

SAVVI OF HUESTON INDEPENDENT SPIT DISTRICT

YES, YOU CAN LISTEN TO HIP-HOP RECORDS THAT DON'T TALK ABOUT SYRUP AND GRILLS. YES, THOSE RECORDS CAN ALSO BE FROM HOUSTON. THIS PAST OCTOBER, HUESTON INDEPENDENT SPIT DISTRICT QUIETLY RELEASED ONE OF THE MOST UNIQUE ALBUMS TO COME OUT OF HOUSTON IN RECENT YEARS. IT SOUNDS DIFFERENT, UNLIKE ANYTHING COMING OUT OF THE CITY RIGHT NOW. BUT IT'S ALL H-TOWN. I TALKED TO PERHAPS THE MOST VISIBLE MEMBER OF THIS TRUE COLLABORATIVE ABOUT WHAT MAKES THEM SO DIFFERENT.

I was just listening to the record and I noticed how it's got kind of a hollow, airy quality to it. Is that something you set out to do?

You know, I don't think it was by design, I think it was just through the cycles of recording and getting it mixed and mastered, we kind of stumbled upon that sound on there and I really give credit to the engineer, who gave it that particular flavor. It kind of set the tone so I went along with it.

Are you going to go that direction on the next project—and what is the next project?

Actually we're doing a project called 'Summer Sessions,' and it was initially intended to be a mixtape but the way it's coming out it's probably going to be an EP of sorts. It will be about ten new songs that we just crafted to give to the fans that dig *The District* and to also help promote *The District*. We'll have it exclusively for download for free on our website in the middle of July.

Are you going to stick with that same sound?

As far as the sound quality... in some cases yes and in some cases no because there's some stuff we have now that is gonna have a different texture than those tracks. We've really thought about how we do want to progress with our sound. You're gonna still hear some of that feel from *The District* but then you'll hear a departure so it's 50/50. This record I think will have a little bit more character to it.

When I first heard a track by you, I said the same thing the person who played it for me said—it doesn't sound like it's from Houston. But now I do hear some of the Houston sound in there. How do you think it manifests itself in your music?

Well, I was born and raised here so it's not like I just stopped through—Houston was my foundation. For instance, "The Hueston Chronicles." It's really sort of a double play. When I was 10, 11, 12 years old, I actually would sell the *Houston Chronicle* newspaper. I would be out on the corner or whatever selling those papers. So that's part of where the title of that track came from, but I also use the phrase to kind of paint a picture of Houston that shows my perspective and is representative of any musicians that I've heard—different flavors of Houston. I've heard most of them, but I felt like I was speaking to a side of Houston that hadn't been spoken for. But Houston's there, and in everything I do I try to represent that in some aspect. I guess it might not sound like what you'd expect coming from

Houston but it is the Houston sound. You know, we have pioneers in a lot of other genres ... blues, jazz ... who either live here or got their start here. So I just try to embody the place.

What's the concept behind Hueston?

Basically by changing the Hou to Hue, I think there's been given a one-dimensional perspective to Houston out there, and when I say Hueston, I wanted to show that Houston has color. And this is a different flavor and color that is represented in Houston. Houston is one of the most diverse cities in the world, so that's what that stands for.

How do you guys collaborate? I know there are 8 of you. How do you do it?

The biggest obstacle for us... scheduling is a nightmare when you have that many people. There's just no way around it. We don't really have a formula or anything like that, but we have three producers who for the most part will specifically work on new music and beats and then they'll email us a beat or we'll have a meeting where we can get the majority... because that's usually what it is, a majority. You can't get everybody in the same room at the same time. And we'll kind of listen and vibe the stuff and say 'this is what we want to write about for this track—this is the topic and this is the title, now go to your corners and write.' We don't actually write together at all. We take our music with us and then we all bring back our own flavor and style to the topic or concept that we had. Really most of our writing is done and then we share what we wrote through emails, so there's a bunch of chain emails that go back and forth. One guy will send his rhymes or his verse and another guy will send his and then next thing you know, we have three or four pages worth of stuff, then it's like 'okay, what do we want to keep or what do we want to take away,' but that's pretty much our main methodology for making songs.

That must bring about a healthy kind of competition as well.

Oh, it definitely inspires a good, healthy competition that really helps our creativity. No man wants to be considered the weakest link. Every time someone steps up, they're raising the bar, setting the bar pretty high. And that's how we do it. It makes us better and better.



Left to right:
Soul One, Fresh Gordon Parks,
Savvi, Equality, Ldavoice

peaceofmind.com | myspace.com/hisd