



# A\$AP ROCKY

The future of Hip-Hop is in the good hands of A\$AP Rocky, and it looks bright. The quick witted Harlem native's self-released debut mixtape, *LiveLoveA\$AP*, dropped on Halloween of 2011 and quickly proved the hype around A\$AP Rocky was well deserved. The project landed on dozens of year end "best of" lists and Rocky garnered Rolling Stone's Rookie of the Year and MTV's Hottest Breakthrough MC and Artist To Watch in 2012. Accolades continued to pile and created high anticipation for his January 2013 major label debut album, *LONG.LIVE.A\$AP*, which entered at #1 on Billboard's Top 200.

*"Rocky is music, music videos and fashion,"* says A\$AP Rocky of his blossoming career. Thanks to his breakout hits "Purple Swag" and "Peso," the fascinating NYC product scored a recording deal with Polo Grounds Music/RCA Records through his and his partner Steven "Yams aka Yamborghini" Rodriguez A\$AP Worldwide imprint.

The lyrically dexterous 24 year-old and self described "pretty motherf\*\*ker" was born to become an MC. This isn't a farfetched claim when you consider his parents named him Rakim after the seminal rapper credited with changing the course of rap history. A\$AP Rocky (short for "Always Strive And Prosper" and various other acronyms) pinpoints the start of his own rap aspirations to when he was only 8 years old. "My sister was born, she was on the bed, and the first rhyme I did was about her," he recalls.

Encouraged by his late, older brother Ricky Black ("My first true friend. God bless all big brothers man, I had a good one."), Rocky continued pursuing his craft. His brother was a big time Bone Thugs-N-Harmony fan. "I grew up on Bone Thugs because of him," says A\$AP Rocky. "I even knew about Flesh Bone when I was five years old. Bone was everything. That's why I spit how I spit now, it's the Bone Thugs influence."

Rocky credits all the great Hip-Hop artists from the 1990's as inspiration, and he hopes to bring that same type of creative energy and innovative spirit to his current music. "I feel I brought back that essence with the 'Peso' video," says Rocky. "Not just New York but that Hip-Hop in the 90's thing. Hip-Hop in the 90's set the format for Hip-Hop today." But, he adds, "I'm really, really tired of the cliché rhyming and the mansions where every night you popping bottles and you got a girl in your flying spur, *all* the time."

Instead, Rocky is offering up an alternative to the current rap status quo. It was this void Rocky perceived in Hip-Hop, as well as clever songwriting and infectious beats,

that made him realize he had a spot in the music industry for the taking. "That's what made me know that I can make it. I said, 'I can't be the only one feeling like this,'" says Rocky. "I'm not saying I'm the one that everybody needs to listen to. What I'm saying is I have a different kind of standpoint and I got different views and I bring a different approach. And if you f\*\*k with me, good. You should."

The devoted prodigy's ambitious outlook has been noticed by some of the industry's elite such as global superstar Rihanna, who sought out the MC for a boastful rap verse on her official "Cockiness (Love It)" remix – which Rocky performed alongside her at the 2012 MTV Music Awards.

Anyone who pegged A\$AP Rocky as a one trick pony after the success of "Purple Swag" was proven wrong with the follow up successes of "Peso" and the Hit-Boy produced "Goldie." Both songs soon followed with unforgettable co-directed videos by Rocky. The stylish "Goldie" visual even went on to collect "Best Hip Hop Video" and "Video Director Of The Year" nominations at the 2012 BET Hip Hop Awards and was acknowledged in the "Best Editing" category at the MTV Video Music Awards in the same year.

Aside from being recognized by the 2012 MTV Video Music Awards and BET Hip Hop Awards (total of 6 nominations, including "Best New Artist"), Rocky also earned himself two MTV Europe Music Awards (EMA) nominations: "US Artist About To Go Global" and "Best Look" for his impressive sense of fashion, as highlighted on the covers of Interview, Complex and Vogue (Italy).

Rocky's exponentially growing worldwide fanbase has become privy to the world of the A\$AP collective; a crew of Harlem based, fashion-forward street kids ("These were the guys dressing like they were rolling on the red carpet.") that A\$AP Rocky formally joined in 2007. Members of A\$AP include producer A\$AP Ty Beats ("Purple Swag," "Peso") and rappers A\$AP Ferg, A\$AP Nast and A\$AP Twelvy. Their collaborative self-released mixtape, *Lord\$ Never Worry*, was released in the summer of 2012 and boasts the fan favorite track, "Bath Salts" (feat. Flatbush Zombies).

Although he already sports co-signs from fellow Harlem native Jim Jones and Young Money rapper Drake, who invited Rocky on his 2012 "Club Paradise" tour, Rocky is still looking to prove the excitement surrounding his burgeoning career is merited. The promising Harlem lyricist fine tuned his highly anticipated major label debut, *LONGLIVEA\$AP*, which includes the platinum hard-thumping Noah "40" Shebib produced track "F\*\*kin' Problems," featuring today's biggest names in hip hop music – Drake, 2 Chainz & Kendrick Lamar, along with the rambunctious "Wild For The Night" (featuring Skrillex & Birdy Nam Nam), the hip-hop posse cut "1 Train" (feat. Kendrick Lamar, Joey Bada\$\$, Yelawolf, and Danny Brown), and current single "Fashion Killa," which boasts a video cameo by Rihanna.

"I think it's too much hype about me. I want to prove myself to these people," says Rocky. "I want to prove to them that I'm an all-around artist, I'm a great video

director, I'm a great human being, I have a good head on my shoulders and I'm a great lyricist. I'm ready to represent now. I got too much style not to be."

<http://www.asvpxrocky.com>

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