



PASSION OF
THE WEISS

“I Didn’t Even Know People in the Industry Knew Who I Was Until They Were in My Face:” An Interview Mo3

Taylor Crumpton speaks with the North Dallas rapper about a conversation with his father that made him pursue rap seriously and being referred to as his generation's Boosie.

BY TAYLOR CRUMPTON | MARCH 23, 2020

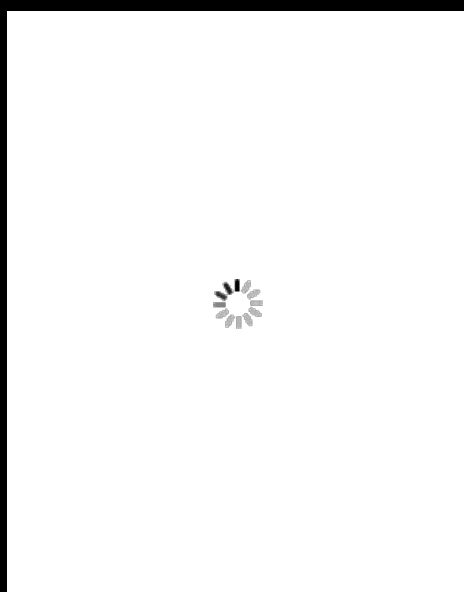


Please support our coverage of the best emerging voices in hip-hop by subscribing

to Passion of the Weiss on Patreon.

In 2008, Dallas boogie movement reached the Billboard's Top 100 R&B/Hip-Hop Chart. Characterized by its instructional chants over dance beats, a new renaissance of Dallas rappers achieved national prominence for their viral tracks which dominated early YouTube from 2007 – 2010. Throughout the local hip-hop scene, "Dallas Got Next!" was shouted among attendees, artists, and promoters who felt the city was about to emerge out of Houston's shadow. Amplified by collaborations with nationally recognized talents such as DJ Drama and Diddy and selected as a host city for the NBA All-Star Game; Dallas hip-hop dance culture was the city's biggest cultural attraction.

Yet, as elements of the "Triple D" spread via "T-Town" mixtapes, coastal rappers such as Los Angeles based Cali Swag District renamed the city's dances such as Lil Wil's "My Dougie" and transformed it into "Teach Me How to Dougie" which resulted on a placement in Billboard Top 10's Hip-Hop Chart. Despite being signed to major record labels such as Universal Music Group, and features on MTV and BET; the emergent collective of Dallas rappers failed to sustain national attention in comparison to their Houston counterparts. As their popularity declined, the city's independent hip-hop scene regressed to their "gangsta rap" heritage, where talents such as Mo3 reached national and regional acclaim for his autobiographical depictions of "Nawfghanistan", his North Dallas neighborhood. — *Taylor Crumpton*



Contrary to Dallas' tradition of hip-hop, you've compared yourself to Boosie, a Louisiana rapper, instead of the city's legends of Big Tuck, Tum Tum, and Yung Nation. What inspired you to align yourself to him?

Mo3: There's a lot of people that'll get up and say, "I'm the Pac in this generation. It's me". It's like no. The fans associated me with Boosie BadAzz, man. Once you see it in the comments, at the shows, and mentioned to people at shows. When I'm being interviewed on the radio, they'll let me know, "Bro, you're like the Boosie of this generation". Matter of fact, him and I released *BadAzz Mo3* on Valentines Day. When Boosie is on the radio, they asked him "How did you and Mo3 link?" He explained Mo3 got the streets. Shoutout to everybody in the D, like Big Tuck. I salute them boys. They did they thing.

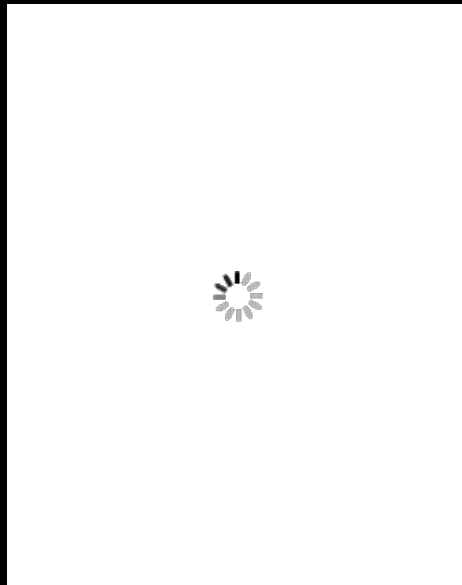
In mainstream conversations, Houston is considered the focal point of hip-hop in Texas

because of DJ Screw's legacy of Chopped and Screwed, OG Ron C's Swishahouse, and UGK. Yet, Dallas has always maintained an independent hip-hop scene that has recently received attention. Where do you see yourself in this recent ascension of the city in hip-hop discussions?

Mo3: Houston has DJ Screw, Paul Wall. Swishahouse, Screwed Up Clicks, Mike Jones, and Chamillionaire. They already have their own culture of music. When the world first heard about Dallas, it was dance music, because we were known for The Dougie, The Stanky Leg, and all of those dances. Since I started rapping, I've always stayed in my lane. I ain't never tried to do what the next rapper was doing, but I always saluted them; but we're different from Houston. I changed the fame in Dallas when I started talking about these streets. I gave the city a whole different look. Like man, this is what we've been needing.

Listeners outside of Dallas and the South; don't recognize that when Big Tuck said in "Southside Da Realist," "Home of the killas, Home of the G's". He referenced a point in history where Dallas was considered one of the murder capitals in the world.

Mo3: It was. I tell people all the time, you can't tell me "First 48" out of Dallas ain't come on your TV. It showed what life in Dallas was like for real. But, the show didn't display the music behind that to explain the conditions. Big Tuck did his thing, but it didn't reach as far; compared to the avenues and resources we have today. Shit, when Tuck was doing it, they ain't had YouTube.



What inspired your transition to rapping about the truth of North "Nawf" Dallas, and how rap was an outlet to express your autobiographical story?

Mo3: If you type in my government name in the system of Dallas, it will show you that I went through everything. From boys home to every correctional facility in the city. At the age of 17, I went to prison for aggravated robbery with a deadly weapon. When my daddy came to visit me in person, he told me, "Man, when you get out next time. Can you just rap about it and don't do nothing else?" I said, "What you mean?" He said, "If you can rap and talk about it, you can't go to jail. It ain't no crime. You just expressing yourself."

Shottaz Reloaded, was an infectious project that proved the city's ability to produce authentic and quality "gangsta" hip-hop. When you released that tape, it was played throughout Dallas. At times, it felt infectious and contagious, because listeners felt like the city had a real anthem. At this current moment, how does it feel to be heralded as the

city's champion?

Mo3: Man, it feels good. I'm glad people gravitated to it. I've been reached out by a lot of people, so I'm living in the moment. But, I'm here on a whole other game plan. Right now, rap is gimmick music that sounds good for the moment. I'm trying to be like Pac. You can play "Dear Momma" today and feel it, even though he's dead and gone. My game plan is to stay in my lane, keep it silent, and preach my message through music. I'm going to keep doing it because it's going to open up more doors. Right now, it's been good to me. I attended the Grammys experience in Los Angeles, and there were rap Gods in there. I didn't even know people in the industry knew who I was until they were in my face.

Are you trying to be the first rapper from Dallas with a Top 10 hit on Billboard?

Mo3: Yeah. I'm trying my hardest, man. For real.

How would you describe Dallas rap?

Mo3: It's going to be hard because I can't speak for everybody. What I can say about Dallas rap is that we are creative and original. We sit in our neighborhoods and come up with the craziest shit; whether it's dance or slang. Then the world takes and runs with it. It's like no, we started that right here in Dallas.

Based on your definition, where do you align yourself in Dallas rap?

Mo3: I classify myself as a rhythm of outstanding music. I thought of Dallas in a whole different way. When the news talked about my side of Dallas, they referred to North Dallas as "Nawfghanistan." When I heard that, I jumped out off the bed like, "Bro, I made this. Now these white people calling it this!" You get what I'm saying? It's like it went from me naming the hood that, then Houston turned around and named they hood after my hood. They named their side, "Nawfghanistan", and made shirts. When we saw each other at South by Southwest, I thought there was going to be beef, but they paid homage. "Bro, we know you started Nawfghanistan. We wanted to let you know we took that movement and brought it to Houston" Everytime I went to a show, anybody from the "Nawf" they was like "Yeah bro, we Nawfghanistan." I'm like "Damn bro. That's something I started right here in my neighborhood." We're trendsetters. We start a lot of shit we don't get credit for. Whether it's my type of rap, Yung Nation's type of rap. It's like we all came up with it right here in Dallas, Texas.

If you had to name your type of Dallas rap, what would it be?

Mo3: Chop music. Based off of what people tell me like, "I like when Mo3 chop it up. When he be rapping, he chopping the words up." I don't know what to name it, but that's what people tell me like, "Go chop it up. When you get in there, chop up the verse. Chop up the hook." "As long as there's music around me, there ain't no limit to it.", says Mo3 in a reflective tone, as he describes his goals for 2020 and the decade to come. For the Dallas rapper, he's adamant on bringing the city's tradition of gangster rap to the mainstream while remaining authentic to "Nawfghanistan."



We rely on your support to keep POW alive. Please take a second to donate on Patreon!

 [BECOME A PATRON](#)

Share this:



Related

Coast to Coast: Trey Coastal Lights Up the Bay

December 5, 2019

In "Interviews"

LA Weekly: Has the LA Hip-Hop Plague Finally Passed

September 25, 2008

In "Are You From the Lester Bangs School of Thought?"

"There's Plenty of Crazy in New Orleans" -- How The Post-Katrina Underground Hip-Hop Scene Rebuilt Itself

October 15, 2015

In "Justin Ivey"

STAFF WRITERS

JEFF WEISS
SON RAW
DOUGLAS MARTIN
MAX BELL
DEEN
BRAD BEATSON
JONAH BROMWICH

INTERVIEWS

FRANK OCEAN
TYLER, THE CREATOR
RUN THE JEWELS
RAY MANZAREK
JAMES BLAKE
ZOMBY
KEVIN GATES

SOCIAL

FACEBOOK
TWITTER
INSTAGRAM
SHOTS FIRED
YOUTUBE
P.O.W. SOUND CLOUD

ABOUT US

ADVERTISING
PRIVACY POLICY
TERMS OF USE

EVAN NABAVIAN
DOC ZEUS
CHRIS DALY

NARDWUAR
ATMOSPHERE
KA

© 2020 PASSION OF THE WEISS, LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



Developed by Tactics
Digital