

BMWMB: The Power of Three

Timing is everything. Many great ideas have been launched into the world and forgotten because the timing of their debut was wrong. Yet, lately it seems all the planets have aligned to create the perfect environment for the introduction of a greater consciousness of ourselves and our purpose in the world. After viewing Oprah's Hip Hop town hall to discuss the problems that exist within the music genre and American society in general, I am even more convinced that the time is right for **BMWMB**.

But what is a BMWMB? No, it's not a new model of BMW nor a new television network or sports association. And no, you won't see it "walking it out" on BET. However, that is not to say you won't see it "working it out" on the popular network and others. From the corporate office to the barbershop, from the corner store to Ivy League halls of academia, BMWMB can be found collectively or individually making things happen. Still, don't get it? Here's the answer. BMWMB is the acronym for **Black Men Who Men Business**.

Black Men Who Mean Business, the phrase alone commands a certain respect and sense of anticipation because Black men who mean business are not only the visionaries but also the reality-makers. With that intent, Sacramento, California based writer and producer, **Michael Dailey**, gave birth to BMWMB. He partnered with legendary scholar, author, orator, and professor **Dr. Cornel West**, and his brother, **Clifton West**, to create the original chapter of BMWMB. I say chapter because I'm praying their model will be duplicated around the country and eventually the world.

In August, these three visionaries released, **Never Forget: A Journey of Revelations**. Debuting on Hidden Beach Recordings' new label, **Hidden Beach Forum**, this powerful musical experience places Dr. West in the eye of a lyrical and visual Hip Hop storm. Just as music execs, artists, business leaders, and community activist meet to clean up the misbehavior in Hip-Hop, BMWMB and Hidden Beach will have already constructed a musical template for them to follow. This collaboration of conscious thought and musical righteousness takes Dr. West out of the confines of Princeton classrooms and releases him creatively to share the mic with Hip Hop and R&B heavy hitters like *Andre 3000*, *Black Thought*, *Kanye West protégé' Rhymefest*, *KRS-1*, *Talib Kweli*, *Prince*, *Dave Hollister*, and the late *Gerald LeVert*. Addressing issues of racial profiling, politics, 9/11, war, and a litany of other concerns of not just Black people but America at large, **Never Forget** is a wonderful example of just what men can do when they mean business. No bitches, no hoes, no misogyny, no homophobia just straight lyrical genius laid over perfect beats. The music and the message transcend generational and racial differences to speak to concerns we all have as everyday people.

And now that Hip Hop appears to be ready to address its problems, this unique project is definitely part of the solution. Again, timing is everything. Hidden Beach founder, **Steve McKeever**, could not have planned it any better. And the title of the project is so appropriate to what we are facing right now. Never forget that Black music set the musical foundation for this country. Never forget it soothed our souls in the fields and secretly led us to freedom in the north, expressed our woes in shades of blue as we carved out a new existence in a racist society, helped us swing our way into a new cultural and economic existence as we passed trees bearing Strange Fruit. And while the country faced a great depression, we sang a happy song because it was well with our souls, marched to the rhythm of a new freedom song; pumped our fist to the beat of black pride, scratched classic tunes to create a new sound; gave

pop music a new king that was a thriller, and ushered in a phenomenal musical combination of all these experiences and history just for it to be reduced to one drunken night in a strip club. People, never forget