

ENTERTAINMENT

Raw Breed Visits WSSU

BY TRACI TIERA A.KING
Staff Writer

Members of the rap group **Raw Breed**, who were natives of South Bronx, NY, but are now residing in Los Angeles, are currently on a promotional tour through the Southeast.

Last month, they visited Winston-Salem State University and three members of the group gave *The News Argus* an up close and personal interview. **Raw Breed** members Burna Blacksun, Marc Live, and Alexander Da Great, whose real name is Smokey Robason, were excited about their new video release, "Everything Is Lovely" directed by Steve Carr. The video release is off their "Blood, Sweat & Tears" CD.

These **Raw Breed** brothers promote positive lyrics and non-profanity content in their message.

"The beats are banging but the lyrics are non-negative. It's time to go back to the ol' school of battle rapping. We're from the rim, we were inspired by Krush Groove, Run, DMC, and Grand Master Flash. Brothers like that turned us on. Young brothers on the rise need to develop a vocabulary of positiveness and that's what the ol' school developed. They battled," explained Live.

"That East Coast - West Coast mess is a done deal! We've lost two ingenious brothers that offered a lot to the industry. If we keep this kind of violence up how will the rap industry continue? We, **Raw Breed** decided to keep it on the real," said Blacksun.

"We're not new to the game. We first hit the scene in 1993 but our big break came when Ice T took us under his wing and turned us on to Warner Brothers. Over the years we've opened for Ice T, Outkast, Ice Cube, EPMD and other rap artists. Our music is tight

and our message is real because we are childhood friends," said Robason. "We feel good about what were putting out. We can't go wrong with pumping beats from T.R. Love of Ultra Magnetic. He's been turning out the beats for years and he's also from the Bronx."

Their image is simple and straight. They are striving to keep it positive. **Raw Breed** also expressed their views on why they don't degrade woman in their music.

"We felt that degrading Black woman was uncalled for. Our mothers, aunts and grandmothers were the ones that raised us. We strongly felt that respecting and protecting the Black woman was part of being a man," explained Live. "If we put those kinds of words in our music what is that saying to the younger brothers' coming up. We don't dis' other rappers, we don't degrade our woman and we won't change our image to accommodate the media hype."

According to Fat Thomi, national director of Warner Brothers, "We decided to come to the South to put **Raw Breed** on the map. Throughout the East and West Coasts the group is well known. The Southeast region needs to be updated on what the happening. Most often this area gets left out or over looked"

Raw Breed has been featured in *Vibe*, *Rapp 11* and *Rap Pages* magazines. The group hopes to have continued longevity in the business and wants to leave a great impact while visiting the HBCUs in the region. **Raw Breed** also said they would like to contribute monies to foundations such as Sickle Cell and The AIDs Foundation.

As their promotional tour continues through the Southeast area their CD "Blood Sweat & Tears" may



Raw Breed

Photo By: Traci T. King

be purchased at Miss Lady Music Creations or Discount Records & Tapes, both are local black owned record stores.

The Budweiser Superfest

A Review

BY DANIELLE PROPHETE
Editor

In an age when concerts are filled with lip synching and "dat machines" it is so refreshing to go to a concert and really see a good live performance. After spending \$30-40 for a ticket to a concert, it is very important that concert attendees get their money's worth.

The Budweiser Superfest, held on Labor Day in Charlotte, featured Bone Thugs -n- Harmony, Mary J. Blige, Aaliyah, Ginuwine and Dru Hill. The show opened with a Bang!

With songs like *Tell Me, Never Make A Promise*, and *In My Bed*, from their self-titled debut album *Dru Hill*, the group was amazing! Their voices sounded exactly like they do on the album but even more importantly

their stage performance was right on the money.

After Dru Hill got the energy level to 100, Ginuwine (*The Bachelor*) came out and doubled the energy level. Outside of being extremely handsome he had the nerve to have on a red leather outfit and a matching microphone. By this time my blood pressure was up.

Aaliyah followed Ginuwine. This was when the audience could tell the difference between a singer and a performer. Aaliyah is just a singer. Her hits *Back & Forth*, *Kiss & Tell* and *One In A Million*, were nice but after Dru Hill and Ginuwine had raised your blood pressure; her performance was boring to watch. Even though she had cute dancers, she just didn't give the audience a real performance. Even the

guest appearance from DJ Kid Capri, from HBO's *Def Comedy Jam*, failed to get the crowd pumped.

A concert attendee stated that maybe it was harder for some female performers to get the audience going because men don't scream and holler like girls do.

But I beg to differ with her, because Mary J. Blige "ripped it"! Blige went back "old school" with hits like *Real Love*, *Sweet Thang*, *You Remind Me* and *I'm Going Down*. Her new hits, *Love Is All We Need*, *You Are Everything*, *I Can Love You* and *Seven Days* just kept the audience on its feet.

Blige has really grown as an artist. It had been said that Blige gave an awful live performance. Even watching her TV appearances could give you the

impression that her voice relies a lot on studio machines. But the proof was definitely in the pudding. Not only were her vocals on point but her stage performance was even better. Blige and her dancers were well choreographed. She performed for an hour and believe me the crowd hated to see her leave. Blige definitely deserves 3 thumbs up!

The concert ended with Bone Thugs -n- Harmony. If you are a rap lover then this part was for you. They had a nice stage scene but you couldn't understand a word they were saying. They were extremely loud; but the rap fans seemed to like it. I don't think that rap group should have been showcased with the rest of the artist but all in all the concert was GREAT!!