

1. What have you been up to since graduation?

I've been quite busy working on creating a record label (Worldwide Ape Entertainment), recording an Album (Break The World) and an EP (Time Steps), and building a brand.

2. What kind of label are you creating?

It's mainly a Hip-Hop centric label at the moment, but other genres may be incorporated in the future. The label is targeted towards the forgotten ones.

3. Can you expand on what you mean by "the forgotten" ones?

The forgotten ones are kids who fall back or who we only remember occasionally; kids who may actually have the loudest voice, but simply don't have a place to use it or apply it.

4. Do you identify as a "forgotten one"?

Absolutely.

5. Tell us about your brand.

I want to create a brand people can connect to, similar to what Kid Cudi has done with his artistry. He emphasizes mental illness and personal setbacks, but also a brand which allows me to promote myself as an artist.

6. Tell us about your album - Break The World.

My album is a conceptual story based on reality, but dabbles in fiction as well. It surrounds the subject of life and death. It's mainly a Hip-Hop album, but it also contains a few ballads.

7. What inspired you to create this album?

The life that I'm living - it's a way to cope and overcome a lot of things. I had this vision, this idea four years ago, but it was through the people I met at Flashpoint that I was able to tap into resources in order for the album to come to fruition. This story is a way to get my story out.

8. You mentioned your time at Flashpoint providing you with necessary resources, can you expand on that?

Flashpoint helped me bring this dream to fruition by getting me out there and tapping into what I have to offer. It forced me out of my comfort zone and it gave me the opportunity to make friendships, partnerships and to network. I wouldn't have been able to do this or to do it at this point in time if it wasn't for the support and encouragement I received.

9. Aside from your album and the record label, what are your immediate professional interests?

I'm interested in pursuing opportunities which allow me to use my degree and the skills I have gained. I would like help companies and organizations with their audio needs. For example, I currently work for an organization called Chicago Votes. I set up events and handle the required audio needs. I would love to do more of that. I would also like to get involved with local

recording studios such as CRC and Classick Studios. Trying to build my voice acting portfolio as well.

10. What would you say is your biggest obstacle regarding your job search or immediate professional interests?

The fact that many opportunities require extensive experience, which I don't have. Also, the fact that a lot of the opportunities that interest me within recording studios, which all tend to be unpaid internships.

11. How are you overcoming these obstacles?

I'm reaching out to local event companies to assist with audio work. I will be meeting with Career Services here at Flashpoint to help me improve my résumé, LinkedIn profile, etc.

12. What made you choose Flashpoint over other schools?

I would say my experience with my Admissions Rep. He had an understanding of my financial situation and a genuine interest in people furthering their education. Also, the facilities here on campus were impressive to me.

13. What has been your favorite highlight here at Flashpoint?

I have a few! Being able to attend a class at CRC, the same studio where Chance the Rapper and Kanye West have worked at. Being able to discover and apply my talents, and taking a class with Paul Rodgers doing voice over work. Also being able to build a movie scene or video game trailer from scratch.

14. What advice do you have for current RA students?

Pay attention to everything! Don't be a loner, get out there and talk to people. Be nice! Don't be afraid to pursue your goals and dreams - you must want it more than you need to breathe (cliché but true!) Realize that fellow students are your competition, but they are your network and support system as well. NETWORK! My relationship with fellow alumni members has contributed to the creation of my current album. Thanks to people such as Ruben Ochoa, we have put the foundation for the record label we building.

15. If you had the opportunity to do it all over again, what would you do differently?

I would be a better student and apply myself to a greater degree. I wasn't the worst student, but I wish I would have paid attention more, as I would have benefited much more from being more fruitful in my studies.

16. What advice do you have for current Flashpoint students?

Be humble, tenacious, and have grit. Keep in mind that it's about the craft and building something, not the money. You can earn money anywhere you want, but do something you truly love.

17. What has been the biggest challenge you faced working on your album and creating your label?

Overcoming my doubts. The lingering question: Are people going to like it and/or appreciate it? Knowing that I wanted to tell a story in a way that to entice the listener without compromising my message and vision.

18. In your opinion, what assets do you believe RA students should have?

The willingness and patience to learn. Flashpoint has taught us a lot, but there's also a lot we don't know. You must have a "go-getter" mentality.

19. What have you learned out there in "the real word" that Flashpoint didn't necessarily teach you?

There is a lot of equipment beyond what were taught. You always have to be cautious, since most people don't have your best interest in mind. Also, that audio studios all have their own culture, etiquette and way of doing business.

20. What advice do you have for candidates actively job searching?

Know that you will get a lot of no's before getting a yes. Don't get discouraged and certainly don't give up. Don't be afraid to leave something to do something better.

21. What other components of who you are have contributed to your creativity?

Well, you will definitely hear about my life throughout my work. Every experience I've had and trials and tribulations I have gone through have motivated and inspired me. Everyone has a story, but not everyone has the platform or the voice to tell it. Being inspired by my heroes, to be just like them. I would love to one day meet and work with the Hip-Hop Royalty.

22. You mentioned Hip-Hop is dying...do you really believe it is dying?

Yes. The true essence of Hip-Hop was to be raw, and for people to bring light to the difficulties of life as a person of color. It was giving a voice to the voiceless which is sadly diminishing. There is more of a party focus now. Although Of course there are still artists out there who are involved and promoting the true essence of Hip-Hop. artists such as Kendrick Lamar, Jay Rock, J. Cole, Bas, Dave East, Joey Bada\$\$ and Logic to name a few.

23. Who are your top ten artists?

J. Cole, Kendrick Lamar, Nas, Kanye West, Jay-Z, Logic, Childish Gambino, A Tribe Called Quest, Joey Bada\$\$ and Mac Miller. This is in no particular Order, but there are so many other artists I would put on this list. It honestly depends on the day, I could be bumping N.W.A one day then Joji the next.

24. What is your definition of success?

I want to step away knowing I have inspired somebody. When I successfully inspire people to live life and go out there and live their dreams and to be remembered. When I reach that YE level I know I've done something right. Also so my mother mat never has to worry about

anything financially and my little brother don't have to go through the poverty struggles that I have.

25. Can you share a fun fact about yourself?

I have a range of pitches - from Mickey Mouse to Optimus Prime, when it comes to voice overs.