

Kyle Rapps – “Rapps 101” feat. U-N-I



“Rapps 101” is the third single from Kyle Rapps’ debut *Re-Edutainment*. Rapps invited U-N-I to collaborate on the song because he wanted something for the kids.

Download “Rapps 101” ft. U-N-I [here](#).

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For 19th Anniversary of Rodney King Riots, Thurz of Award-Winning Rap Duo U-N-I Releases “Los Angeles” & Preps Solo Album L.A. RIOT



(Los Angeles, California – April 28, 2011) – As one half of Los Angeles’ critically lauded sub-commercial rap duo U-N-I, Yannick “Thurzday” Koffi along with rhyme partner Yonas “Y-0” Michael have already racked up over 2 million views on Youtube while being rained with accolades – named “Best Breakout LA Artist” at the 2008 MTV Video Music Awards, featured in URB Magazine’s “NEXT 100” & “NEXT 1000,” XXL Magazine’s “New Kids in Town,” Billboard

Magazineâ€™s â€œActs to Watch,â€ The Source Magazineâ€™s â€œUnsigned Hypeâ€ & â€œOff the Radar,â€ Time Out New Yorkâ€™s â€œThe Volume,â€ MTVâ€™s â€œThe Hot Seat,â€ BET.com’s “Rookies of the Year” and ending up on the â€œSoundBoardâ€ of The Los Angeles Times while serving as the official hosts of MTVâ€™s â€œSucka Freeâ€ – on the strength of their observant, life-affirming rhymes that revolved around everything from limited-edition sneakers to cosmic existentialism and old-school video games to down-home musings on life and actress Lauren London.

This Summer 2011 Thurz will release his debut solo album, L.A Riot inspired by the aftermath of the Rodney King verdict which took place during six days in 1992 from April 29th to May 4th and saw the second most populous city in the U.S. serve as the home to rampant and widespread unrest, including looting, arson, assault and murder. The death toll from the riots officially tallied at 48 men and 5 women cross racial and ethnic linesâ€”35 fell from gunfire (eight at the hands of law enforcement and the National Guard); Thousands more were injured. Property damages totaled over \$1 billion.

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[â€œLOS ANGELES”](#)

Thurzâ€™whose rap name nods to the weekday of his birth as a counterpart to his last name (“Koffi” which actually means “born on a Friday” in Ghana’s native language, Akan- found the L.A. Riots were the perfect metaphor for the direction his music was moving into: mature and confident yet reactionary and emotional; the response to decades of things unspoken and undone. As someone who had identified with Los Angeles his whole life, it was natural that his artistic manifesto chronicle the most defining moment in the city’s modern history.

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[â€œRODNEY KING EVOLUTIONâ€](#)

Produced by hometown heroes R0 Blvd (U-N-I), DJ Khalil (Eminem, Jay-Z, 50 Cent), Aaron Harris (Dr. Dre, Dead Prez), THX (Murs, The Clipse, Mobb Deep) and Terrace Martin (Snoop Dogg, Talib Kweli, Lalah Hathaway), L.A. Riot relies heavily on live instrumentation that eschews samples without sacrificing the boom bap. "What do you Riot for?" is a central question to the music. It's a matter of importance and meaningâ€" statement masquerading as a query; a movement smuggled through an album and carried out by a multimedia campaign, both online and off, which pays homage to the recent North African political uprisings.

Produced by longtime collaborator R0 Blvd, the first single "Los Angeles" was built around a jazzy horn riff, the beatâ€"wide-open and sparse, anthemic and definitive, groundbreaking yet accessibleâ€"was a rapper's dream: the type of music that demands a statement. "This could be your 'Exhibit C'," said Ro, alluding to ascendant rap superstar Jay Electronica's Just Blaze-produced lyrical magnum opus. In paying respect to his hometown of Los Angeles Thurz had to go beyond the good times, palm tress and gangsta tropes, he had his fellow Los Angelenos call into his voicemail and leave one sentence definitions of the city. He wound up receiving over 100 messages of civic pride and observationâ€"poetic, straight-forward, sentimental, braggadocios, complex, simpleâ€"that would anchor the song in place of hooks. He laid his rhymes as a skilled latticework of street bravado, ghetto art, sports franchises, and social commentary with the individual vocal drops of nearly twenty proud Los Angelenos articulating its borders. A movement had begun.

Musically, L.A Riot is an album that strives to stand for something and succeeds. "Niggas" uses an electric guitar and widely-sourced vocal snippets to create a discussion around the divisive n-word, race, self-hate and self-love, ending with the declaration: "F%#\$ being a nigga, I'd rather be a king." "Home," featuring soul singer Aloe Blacc tackles the

homelessness of Africans in America, debt slavery and cycles of families in the penitentiary system, showing the personal and political as one in the same. "Two Clips," featuring street-based singer-songwriter Kobe deals with patterns of recurring gang violence by dissecting the ideas of honor, loyalty, revenge and karma. Other guests include Black Thought of The Roots and Jive Recording R&B sensation Miguel.

Last month to commemorate the night of the Rodney King beating (March 3rd, 2011) Thurz released a grippingly haunting video clip transforming himself into the image of the beaten motorist (via makeup and computer effects). The song "Rodney King" off the upcoming album is a first-person perspective detailing King's night with acutenessâ€”from the statistics of the basketball game he was watching, the drinks he threw back, the marijuana he smoked, the make and model of car he was driving; the chase through highways and residential areas through Lake View Terrace interspersed with King's parole worries; the relentless brutality captured on video by a plumber named George Holliday. And it's the events of that night which make "Rodney King" one of L.A. Riotâ€™s most compelling songs, full of sentiment and anger, music and motion, ominously rising from the mundane and deepening into dark anger and ending as a beginning, Thurz raps: "Beware: This stormy black Monday will morph its way into a black plague of agony: broken glass, burning buildings coughing up black smoke. My pain will be a molotov cocktail of hope for all those who sit silent, listening, contemplating violence, awaiting their turn to play their part in the uprising we call Rodney King Riots."

The Riot starts here.

MTV 2008 VMA Winners & LA Rap Duo UNI Leak Tracks From New Album A Love Supreme

Los Angeles, California â€” January 13, 2009-

Born from the ashes of gangsta rap Los Angeles, California is experiencing an indie hip-hop resurgence. Inglewood rap duo U-N-I are the talk of the Internet and guiding hip-hop's path in the city by juxtaposing music with customized fashion. The two MCs™ have loaded up on accolades over the past 2 years—being named “Best Breakout LA Artist” at the 2008 MTV Video Music Awards, featured in URB Magazine's “NEXT 1000,” XXL Magazine's “New Kids in Town,” Billboard Magazine's “Acts to Watch,” The Source Magazine's “Unsigned Hype,” ending up on the “SoundBoard” of The Los Angeles Times and serving as the inaugural artists for Scheme Magazine's Schemer series—on the strength of their observant, life-affirming rhymes that revolve around everything from limited-edition sneakers to cosmic existentialism and old-school video games to down-home musings on life, declaring their love for music while appreciating plus-size ladies and enjoying lap dances.

Though the two rappers—“Thurzday” (Yannick Koffi) and “Y-O” (Yonas Semere Michael)—hail from an area of Los Angeles commonly associated with the trappings of violent ghetto life, their debut street album, Fried Chicken and Watermelon—powered, melodic and groovy, employing angelic strings, electro-bounce and Nintendo 64 scores—eschewed Dickies, lowriders and high-powered armory in favor of positing their lives against a greater Black experience that was at once earthly and universal.

Their progressive swagger and throwback fashion sense may initially compel comparisons to “hipsters,” but the duo’s truth is at once more complex and far simpler: Y-0 has been sporting a vibrant mohawk for going on five years while Thurz notes that the group is innately fashion-conscious and not willing to sacrifice substance for style.

When asked about new school “kid” groups saturating the hip-hop subculture scene the guys laugh – particularly when it comes to New Orleans own The Knux. While members Krispy Kreme and Mary Kay continue to assert during interviews that U-N-I and the entire “hipster” movement revolve around them Y-0 and Thurz casually respond, “I mean how could we possibly compete with one dude who named himself after a glazed donut and another who rhymes like Dr Seuss, dresses like a ghetto Richard Simmons and let his brother name himself after a glazed donut? Jimmy Iovine was unconscious when he signed them – you’ll never see us wearing eyeliner.”

True to their laid-back sneaker pimp theory, the aficionados flipped the Wu-Tang Clan’s “C.R.E.A.M.” into the popular song “K.R.E.A.M.” (Kicks Rule Everything Around Me), complete with a Do The Right Thing inspired video, garnering the attention of major shoe corporations including Adidas and Puma and landing them in the footwear department of Slam Magazine. Their other visuals—the lazy, color-rich, slow-rolling “Beautiful Day” and the genre-jumping, kaleidoscopic “Soul Hop”—continue to play in rotation on MTV Jams and VH-1, while the duo hit MTV2’s Sucka Free for a freestyle appearance. Thurz says, “the video for “Beautiful Day” embodied our characters – showcased our neighborhood and was unforced and natural, like our music. “Soul Hop” on the other hand is an experience showcasing a brain on crack.”

U-N-I’s latest offering, A Love Supreme is put forth with a “recession-proof theme” for folks who have fallen on hard times in our struggling economy (soon to be available via free

via download). The effort continues the band's mission of expanding and texturizing hip-hop's conversation: tackling the lust, love and hate of relationships (â€œRight Now,â€ â€œDesha Dayanaâ€), tossing crafty, whimsical odes to black actresses (â€œLauren Londonâ€), dramatically dealing with the mundane aspects of struggling artistry through borderline poverty and senseless crime on the sublimely dark â€œHalftime.â€ Where Fried Chicken and Watermelon was a spontaneous and easy-going trip backed by a handful of producers, A Love Supreme is a matured and intimate journey produced entirely by west coast producer R0 Blvd., who is steadily garnering acknowledgement in underground movements for his boundary-crossing inventiveness.

Yonas â€œY-0â€ Semere Michael was raised in Seattle, Washington by an African-American mother and a father born in the Northeast African country of Eritrea (bordered by Sudan in the west and Ethiopia in the south). He moved to Inglewood in 1996 with his mom and sister, crying at the U-Haul, until he â€œfell in love with the palm trees, the women and the weatherâ€ of Los Angeles and fed his musical jones by ingesting west coast artists.

During Y-0â€™s freshmen year, he linked up with sophomore Thurzday who took the moniker from his last name â€œKoffiâ€ which meant â€œboy born on Friday,â€ but flipped it so the phrase could be on the money. The two class clowns noticed they had much in common: Thurzdayâ€™s mom was from Belize; his biological father from the Ivory Coast. His stepfather was from Belize, as well, and his uncles were all DJâ€™s, playing soca, reggae and dancehall in the house at all times. His musical education was broadened by one of his uncles who introduced him to De la Soul via the groupâ€™s seminal 3 Feet High and Rising when Thurz was only four years old. In the seventh grade, the MC came across Redmanâ€™s funny, witty and hard Muddy Waters, which widened his ideas of what hip-hop could be. By the time the two MCâ€™s met, they were so well

versed in hip-hop lyricism that they took out upper classmen with ease during schoolyard battles.

Taking their name from the Roots' "UNiverse at War"—"you and I verse at war," a nod to their renewed allegiance and self-confidence—Thurz and Y-0 went on to open up shows artists such as The Roots, Ludacris, Lupe Fiasco and Redman and proceeded to promote their brand via social media networks—a marketing plan that cost Thurz his day job as a statistics analyst at an actuary firm in October 2008, when his bosses monitored his internet hours and found an exorbitant amount of time spent on Okayplayer.com and Myspace. "My productivity did decrease a little bit," Thurz admits with a giggle. "Now I'm a full-time rapper with no plans to go back to the plantation."

For his part, Y-0, who pays his bills by driving a van full of "rugs" from school to a childcare center says, "The entire ride consists of paper balls being thrown at the back of my head. But when I pop in our music the kids can recite all the words."

Watch the video for "Soul Hop"

Watch more [MTVM videos](#) on [AOL Video](#)

**Rap Duo U-N-I Talk Apparel,
Hipsters, Palm Trees, Lauren**

London & A Love Supreme