



Hip Hop By Da Bay

Picture: C+ Sound: C+ Extras: C+ Main Program: C+

In our continuing search for new life in the Hip Hop genre, **Hip Hop By Da Bay** (2005) is an interesting contender. The goal is to have a new variety and generation of Rappers from all over the U.S. to compete and celebrate what the genre is supposed to be about: unity, peace and progress. By literally mapping things out, the generic East/West split is banished as Jahi, T-Kash, Pro, Attik, Renai7sance, Zion I, Ise Life, Krushadelic and others show up in the San Francisco Bay Area to come together and maybe make some kind of new start for the genre.

Though this is an affair for fans only, with extended sessions with and without video, the DVD is loaded with an hour of main programming, two video bonus tracks and an all-audio section that runs nearly as long. Rap fans looking for something new and fresh (pun not intended) may want to catch this one.

As for the performance of the DVD itself, the picture is shot on 1.33 X 1 videotape and the fidelity is limited to analog NTSC-induced digital video at best. The Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo would usually not be able to handle the music, but much of this is taped on the scene with minimal attempts to make the sound fully realized. The combination looks like someone who was visiting in the audience. Besides the two bonus performances inexplicably not in the main feature, the DVD comes in the usually dreaded cardboard snapper case that the few DVD companies still using them have eliminated. Here, however, a nicely illustrated, 28-page, full color booklet with text on the show and the talents behind it is built into the paperboard cover, making this a unique DVD release. Now if they a more durable case could be tried out.

- Nicholas Sheffo

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