

Rima Aanjay discusses Culture, Hip Hop and Racism



Washington, D.C, Aug 31, 2020 (Issuewire.com) - [Rima Aanjay](#) aka [Spoken Word](#) has been performing as a spoken word/hip hop activist since 2008; calling the attention to the injustices that have been plaguing African American communities throughout the world. In her venture to promote black awareness, she published a magazine entitled [All Shades of Brown](#) dedicated to sharing the experiences of African Cultures across the globe. She is also the self-published author of [Spoken Word for the Soul from the Soul](#), and performer on albums [Hip Hop Will Never Die](#), *After the Pain*, and *Make Some Noise*; work that has earned its place on platforms such as Spotify, iTunes and [Google](#). Not only does Rima Aanjay's music promotes awareness on issues such as poverty, racism, and so forth, it also speaks volumes about spirituality and the oppression that plagues black women; especially those that live in poorer and rural communities. Rima was born in a low-income area; surrounded by poverty. The youngest of four children growing up in a single parent home, she found an interest in music and poetry early on in life. Influenced by her twin brother, G Valley, she found pleasure in hip hop. Performing in local talent shows eventually earned her a name for herself. That name was "dope" among both the male and female audience. However, it wouldn't be until the release of her first solo album, *Hip Hop Will Never Die*, that she would truly realize her potential for success. She was able to speak of issues that affected her more as a woman living in a poor neighborhood. The way she puts it is that, "you never

know a woman until you become one and that is something that a man can never be". When asked if she considered herself a feminist, her response was:

I do not consider myself a feminist but a voice for woman who can relate to the things that I speak of in my work. As a woman I naturally share in the experiences that affect other women. While I understand women on a level that men do not understand, I don't feel that makes me a feminist. I'm just a woman who understands what other women are going through. Let's remember that feminism was never truly inclusive for African American Women. The rights won during the feminist movement only truly extended to those of the elite or middle-class group. (bourgeoise) Those of the lower class continued to struggle with the oppression that affected them all at one point. Even in that, black woman was victimized by the same white women who fought for equal rights; even those of the lower class. So where does that leave us in a movement that never considered us in the first place? Some of what feminist was fighting for was protection against domestic violence, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. Even today, black women continue to fight to be protected from such violence. Some commercial industries tend to portray black women as if we embrace such violence and negative attention. Therefore, claims of sexual harassment, sexual violence, and domestic violence are often ignored. When such women speak out, they are seen as a liar even among black women. It's this complex system that can only be overthrown when we admit that it actually exists.

What do you think about sexuality in hip hop?

Certain images in hip hop demean women in terms of strippers, pimps, players, and so forth. That is what hip hop has become today and we can't ignore that. However, you can't hate the player but hate the game. To sort of echo Speech Thomas, who is it that keeps delivering this music to black communities is the real question? There is some sexuality in all music, but the image of us is overly exaggerated in hip hop a lot. Corporations invest a lot of money into degrading black women and black men. Since such images appear in blackface, it looks as if it is the attitude of the overall black culture. However, it is not. I'm a poet and rapper with an education. I don't see myself as beating the odds; especially today. My mother grew up during the Jim Crow era where she lived on a farm that required her to work; one of the major disadvantages of growing up in the Jim Crow south. She did not get the proper education but is one of the wisest women that I know. All because you are poor and live in a poor community, that should not be correlated with the images you see on TV. So, when I continue to see stereotypes that have plagued the black race being cultivated on such a high level, it tells me that the industry is disconnected from the overall community. Perhaps they should do more outreach or public involvement to learn how to implement the real attitudes of black people into black music. As [Hip Hop Literacy](#) quoted "hip-hop, which began as a form of cultural expression in marginalized communities and was once poised to become a vehicle for African American empowerment and political activism, is today stereotyped as misogynistic, glorifying violence and racist caricature".

What do you think about the protest?

I think that the protest is about more than the injustices and brutality that blacks experience throughout the world. It is also about our human right to exist and be left alone. Despite of how the world views us, we are very peaceful and moral people. It's hard to live in peace when you're constantly mistreated because of the color of your skin. We go through it during recreational activities, walking our dogs, buying coffee, and in the everyday attitudes of those leading this country. Most of our parents and grandparents don't talk about the past because it is too painful to remember. I guess some things, you just want to get out of your mind. It's hard to do that when you can't even take a ride to the park without being faced with that reminder through statues and monuments. What some see as preserving the legacies of this country is a painful reminder for other citizens of this country. Why preserve a legacy that

was so destructive by nature.

I heard that there is a new album. Tell me about it?

I'm certainly excited about the new album. It's been a while since I produced an album because I took time off to focus on other projects. Of course, I'm constantly writing and working to come up with new ideas. I feel that the new work that will be released is more powerful than my work prior to this. I feel much more mature and transformed spiritually. Robert Townsend once said, that "the greatest writer is one who has suffered the most". That has stuck with me through life. I've learned that knowledge, no matter how much the cost, is nothing without wisdom and understanding. Once a person has obtained wisdom, they become better, stronger and understand more about life. However, that wisdom is not obtained easily. It is obtained through our everyday life experiences. Much of what you will hear on this new album will be both a mixture of hip hop and spoken word regarding everyday life experiences. I'm excited to release it to the public. I will be going back into the studio in September to start recording, so hopefully the full album will be released in 2021. In the meantime, I will keep you informed!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76UWAEOhYAs&list=PLT7Fdxl6PrQtPdUU7MaUnO07pRGhRzFG1&index=1>



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