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# TRIPLE M

Coming from the San Francisco Bay area, A&M rapper **TRIPLE M** has his origins in the same Northern California region that birthed MC Hammer, Digital Underground and Too Short. He's inspired by the same funky people (James Brown, George Clinton, Sly Stone, Cameo) as his hometown homies, but this hardcore stylist's got his own thing: a new sound that he's dubbed "*techno-dope*."

"I'm trying to do something innovative in rap," says Triple M, "I experiment with the latest technology and really get inventive." He doesn't use borrowed samples, yet he still maintains the grit and freaky seasoning found in most great rap records. By pairing original '90's music with funky vibes from the past, he's standing on a new frontier of rap. By way of MIDI keyboards and micro computers, he's offering aural visions of the future, "Techno music usually has a cold feel," he explains. "To keep the soul, you must have a soulful background—and not be lazy."

On his self-titled debut album, produced by Oaktown International's Joel Newman and Mark Elliot, Triple M got busy with a number of talented new artists including: DJs Shaboo and Cut Throat; vocalists Tonia Jones, Marie Dockers and Preston Grey, a.k.a. The Cassanova Kid, keyboardists Lloyd Richmond and Chunky D. "These are friends of mine," says Triple M. "We had such a good time in the studio, and I think that shows through with what's on the album."

Like another San Francisco rapper, Paris, Triple M presents a strong image of the black male. "I want to reach my peers with a positive message," he says. "I'm not talking about killing people, drugs or materialism."

What Triple M is talking about is good times and the single life: of the peer pressure to be a player, of being played, of the mission involved in trying to find "the right one." Real women, or real experiences with women inspire his creativity. In songs like "*She She Wa Wa*" and "*Forever True Love*," he's pouring splashy baths of respect and adulations for a special lover. "*She She Wa Wa*" was in fact derived from a song Triple M used to sing on the playground as a school boy—part nursery rhyme, part street chant. In "*Hip Hop House Nights*" he's loading his street-chic poetics into a potent party machine. And in "*Do It / Smooth Like A Reptile*" he pumps the beat harder, urging listeners on and on till the break 'o dawn. The album's first single, "*Prisoner Of Passion*," showers "fly honey" with meads of sensual praise: "Oooh so appetizing—a pleasurable spell...the ultimate relax-sensation."

As a poet and a true ladies man, Triple M writes with a smoother approach toward his lyrics. Appealing to the masses with what he calls "The laid back Mack daddy style of rap." "I didn't try to get too complicated," he says. "I'll do that after I've captured people's attention."

Along with his innovative boom tracks and fly-boy street poems, Triple M plans to flood the public's senses with a colossal stage prop/computer console called MIDI Lab 2000 (designed so "people can see how the sound was created"), and retro-neuvo dance moves, an amalgamation of old-time pop-locking and new-jack maneuvers.

Before establishing himself in the valley of neat beats and clever lyrics, Triple M, whose real

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name is Mark Elliott, already had notoriety. At 16, he founded and led the award-winning, widely profiled robotic dance troupe, Close Encounters Of The Funkiest Kind. Now Triple M (for Mean, Makin' Mark) is makin' mo' money as A&M's latest discovery. "I'm a boss brother from the neighborhood, who wants to reach for a new trend of sound," he says. "I want people to enjoy themselves, have fun while I soothe their souls."