

The Emanation of TONYVIC™

Making the Bay Area Brighter

By Kevin L. Nichols

Bay Area hip hop trends have been innovative in creating an alternative dialect. With words such as "hyphy" "thizz", and "stunners," it is often refreshing to hear an artist who is equally creative lyrically, yet predominately in a grammatical sense. Outrageously talented and seemingly undiscovered photon in the ever changing kaleidoscope of rap music, we present to you TONYVIC™.

TONYVIC™ is not your average cookie cutter emcee. Not only are his lyrics entertaining and witty, but his clean-cut aura communicates that he has something profound to say and demands to be taken seriously. Growing up in Oakland, TONYVIC™ has had the best of both worlds; a formal education at Skyline High School and a dose of street consciousness.

Backed by some heavy hitters in the local music industry, TONYVIC™ is the second artist in addition to R&B singer Rob Bess, on the budding independent record label, BTR Entertainment. BTR was founded by the aspiring "West Coast Diddy," Wesley Osaze, who formed BTR as his business school master's thesis. From there, the rest is history. TONYVIC™'s debut album, "VIC(S)TOR(Y)," features some prolific producers, such as Kevin Choice (Goapele, Michael Franti, Blackalicious, Spearhead) and Mike Tiger (Dead Prez, Goapele, The Coupe).

After TONYVIC™'s recent December 28, 2005 performance at Blake's Restaurant on Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley, CityFlight had an opportunity to sit down with the transcendent artist:

CITYFLIGHT: Define for me from your perspective what "hyphy, stunners, and thizz" mean and how do you fit in this movement?

TONYVIC™: 'Hyphy' is like the equivalent of southerners going crunk. But instead it's a Bay Area lifestyle. Its dancing on the hood of your car, shaking your dreads, going dumb in the club or just knocking to some up tempo head-nod music. Stunna's are shades like aviator glasses. 'Thizz' is a word created and popularized by the late great Mac Dre and all his patnas. It was used as a term for doing E [ecstasy] and just being on one . . . but now like most other terms, the youth, us Bay Area hip hop artists have turned it into an everyday term... 'whut thizzzz it.' Also keeping Mac Dre's memory alive and strong. R.I.P Mac Dre and much respect to Mr. Fab. Now, the music I create is just a little different only because I consider it my verbal testimony. Don't get me wrong, I enjoy going dumb from time to time and getting 'hyphy' in the club every now and then, but I just wanna show the world that we not only get dumb in the Bay Area but some of us have something else to say as well.

CF: Describe how you want to represent the Bay Area.

TV: I wanna rep the Bay in a whole new light. I wanna be that universal artist that cats not just in the Bay but around the world can relate to. I wanna show that diversity, that flyness, that gigolo stlye. I'm the Kanye West of the Bay Area.

CF: What is one thing that you want people to know about you?

TV: That I got something to say. That TONYVIC™ is not just an artist but an entertainer and a



TONYVIC™ representing the Bay Area

Photo: Luanne Lin

writer and I've been doing it for some time now, so I want cats to respect my game and know that this [year] I'm coming to ball.

For more information about TONYVIC™ and BTR Entertainment, please visit www.WHOSVIC.com.

Kevin L. Nichols is President and CEO of KLN Publishing, LLC located in San Francisco. He is also a section editor for CityFlight News Media.

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