

J.Ivy Interview Review

By: Hannah Landsberger

Last week Aisha and I travelled to DC to interview J. Ivy, a hip-hop artist who puts emphasis on his lyrics and spoken poetry. It was my first interview for WGMU, and I was incredibly nervous. What if I forgot my questions? What if J. Ivy wasn't interested in talking with us?

But I shouldn't have worried at all. J. Ivy is more than just a performer: he's an artist with a heart and with a mission. Easy to talk to and comfortable in his own skin, J. made Aisha and I feel more than welcome. We chatted for almost an hour about J. Ivy's inspiration, goals, and career as a musician and teacher.

As a kid, J. had plenty of experience writing— working on homework assignments and love letters to girls helped him develop his skills. But J. never intended to pursue writing or performing as a career. That all changed when an English teacher convinced him to appear in a school show. He received a standing ovation after delivering his monologue; from that moment on he was hooked. In college he wrote a girl a poem for Sweetest Day (a kind of second Valentine's Day in October). His English teacher liked it so much he suggested that J perform his work at an upcoming open mic. J. quickly became a regular at performances on campus and became known as "the poet".

When asked about his inspiration, J. answered that life—what is going on around and inside him—is what motivates him to write. What is certain is that J's uplifting music has inspired and touched many listeners. One fan even emailed J. to tell him that his music had helped her overcome her drug addiction. J. spoke with enthusiasm about a summer program in Aruba where he taught poetry to a small group of students. At the end of the two-week camp his students performed alongside theatre, dance, fashion, and DJ students. He is in the process of turning his Dream Big Foundation into the "J. Ivy Write to Live Academy", an organization that will allow him to speak and hold workshops at different schools around the country. He is already well on his way—before stopping in DC he took time to speak to the students at a charter school in Maryland.

J. Ivy comes from a musical family; his dad was a well-known DJ and his uncle a famous college band director. He grew up in Chicago, a city he loves to perform in (especially at The House of Blues). He acknowledged that Chicago-ians are hard to please—with all the gifted artists located in the city, you have to be really talented to stand out. J. also loves performing in New Orleans and has spent some time in Nashville, where he learned about the importance of story-telling through country music.

We ended our conversation with Aisha's signature question: If you had to tattoo something on your forehead, what would it be? J.'s response? "God [in big letters across his forehead]... and peace, and truth, and love." It is clear that J. Ivy has his head (literally!) in the right place, a fact that his music makes more than apparent.

Don't believe me? Check out J. Ivy's new CD, *Here I Am* at www.jivy.com. And keep your eyes peeled—I wouldn't be surprised if J. finds his way to campus sometime soon.

“Stay In Your Lane” Track Review

By Aisha

Here I Am is a smooth ride to say the least. Beautiful expressions are made by both words and beats. J-Ivy honestly flows in a way that creates a comfort in the soul. No doubt a listener will develop a strong connection with the pounding lyrics.

His words create hope in difficult internal battles such as identity, influence and strength. With all honesty, each track is a daydream because each song seems like an escape to a place of no pain.

The lines “Do it because you love it” and “Smile while you endure the mile.” make me feel like letting go of all my stresses in the track “Stay in Your Lane” His voice is extremely calming and easily digestive.

Many tracks deliver the real destructive message of war. On the flip side he is upfront with his faith; “I am trying to shine the light of God’s smile” This is an encouragement to see an artist raw and open to share where he is in his pain and view of the world.

If you are looking for a boost of confidence and an escape from studies, relationships or your family or learn how to identify with people from different cultures,go and buy the

“Here I Am: album at: [Click here to listen to J.Ivy!!!!!!](#)

