

BigYO

Legal Hustlin'
Myspace/marshallawproductions

When most rappers talk about their hustle, they usually aren't doing it legally. But Memphis reared rapper, Big Yo isn't your prototypical emcee/producer. As agile behind the mic as he is behind the boards, Big Yo's musical styling defies immediate comparison. Having worked with some of the biggest names in southern underground rap, including Fiend, Mr. Mike, Thorough, Fishscales of Nappy Roots and Indo G among others, Yo is keeping things moving via his latest outing *Legal Hustlin' Vol. 2*.

Talk about the concept behind *Legal Hustlin' Vol. 2*?

It's really just an album displaying good music. The whole thing about the industry now is music is really wack and uninviting, so I'm just trying to come with some good stuff to compete with the real artists in the industry. Right now the artistry part is gone. It's all about business, it's all about money, it's all about flashin'. I describe my music as backpack rap with a gangster twist to it.

What exactly do you mean when you say backpack rap?

It's thought out lyrics. Not just dance sh-t or sh-t to make you get crunk. Most of the time when people do that they just rhyming words and it ain't makin no sense. Mine is thought out sh-t.



Photo by Brian Archie for Johnny Flash Photography

You've worked a lot of big names from the mid to late nineties.

Yeah, I've produced an entire album for South Circle who were on Suave House in the mid-90s. They're on the album and I have song with Fiend from the No Limit camp. I have a song with Fishscales from Nappy Roots. I also have Skinny Pimp on the album, who is an ex-Three Six Mafia member and Tom Skeemask from DJ Squeeky's camp. I also worked with Toni Hickman formerly of Suave House.

What do you want people to take from your music?

I just want them to respect it. Just because it doesn't sound like common sense music, doesn't mean it doesn't have a positive message to it. That's why I say it's backpack rap with a gangster twist. When your beats sound a certain way, they automatically throw you into a category instead of listening to the words. I feel like I put messages in my sh-t, I just do it in a different way. I don't promote dope selling and all that sh-t, that's the whole premise behind *Legal Hustlin'*. It's a lot of muthf-ckas that work for a living, everybody don't sell dope.

ARTIST OF THE MONTH

This Artist Should Be In Your Top 8

Miki Vale

By AUC staff

Myspace.com/mikivale

Location: Oxnard, CA

Project: *The New Dope*

Hot Song: "Bring It Back"

Dope Lyric: "We affect change/Drop heavy like medallions on ya neck chain/ it's grown woman talk so respect game..."

What's the meaning behind your album title, *The New Dope*?

The New Dope is a play on words. The slang term 'dope' is used to describe something that's very good or something you like a lot. It's also a term for drugs. So, my music is like the new dope on the streets. It's very good and takes you higher... you might get

hooked. It's actually not a full album, it's more like a preview of my upcoming full length album.

What's the biggest misconception people have had about you as an artist?

I think one misconception that some people may have is that my music is one-dimensional, that I just cater to an underground sound. Like I don't do "radio-friendly" music. I am very versatile. I like playing with different sounds and styles and I like all types of music.

What is your mission, musically?

I just want to make good music and spread a message of love to a large audience. I want to tip the scales a bit so that there's more balance in the Hip Hop game. Women don't have a huge presence in Hip Hop, it's



very much a male dominated genre. I want to reverse the misogyny that is demonstrated in today's music. Add a woman's touch and show that Hip Hop is more than thugs, bling and disrespecting women.

Coming to Atlanta any time soon?

I plan to come to Atlanta next year. I definitely plan to make it there next year after my album drops.