

FACT SHEET

Hip hop artists

Grandmaster Flash & The Furious Five

A pioneering group from New York, they created many turntable techniques and introduced social commentary into rap lyrics. They formed in the late 1970s, and released 'The Message' in 1982. Grandmaster Flash was a DJ, and he was joined by a group of five other MCs, including Melle Mel.

Run DMC

Run DMC refined the rawness of early rap by introducing rock beats and guitars. Their hits include 'Tricky', 'It's Like That' and their collaboration with Aerosmith on 'Walk This Way'. A socially conscious group who rapped about urban realities, they also spread positive messages about education, voting and the problems of drug addiction.

Public Enemy

One of the more confronting rap groups, Public Enemy delivered their message in a booming authoritarian style. Songs such as 'Bring The Noise', 'Fight The Power', '911 Is A Joke' and 'Don't Believe The Hype' deal with African-American issues in an uncompromising way.

Tupac Shakur

Tupac Shakur (a.k.a 2Pac) was one of the most dynamic and influential rappers of the 1990s. He was fatally shot in 1996 in Las Vegas during the highly publicised east coast vs. west coast rappers' feud. His hits include 'All Eyes On Me', 'California Love' and 'Changes'.

The Notorious B.I.G.

Originally a New York street hustler, Notorious B.I.G. was one of the most celebrated rappers of the 1990s. His murder in 1997 as part of a gangsta feud ensured his fame. His hits include 'Juicy', 'One More Chance' and 'Big Poppa'.

The Beastie Boys

The Beastie Boys were the first white hip hop/rap group to be successful. Formed in New York as a hardcore punk band, they released the successful *Licensed to Ill* album in 1986 which included the hits '(You Gotta) Fight For Your Right (To Party)' and 'No Sleep Till Brooklyn'.

Eminem

A Detroit-based rapper, Eminem's songs have drawn protests from gay and lesbian, religious and women's groups because of their lyrical content. A white rapper in a predominantly African American market, he was labelled the 'great white hope' for rejuvenating rap in the late 1990s. Admired for his skills and lyrical ability, Eminem has sold over 60 million albums and has won nine Grammy Awards.