

HIP-HOP ON A HIGHER LEVEL

IN STEREO

XXL

WE'LL ALWAYS LOVE **BIG POPPA**

1997-2007

NEVER BEFORE SEEN **BIGGIE POSTER INSIDE**

+ RICH BOY TRU LIFE BONE THUGS NORE UGK NAS

I AM **HIP-HOP**

LIL WAYNE

BITES HIS TONGUE FOR NO ONE

360

OL' ENGLISH

CANADIAN MC IS TURNING CLASSIC LIT INTO HIP-HOP.



Baba Brinkman

mances. "I thought what defined poetry to them is what defines hip-hop to me," says Brinkman, who started rapping at 19.

For his college thesis, Brinkman aimed to show professors the link between the two genres. So he reworked verses from Chaucer's classic book, *The Canterbury Tales*, into rap lyrics. In 2004, he independently released his hip-hop debut, *Swordplay*. Then with the aid of U.K. beatsmith Lin Gardiner, Brinkman put his Medieval rhymes on wax and released *The Rap Canterbury Tales* that same year. The album drew interest from Talon Books, which published a book version of the CD in September 2006.

Since graduating, Brinkman has made a living performing a one-man show at dozens of colleges, theaters and arts festivals in the U.S. and Canada. "The fact that it keeps catching on reassures me that it's actually got basis," says Brinkman, whose fan base ranges from literary scholars to



Baba goes medieval.

In the widely used technique of sampling, artists incorporate tunes, lyrics and concepts from music made decades ago.

But Vancouver's Baba Brinkman is taking it back even farther—to the 14th century. For the past four years, the 28-year-old MC has been translating literature from Medieval scribes like Geoffrey Chaucer into hip-hop and performing his rhymes onstage.

Though Brinkman's knowledge of rap dates back to childhood, he only recently learned about 14th century poets, while pursuing an English degree at Canada's Simon Fraser University. In his studies, Brinkman noticed similarities between those classic writers and rappers like Slick Rick and B.I.G.—vivid storytelling, rhythmic flows and powerful live perfor-

hip-hop heads. But he's not limited to reworking archaic poetry—his third album, *Lit-Hop*, released this past December on his own label, Lit Fuse Records, is straight hip-hop.

This spring through fall, Brinkman will take his act to England, Scotland and Australia, among other places, while working on the manuscript for his second book, *Lyrical Ballast*, scheduled for publication in fall 2008. He views his music as a bridge between the literary and hip-hop realms. "For me, this is just the most logical thing in the world," says Brinkman. "When you actually get down to the substance of both of these forms, I feel like they're kindred."

In other words, the best of both worlds. —WILLIAM E. KETCHUM III



STEP YOUR **RAP** GAME UP

"I'M BLACK-TY, FA-SHEEZY/AND I AIN'T LAUGHIN', HOMES/ WHEN BLACK-TY COME ON/IT'S LIKE A DANGER ZONE."

—BLACK-TY, "What It Is"



XXL & JAMS Present

JAM Y'ALL

Back when the term "whoadie" was common in rap grounds, Lil Wayne and Cash Money repped New Orleans hard in their music videos. Since then,

Wayne has evolved quite a bit both lyrically and stylistically on his way to establishing his own identity. Here, XXL and MTV Jams present five of his best videos.



LIL WAYNE FEAT. ROBIN THICKE "SHOOTER" 2006
This partially-split-screen video finds Weezy and blue-eyed crooner Robin Thicke holding competing parties in adjacent abodes. It ends with them performing onstage together. Wait, so no shoot-out?



LIL WAYNE "FIREMAN" 2005
In this week's episode: Weezy F. goes to school. Sporting sunglasses and BAPE threads, the "best rapper alive" cavorts around campus with females, gives a classroom presentation (about himself) and struts around a deserted field—unconcerned about the deadly patches of fire surrounding him.



LIL WAYNE FEAT. MANNIE FRESH "GO DJ" 2004
This is the Car-TUHI! Wayne is first seen donning a Hannibal Lecter-like mask and escaping from an electric chair. He's locked up, but luckily he still gets costume changes—opting for wifebeaters, tees and crisp jeans. Cute female prison guards dance around while inmates cause a *Prison Break*-style ruckus.



LIL WAYNE "GET OFF THE CORNER" 2000
The Hot Boys are at a boiling point, and Wayne gets to shine on his own. In this clip, he and his comrades are being chased between houses by N'awlins po-po—Wayne ends up rapping atop a high-rise. It's "to be continued," but judging by the circling copters, we can guess how this one ends.



LIL WAYNE FEAT. JUVENILE & B.G. "THA BLOCK IS HOT" 1999
Fuck a concept. In this video, a shirtless teen Weezy is seen running and ducking from cops. Blue laser beams, dice playing, old people on porches, rapping in the rain—classic.

APRIL 2007 No. 90 \$3.95 \$4.95CAN
0 09281 03889 4