

New Man

AMERICA'S #1 MAGAZINE FOR CHRISTIAN MEN

FOR MEN ON A MISSION

GuyGear MUSIC

Da' T.R.U.T.H. Will Set You Free

A '21st Century John the Baptist' rises from the hip-hop scene's underground. | by JOHN CROSBY

Da' T.R.U.T.H.'s mission is in his name: "To Reach 'U' Through Him." With his new release, *Moment of Truth* (Cross Movement Records), Da' T.R.U.T.H., also known as Emanuel Lambert Jr., mixes a layer of thick, funky beats with his diversion of crafted lyrics that bring hope—not in gold rings or flashing rims—but in Christ's salvation.

Better known to some of his fans as "The 21st Century John the Baptist," Da' T.R.U.T.H. may be the revolutionary who leads the hip-hop culture to a place of dignity and discipline.

"I prioritize the kingdom agenda and the reputation of Christ over my own," the 26-year-old Lambert says via telephone from his home near Philadelphia. "I want to live in a way that makes the Lord look good."

Lambert lives in the hip-hop culture, but his life differs from that of a mainstream hip-hop star such as Jay-Z. Instead of riding in a decked-out Cadillac Escalade and clubbing with a drove of short-skirted ladies, the husband of two years can be found studying in the Learning Resource Center at Philadelphia Biblical University (PBU).

Lambert is working on a theology degree with an introductory concentration on social work at PBU to better articulate his funkadelic, hope-filled message to the sinister side of hip-hop.

"We live in a world where there is a downward spin," Lambert says. "God is being left out of the equation. Hopefully Christian hip-hop will help redirect the affections of this generation."

The hip-hop music genre started as a collaborative transfusion of late 1950s doo-wop, '60s soul, '70s funk and the cadenced vibrations of '80s rhythm and blues. The music spotlights the poetic musings of urban orators to a background mix of heavy bass beats, classic or jazz tracks and record scratching.

Today, hip-hop has become an enormously popular world culture, dominating the airwaves and permeating the fashion industry.

Lambert knows he needs more than just creative rhymes to steer the massive hip-hop movement. He decided a strong theological foundation would help him relay the gospel message in his lyrics.

"I was looking for a way to be knowledgeable so that I wouldn't be taking stabs in the dark," says Lambert of his

Since 1999, the nonprofit organization has ministered in the hip-hop culture with outreach concerts, discipleship and evangelistic CDs. The ministry only emphasized what Lambert wanted to do with his life.

"It was the providence of God ... that brought me to represent Him through hip-hop," Lambert says. "Now, in that context, I can appreciate the fullness of what life offers and see the big picture."

For five years, Cross Movement Ministries Inc. honed Lambert's character, and sparked his creative combination of music and urban ministries.

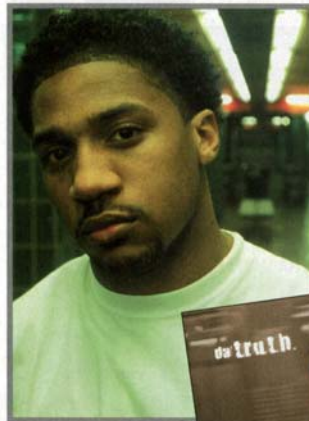
During that time, Cross Movement Ministries began a hip-hop group by the similar name, Cross Movement. In March 2004, after four albums, they produced a live performance DVD, *Holy Culture* (BEC Recordings), featuring their hip-hop disciple, Da' T.R.U.T.H.

For Lambert and The Cross Movement crew, the main objective is to shift the culture, inside and outside of Philadelphia. In the coming months, Da' T.R.U.T.H. will "keep the heads ringin'" at shows across the country—and Canada and Mexico.

Lambert has set his ministry goals high, hoping to reach hurting communities and hoping to see lives transformed in the inner-city areas.

Says Lambert: "Handling the responsibility of putting out this album and everything else is easy, so long as I have God's grace guiding me. We will do whatever we can to distinguish and define the hip-hop culture for everything God intends." **NM**

John Crosby is editor of The Harlem Times and an avid hip-hop fan.



start at PBU. "I needed a more in-depth knowledge of the Word—how

to read Scripture, how to communicate the Word of God to people. PBU was the natural progression to that end."

Beyond his degree, Lambert foresees more schooling and hopes to teach theology in an urban area someday.

"I kind of see myself becoming an urbanized Billy Graham," Lambert says.

Lambert's wife of two years, Nicole, is a major supporter of his vision. While the two were dating, Lambert became a valuable part of the North Philadelphia-based Cross Movement Ministries Inc.

A "21st Century John the Baptist" rises from the hip-hop scene's underground.

