muthafucka. It's just killa. That should be a project that all the muthafuckaz should pick up.

### **Why do you think that not too many people come together to do records like this?**

I think it's good to do. Me and Daz have talked about trying to do a record together. Right before I did the project with Spice 1 me and Daz we're talking about it. I think it gives two artists to appreciate each other's craft. It also give a chance for your fans to focus on him and vice versa. People who we're fan's

of Spice and not my fans, are now going to be my fans. Just like niggaz who liked me and didn't really like Spice, now they are going to like Spice. It helps each other out. I never mind collaborating with a nigga. You ain't got to give me a million dollars. Like niggaz say "You have to give me \$80,000 to get me on a song". I understand that because that is the anticipation. When you sell three million records and a nigga calls you to get you on his song, then you are going to anticipate on at least \$50,000 to \$100,000. Me, I'm a reasonable nigga. Don't ever turn shit down. I've learned that now. You got to be humble. I know my worth. I have sold millions of records. I got platinum plaques on my wall. I don't want to discourage a nigga from wanting to fuck with me. I'm going to work with you. I'm going to let you know what I think I should get and you let me know what you can afford. We can meet some where in the middle. I want some of your fans. I want dome of your people to say that they like Eih.

### **You see the bigger picture.**

There you go, I'm a nigga that sees the greater picture. I'm a nigga who sees it ten or five years later. I used to live in the now. I used to be like "Fuck that, I need mine right now". Ain't nothing going to happen tomorrow. Unless I die and unless god takes me up out of here and tells me it's time to go home. Other than that I'm right here. Some niggaz come out and get a record deal and have instant success over night. Some niggaz like me put in work for years. The good thing about taking that long walk is you all ready have stepped in shit a few, so you know not to step in shit. You fell a couple of times, so you know how not to fall. When you step out of the whom and grab the mic and a nigga go here is a million dollar check, then you really don't know too much. You could come out tomorrow and sell five million records thinking that you have made it, but have you? You got a long process to sit down and enjoy, because you just sold five million records. You are going to be on the road for the next five to ten years. A nigga who sold five million records tomorrow who just came out today, he ain't gonna know shit. He is going to get that three million dollar check and buy him a watch, a couple of houses, a chain and it then what? Then there's a lot of muthafuckaz who say they are down with you, but they are just along for the ride. I have been through that. So, now I'm just walking and taking my time.

### **What about another CMW album, is that in the works?**

There is a CMW album coming out on my label which West Music Group. This is my label. The same label that Veteran's Day is coming out on. A CMW record will be coming around the first of the year. I'm putting Veteran's Day out hopefully around August 31<sup>st</sup>. Hopefully I can get a CMW album out by Christmas.

### **Who is going to be on the CMW record?**

It will be me, Chill, Bam and Slip doing production. It will be all of the original members. We did an independent CMW album called "Represent" in 2000. It wasn't really a market album. It was for sale, but it was basically a West Coast project. I just wanted to get niggaz in the studio to see what the chemistry would be like. I didn't want to go to the lengths of ads and interviews when niggaz we're just coming together after a long separation. You know like the Temptation shit. Let's doing a reunion tour and the tour falling apart because we weren't able to ease back into it. I think that by doing the album in 2000 and getting back together everyone is like "Let's do another one". Everyone is focused. This is for the heart of it. Try to capture how we used to be. The group thing is coming back. We don't see too much of the group thing any more. It would be a positive force. I got the CMW thing, then I also got a group called "Affiliated" which is me, my younger brother and Chill. We are going to put that out the first of the year. I just want to keep us a significant force. One day god have it and faith have it someone is going to recognize. They will say "You have been putting so much hard work into this, we're are going to reward you with a proper label, proper promotions and all that". Until then I don't have no complaints with what I'm doing.

### **You got what it takes to be in this game forever.**

If you fall get back up. I wasn't one of these niggaz who would say "rap ain't working for, I'm going back to the block". The block don't always work either. Don't be a quitter. When you start something make sure that it is done. You can't quit the football team and go back a week later when you see

them get their jersey's issued and say "I want to play now". You have to keep working at it. I guarantee somebody is going to notice you.

### **Do you have any acting in the works?**

I'm trying to write this movie right now. It's about growing up and where I'm coming from and how young niggaz get choices. It's gonna be a story about three friends who grew up together. How one decided to be a drug dealer, one decided to be something positive and how one is going through the transitions of being a super star. We all get choices. Whether we have the choice to have kids at a young age, or slang dope, or stay in school. We are all faced with those choice at one time. The movie is not your typical shoot 'em up drug movie. It's about the choice we make. Some people say we are trapped. Even if you grow up in the worst city in the worst place, that don't mean you have to fall victim to what they are doing. You got choices.

### **I used to blame, or come up with excuses.**

I used to say that shit too. I used to say I'm a gangsta because I grew up in Compton. No. I turned into that nigga because I was fascinated by what was going on. That didn't mean that I had to walk down the street every day to see what they was doing. My mom didn't know I was doing that. Mom thought I was in the back yard being a little kid. I was sneaking out the back yard because I was intrigued. That was my choice. When I was 14, or 15 I knew gangbangin and selling dope wasn't going to get me no where. I know that there is a chance that I was going to have to shoot, or get shot. There is a choice. I could of went to school. There is a lot of niggaz in Compton who went to high school and graduated and went to college. I say the product of the environment is when muthafuckaz don't have guidance in which way to go.

### **Did rap come along at a good time for you?**

Yes, because I had no ambitions. I was seeing gang bangin, niggaz hustlin, 7 getting shot. Seeing my mom struggling to make ends meat. We don't have shit. What ambition as a young kid who don't have the role models is going to have. That's when people say product of their environment. Its hard when you live in a gang invested neighborhood and you are working nights. Some of your kids are going to be intrigued by it. I was intrigued by it, but my little brother wasn't. He was into sports and video games. I was into bangin. I was intrigued by niggaz passing by with the cars bumping. I don't think that it is the only choice that I got. Some niggaz feel like that. I make music for niggaz like that. I don't make music to say "I'm a rapper , I'm going to glorify gang banging". I used to be like that. I used to think that there was no tomorrow. I make music to let niggaz know that I used to be one of them. I was one of those kids who thought there is no tomorrow for me. I'm stuck. I also went to school everyday. I got good grades in school. I knew that if you put in hard work that it would pay off, no matter what you do. I'm living in a gang infested neighborhood, but if I go to school everyday I'm going to be up out of here. I'm going to have me a good job. Just like with the rap shit. When I started rapping I knew it was going to get me out. It was a way for me to have to express. I'm seeing it. I'm right here in Compton. I'm going through that. I figured it was going to benefit me better if I we're to rap about it verses taking that chance. I might now be here tomorrow if I take that chance.

### **Did you know Eazy? I heard he had a rep as a hustler.**

Definitely. Eazy was known as a hustler. He hustled and sold his little shit. He wasn't known as the neighborhood menace. That's how niggaz are here. Niggaz are more respected for being able to live better with niggaz and enemies than to be living with animosity. Even though you are the Crip nigga over here you get respect when you act like a grown man. I could go over to the Blood neighborhood and associate with them because you are an older nigga with respect. When I'm a hustler I'm not a ruthless killer. Then you got the ruthless murdering niggaz who don't give a fuck. "Nigga this is Crip, or Blood, I don't give a fuck who you is, you are dying because I'm down for the set". They you got niggaz who are business men and are cool with everybody. I'm gonna be cool with niggaz in this hood, or that hood. Why? Because what I'm doing I want everyone involved.

### **How is Compton today verses 1985?**

We still got shoot outs and the race war is going on. You got the black gangstaz and the Mexican gangstaz with that shit going down. That was in prison but it's leaking into the streets. The neighborhoods are small here in Compton. One block can be two different gangs, because that's how small the territories are. It's a muthafuckin ego thing. When I first grew up in Compton back in '85,'86. Or '87, niggaz was getting murdered every other day. Now, I feel safe as hell in Compton. I used to be a nigga who was scared to look over his shoulder. There was certain liquor stores, or gas stations you couldn't go as fear of a nigga seeing you and getting popped at. Now I don't fear nothing but god. I'm 33 years old. I stop at what ever gas station or liquor store. I don't care. You could be a Blood, a Crip, a hustler, or a hoe, you got no problem with me. If you do have a problem with me then you are going to have to explain what problem you have with me. You are not going to get away with just fuck me just because. Because what? We have a lot of animosities. I symbolize with that Puff situation. How Shine got locked up and how the nigga was in the club hating. He was like "Nigga, you ain't the only nigga with money." It ain't even about that. Some niggaz just hate. Some niggaz can't stand arrogance. They feel like you are pushing your limit. Like Puff comes to the club with Jennifer on his arm and he's all on the tables dancing. Everybody know it's Puff and he has a hundred million. The nigga who standing in the corner who has a hundred million too and don't nobody knows who he is, he's going to hate. He's gonna go "Why are all these bitches on him? Why are all these niggaz swinging on his jock. And if you feel that your heart is bigger than this nigga "This nigga ain't no nigga, this nigga ain't no real man." Niggaz feel like that and they want to test you. You get that here. Niggaz will be like "Here comes Eiht pulling up, this nigga thinks he is the shit." That's why I don't try to confuse shit. I'm riding a round in a 2004 Monte Carlo That's how I get down. I don't want to be the sore thumb any more. I don't want to be the only nigga pulling up in a hundred thousand dollar car. While niggaz is around there riding beach cruisers. Somebody is going to hate you. My thing is don't floss too much around niggaz. Learn how to symbolize what the next man is going through. Like with Jay-Z, he don't understand a lot of this shit. As far as him saying he was a hustler nigga saying he was on the bricks and came from the projects, then he should know how real niggaz feel. All this shit that you are doing is for the kids. Telling them they have to have their Benz, or platinum watch. Real niggaz don't like that shit. Nigga, I'm hustlin out here strugglin'. So what if you are out there riding in your fancy car. You didn't get that shit from the hustle, you got it from that rap shit.

### **We used to see people flossing hard we would follow them.**

Damn right. I used to go pull up in the neighborhood in my 850. Homies would have to tell me that I need to leave. There are certain niggaz that ain't on that. Certain niggaz around here are very irritable and are jealous because you are pulling up in a \$80,000 car and this nigga who is across the streets has his momma come pick him up. He has a daughter and he needs money right now. That's why I don't want to be the soar thumb. Even if I got a hundred million dollars. I still want to look like the nigga that belongs with the rest of us strugglin. That's me. That is why I say Veteran's Day. I'm a vet. I know the pains and the struggle. I'm right here with you. That's my symbol on this record. I'm right here with you. Don't think I'm up in the hills everyday with my feet kicked up getting my toes scrubbed by a butler. Nigga I'm in the bricks every day. When you get up out of your bed every morning and jump on the bricks in Compton, you are gonna see me bending one of them corners. I ain't no different. My skills and god have enabled me to take words and craft them on paper to symbolize what you niggaz are strugglin' with. That's what I can do. I ain't no different. I wasn't born no where else. I was right here catching buses and strugglin'. That's why I had to take it back on Vet's to symbolize. I had to. I'm not going to be confusing shit with "I'm a celebrity". Everybody on the out side has already got to deal with that.

### **So the Veteran's day album is to take it back, is that it?**

To take it back to the old school. I just want to make music for my people. It doesn't matter what color you are. You could be white, black, green, Mexican, Japanese, if you are struggling and don't want to be reminded that's it's all about bling. "I got me a new watch, I got me an industry bitch and we are all in Cancun." Nigga, I can't symbolize with that. I ain't doing it. Every fucking song I listen to, I have to listen to how this nigga is in a mansion. Just make a song where you are not bragging on yourself. Don't brag about your chain, or your pink furs, we know you got that. Let me see you just spit the real about who you are. Who are you? Can you really say that niggaz in your neighborhood before you made can symbolize with you. Yeah this nigga used to be around hear with us. Half of these niggaz are thrown together.

### **They are thrown together like the Back Street Boys**

One guy from here and one guy from there. I'm going to put them together. No, I'm talking about niggaz that can really symbolize with you. Where are them niggaz at? Beside all the fake characters that you are running around with, where are these real niggaz that you claim? "Where my real niggaz at, where my real hustlers?" Or are you just talking about niggaz who I'm reaching. You are trying to capture my fans off of that jive. My real niggaz don't have pink furs, or vacations at 200,000 a week. Those ain't your real niggaz. Or are you talking about "Where my industry niggaz at? Where my million dollar niggaz at?" That's who you are talking too. You are not talking to these niggaz slangin crack pieces with baby's momma's on the county. You are not reaching them.

### **What is a typical day for you?**

Waking up in the morning listening to some old school Eazy-E, or some old school Geto Boys and get dressed and roll me up a blunt. Then I hit Compton and sit there for about 5 hours. Then I go visit my mom and sister. Then I go e-mail my daughter in Texas and check in on her. Then I head to the studio. I try to make my rounds. I see my people then I head to the studio. That's it.

### **How old is your daughter?**

I got a daughter in Texas and a daughter here. I got a sixteen year old and a nine year old.

### **So with the sixteen year old, you have to be getting ready to beat up some boyfriends**

Oh yeah. I'm ready. She just had her a big sweet sixteen party about two weeks ago. I had to chaperone. I had the DJ and all that shit. My daughter is getting up there. That's why I say that I'm not working for me no more, I'm working for them. She's at the age now where I was at that age. You know how kids get. Everything is popularity and peer pressure. I ain't no million dollar nigga. I hustle and make ends meet.