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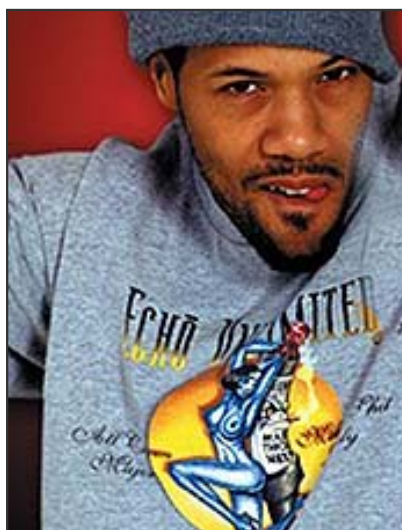
Monday, 14 November 2005

Hip Hop Time Capsule 1993



Contributed by Brent Simon

Thursday, 10 November 2005



I love the concept of time capsules. But when did this catch on? I know there was one on my university campus, from maybe a couple of decades before I matriculated. I think I remember contributing to one in elementary school for some reason or another. But have you ever been to the *opening* of a time capsule? I mean, what's the deal?! And until we start actually cracking open some of these capsules, aren't we just burying a bunch of random crap in a much fancier arrangement than a garbage bag?

The reason I ask is because of something like *Hip Hop Time Capsule 1993*, a new DVD music video compendium of some of the genre's heaviest hitters from the early '90s — a period that saw a tremendous diversity of hip hop hits and, in retrospect, looks like the opening salvo in its war on the Top 40 charts and youth culture to boot. The vibe of the time was both upbeat and hardcore, and groups and artists of the time were incorporating different elements of modern music to form even more original beats. (This was, of course, until Puff Daddy came along, with his \$99 drum machine and propensity for wholesale recycling, and set things back a couple of years.) The lyrical styles remained street-savvy (LL Cool J's "Pink Cookies in a Plastic Bag"), but harsher new styles emerged.

Founding NWA member Dr. Dre had gangsta rap on lockdown (1993 was the year of *The Chronic*, after all), but Onyx ("Slam") and Redman ("Tonite's Da Nite") also scored with an aggressive, in-your-face energy. This DVD takes a look at the changing tides in the rap game, with interviews, performances and freestyles from a dozen years ago. Included are Naughty

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By Nature ("It's On"), Tupac ("I Get Around"), Dr. Dre ("Dre Day"), Boss ("Deeper"), Kool G and DJ Polo ("On the Run") and many more. It's sort of a buffet option rather than a deliciously prepared main course meal, but *Hip Hop Time Capsule 1993* will still satisfy its chief constituency.

Overall, the quality and depth of the interviews are more poor man's VH-1's *Behind the Music* than *Nightline*, and some are a bizarre reach (the cast of *CB4*, Charlie Murphy). Nonetheless, they're generally amusing and entertaining, if not always exactly plumbing and illuminating as to the macro creative picture of the times. Bonus live performances include MC Lyte's "Who Shot Ya?" and the unedited version of Apache's "Gangsta Bitch," plus more. Still, this is more a disc for nostalgia buffs than a true time capsule. Everything is not illuminated, no secrets are revealed. The music sure is nice, though. C+ (Movie) B- (Disc)

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