

# A Hip Hop Dissertation is a C...Dr View Describes His Research

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## SPEAKERS

Eva Dale, David Staley, Stevie Johnson

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**S** Stevie Johnson 00:00

I think that was the true essence of people just being able to see themselves beyond their circumstances, like hey, I can find joy, peace, happiness in this in this culture that truly embodies my lived experiences.

**E** Eva Dale 00:19

From the heart of the Ohio State University on the Oval, this is Voices of Excellence from the College of Arts and Sciences, with your host, David Staley. Voices focuses on the innovative work being done by faculty and staff in the College of Arts and Sciences at The Ohio State University. From departments as wide ranging as art, astronomy, chemistry and biochemistry, physics, emergent materials, mathematics and languages among many others, the college always has something great happening. Join us to find out what's new now.

**D** David Staley 00:54

I am pleased to welcome to the ASC tech studios today Dr. View, assistant professor of creative practice and popular music at The Ohio State University College of the Arts and Sciences. His areas of expertise include hip hop studies, race, class, and gender and popular culture, race and sound studies, and DJ performance and production based studies. Welcome to Voices, Dr. View.

**S** Stevie Johnson 01:17

Thank you. Thank you for having me.

**D** David Staley 01:18

So as we record this, this is the 50th anniversary of hip hop, which dates to August 11, 1973. Why that date, what happened on that date?

**S** Stevie Johnson 01:30

Uh yeah, big shout-out to DJ Kool Herc ,but more so a big shout-out to his sister. His younger sister wanted to throw a block party on August 11, 1973, and she knew her big brother was playing records in the neighborhood, and they decided to throw a back to school party. And that, for the most part, has been like the cornerstone of the foundation, or at least the coined date for hip hop, which I argue is a little bit older than that. When I think about the culture, no one in hip hop says this is the date that hip hop started. And even when I think about just from African traditions and customs, individuals were breakdancing in the early '50s, '60s, and probably even before that. And so, when I just think about just the music, the trajectory of hip hop, it is just a different name, but you know, that body of work of bebop, and to jazz, to rock and roll, to funk and soul, all accumulated to develop disco, to develop what is now, you know, hip hop. And yeah, 50 years, but I'll say 50 plus years for sure.

**D** David Staley 02:44

Well then, who selected that date or why is that date selected?

**S** Stevie Johnson 02:47

I think it's just, uh... quite frankly, it's a New York thing. I'm from the South, and so, I think it was just an opportunity for us to take advantage of the moment to say like, hey, hip hop is here to stay. And I don't have any ill wills in relation to that, but I think it's more like, so much was happening in the culture, the post industrial society was taking place, people were being removed from their homes, buildings were being burned and they needed an avenue to really articulate their lived experiences. And so, you know, hip hop was there, the breakdancing, the graffiti, the DJing, the emceeing. But I think the biggest piece, the element is knowledge of self. And people understood who they were, and where they came from and how they wanted to see themselves reflected in the world. And I think that pivotal moment of DJ Kool Herc and his sister and just bringing community together, I think that was the true essence of people just being able to see themselves beyond their circumstances like, hey, I can find joy, peace, happiness in this, in this culture that truly embodies my lived experiences. And so, yeah, I think that's just kind of where it comes from, but overall hip hop has been around way longer than 50 years.

**D** David Staley 04:05

You said you're from the south, from where?

**S** Stevie Johnson 04:07

**S** Stevie Johnson 04:07

So, I'm originally from Longview, Texas, so Dr. View, the name, comes from my hometown, we call it "The View" for short. So I'm about two hours east of Dallas, Texas, about 45 minutes from Shreveport, Louisiana, so very country, red dirt. It's a town, I'm wearing a town hat. It's not necessarily a city, it's a town that everybody kind of knows everyone. So yeah, those are my humble beginnings of just Texas boy, country roots, single parent household. My mom worked graveyard shifts, only had one Black teacher in my K-12 experience, it's probably the only teacher I can remember because she would sing to me every day, "If you want to be somebody, if you want to go somewhere, better wake up and pay attention." And that was my introduction to music, to hip hop.

**D** David Staley 04:55

So was there hip hop, then, outside of New York?

**S** Stevie Johnson 04:58

Absolutely. Yeah, absolutely. I mean, you think about the influence of artists like Outkast in the 1995 Source Awards. They get the Group of the Year, and they're being booed like, on stage.

**D** David Staley 05:11

Why were they booed, remind us?

**S** Stevie Johnson 05:12

This was also during the time, during the East Coast West Coast beef between Tupac and Biggie. So, '95, very elevated levels of hatred from the coasts, and the South is just like, hey, we have something to say too. So, Andre 3000 goes on stage and is like, "Hey, y'all ain't got love for the South? We're here too." And I think that was the kind of a coming out moment for the South to feel comfortable expressing who we are. So yeah, like hip hop is in the South. It's in Atlanta, it's in Tulsa. It's in...

**D** David Staley 05:45

Tulsa?

**S** Stevie Johnson 05:47

It's in Tulsa. It's in South Florida. It's in South Oak Cliff, Dallas, Texas. It's there for sure.

**D** David Staley 05:53

Well, I laugh a little bit about Tulsa, but I understand Tulsa. In fact, we're going to talk about Tulsa here in just a bit. Before we get to that, so you're a scholar of hip hop studies. So, we've got a sense of what hip hop is, what's hip hop studies?

S

Stevie Johnson 06:07

Yeah, hip hop studies is, to me, it's an epistemological and axiological way of seeing the world. And so, there's also in my mind, there's the idea of the theory, like the understanding the culture, understanding the history, the significance of certain things that have happened in society that needs to be discussed and addressed and understood, but there's also a practitioner side in relation to Hip Hop Studies. So, the idea of taking these theories and these frameworks and these historical accounts, these archives, and bringing it to a space, particularly as assistant professor of creative practice, it's the idea of how do I take this theory and develop action or practice out of it? And so, the DJ skills, like learning how to DJ, learning how to rock a crowd, understanding... particularly, I'm a DJ. I've been DJing since 2009, and majority of the events that I DJ, I don't typically know the people that are there. So, like, how do we read a crowd? How do you understand nonverbal cues, communication? As far as DJs, like we were the Spotify playlist before Spotify, the algorithm, came into play. So, when I see you walk into a space and you do a head nod or you tap your foot, that's me saying like, oh, they're liking this song on Spotify. So if you like this song, then the next song I play, you'll like as well. So how do I develop community with someone I don't even know? And that's sort of the skill that I think it's a part of as well, in addition to a production too. So the sound, the landscape, like how do we develop art that speaks to the times of today? The reason why I decided to do creative projects, not just because I'm a DJ and a producer, but it's about access. How do I talk about election season coming up, particularly with an album, as opposed to writing a book that may take a little bit longer, through the publishing process, getting it passed through. So, yeah, just trying to be present to what's happening in society and develop courses that speak to those lived experiences for students.

D

David Staley 08:12

Tell me, you give this example, the election coming up - how are you going to respond to that? How are you going to produce? How are you going to DJ?

S

Stevie Johnson 08:18

Yeah, for example, I'm coming out with a project called "Higher Learning", which is a spinoff of the 1995 film John Singleton did that talked about higher education. So Omar Epps, Tyra Banks, as well as some others were in that film. And ironically enough, that's the first movie I ever saw as a kid in like a movie theater. And so taking that film and everything it represents in relation to higher education, those same things are happening in society today. And you talk about an election year where depending upon who gets elected affects like state funding, and so how does it affect particularly students of color, i. e. Black students, who may not have as many resources as possible. Even just taking it from a student perspective, you know you got students who are working full time, first-generation, working 30 hours a week, trying to be involved on campus, taking a full load, it's a lot to carry at an age of seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty, twenty-one years old. So, how do I develop a project that speaks to that lived

experience and talks about their relationship with their faculty and maybe how faculty may see them or perceive them even before having a conversation? Those things are important not only to the student, but also to the culture that we're trying to create as these students are coming to campus, but also what type of conviction can be given to faculty, staff, and administrators to speak to our elected officials to say like, hey, these are the things that we're seeing with our students. These are the things that they are conveying to us. And like, if the goal is to recruit and retain and graduate these students, then we need to make sure that we have certain things in place to make sure that their success is exactly what it needs to be. So, that's just kind of how I see my role of like, I have an honored responsibility to really bring these issues to the forefront and hold people accountable to the things that we said we were going to do in relation to student success.

D

David Staley 10:12

So, you're probably best known, I think, as founder and executive producer of "Fire in Little Africa". I want to talk more about this, and I'm going to let you talk about it because the simple way to describe it is it's a multimedia hip hop project, but that doesn't begin to convey what this is.

S

Stevie Johnson 10:27

Absolutely. So, in 1921, there was a community of Black folks in Tulsa, Oklahoma, a.k.a. Black Wall Street, who lost everything: lost their lives, lost their businesses, lost their generational wealth. Even just kind of a side story, Oklahoma during the early 1900s was on the verge of becoming an all Black state, had the most Black towns in the country. So, the story is that a 19-year-old shoe-shiner by the name of Dick Rowland went into an elevator and sexually assaulted a white woman by the name of Sarah Page. And that, essentially, was the impetus for white supremacists to go into the Greenwood District, which is roughly 40 square mile blocks, and basically burned it to the ground. Reports are that roughly 30 people were murdered. We actually know it was more than that, roughly 300, 350 people, were murdered on June 1st, 1921. And so they called it a race riot as opposed to a race massacre because individuals couldn't file insurance claims to their homes. And so, they basically lost everything. 100 years later, I was working for the Woody Guthrie and the Bob Dylan Center, which are two museum exhibits in historic Greenwood District, and just kind of posed a question to them in 2019 of like, hey, the centennial is coming up of the massacre, and I would really like to commemorate this land, this community, and even artists who are direct descendants of these families who lost their lives. And so I was like, I would like to develop a multimedia project, and I wanted to develop an album, a documentary. The album is a 21-track album where 60 artists from the state of Oklahoma, not just Tulsa, but Tulsa, Oklahoma City, Lawton, Enid, Oklahoma came together and spent five days, in 2020, in the last week before the pandemic shut down the entire world, and we recorded an album in five days. We recorded 143 songs in five days, and we recorded in nine recording studio spaces. We recorded four days in the Greenwood Cultural Center and one day in what's called Skyline Mansion, which was formerly a KKK house. And so, we recorded the songs and the pandemic shut us down, and I'm sitting on 140 songs and can't get into the studio. We're a year and some change away from releasing the album because we wanted to release it on the weekend of the Centennial in 2021. So we got creative, got a Zoom account, started sharing the music, had a Google Drive account. We just shared the music and we're just making cuts through Zoom because we couldn't get into the studio. At the same

time, I worked for the Bob Dylan Center and got in contact with Bob Dylan's publicist Larry Jenkins, who used to be President and CEO of Sony Records in the early 90s. He was a consultant with the job. I'm just like, hey, got this Black Wall Street album. Just want to share it with you, not thinking anything is gonna come of it. And he listens to the roughs, it's not mixed or mastered, and he says, "This is amazing. Ethiopia's gonna love this." And I'm like, who is Ethiopia? And he said, "She's the chairwoman of Motown Records." And so we get on a call with Motown, they're like, "This is amazing. We want to sign you all to a licensing deal," which, we still own our music, and ended up signing a deal with Motown. Yeah, again, we did an album, did a documentary that shows the creation of the album in those five days, as well as a curriculum. So the songs that made the album, we developed into a K-12 curriculum that has state and national standards, as well as a podcast where we interviewed any and every artist and creator that helped with the project, just to get their perspective on what Fire in Little Africa truly means. And so, I used to get questions all the time, like, why are you doing so many things? And I think for me it was, how do I meet people where they're at? How do I get the word out about this history that's, you know, even before Watchmen and Lovecraft Country, people really didn't know about it. And so people can listen to the podcast, maybe before they listen to the album, or a parent may look at the curriculum before they allow their child to listen to the album, which we have a clean and edited version too. So we were really trying to be intentional about getting the messaging out and just providing the space for creatives to like truly tell their story. And I think the beauty of Southern hip hop is we don't romanticize about this mountain top. We truly want to let people know how we feel and articulate our stories and really speaking to the times, which, so many things have happened in relation to Tulsa. There's been a mass excavation where they have found bodily remains, and we have literally songs that speak directly to those things that have come about, particularly in Tulsa. So yeah, that's essentially, you know, the project in a nutshell. But it's definitely a great body of work.

D

David Staley 15:45

Tell me about one of the songs, you said there was one about the excavation, which was fairly recent, I think, the excavation of the bodies.

S

Stevie Johnson 15:52

Yeah, there's a record I produced on the album called "Shining". And there's a line in it where the artist by the name of Dialtone says, "300 deaths, I guess that's how the story go. I guess they didn't remember that Jane Doe, Jane Doe, Jane Doe." So he's basically saying like 300 deaths, that's what y'all told us, but there's way more individuals who we've lost. And so those are just very simple, very poetic, visually driven lines that were a part of this album. So, definitely amazing body of work, for sure.

D

David Staley 16:27

Tell me another track, tell me another.

S

Stevie Johnson 16:29

Yeah, there's another track on the album called "City of Dreams" and it was recorded by an

Yeah, there's another track on the album called "City of Dreams", and it was recorded by an artist by the name of Saint Domonick. And the hook says, "I had a dream. It was May 29th. I was sitting in the cell. Now they're playing with my life. Now they're burning my city down," and it keeps going on and on. But, essentially, he's embodying being Dick Rowland, in the jail cell while the massacre is happening. So, what people don't know is that the University of Tulsa has a special collection over the Tulsa Race Massacres that they've been developing since 1989, and we went there prior to recording the album. And I essentially asked like what, if anything, is the relationship between Dick Rowland and Sarah Page. Come to find out, they were actually in a romantic relationship with each other and even ended up fleeing Tulsa and getting married. And so us getting that information prior to recording the album helped us develop a song where he's basically kind of writing this love letter to Sarah to say like, hey, I had a dream, it was May 29th, I was sitting in a cell and playing with my life. And like, I thought you loved me, I thought we were in this together. So, you just see like this, this humanity that's happening in within all this chaos, within the album. And it just puts you in a place of trying to understand, like there's not a linear story like this. It's very complicated, and you just kind of have to sit with that within the entire album.

D

David Staley 18:02

Did you direct the documentary, so I put you down as director?

S

Stevie Johnson 18:05

I was an executive producer for sure, but I allowed my community to do what they do. And so, Sneak, his name, Keith Daniels, was the main director for the film, as well as Ben Lindsey. Keith Daniels was actually a recording artist on the album as well. I just allowed, I gave kind of structure in relation to like what we want to see for the documentary, just capturing like the essence of it, but I truly allowed people just to create and do what they do. I mean, I'm not a filmmaker, but I do know what feels good, but I just allow people just to do them, do what they do.

D

David Staley 18:43

You do so many other things, I just assumed you were a filmmaker, too. You've written that, and I think you were referring to "Fire in Little Africa", you said, "In essence, I'm trying to bridge history, music, sound, and higher education," which I just think is just a terrific idea. And I'm wondering, "Fire in Little Africa", is better than a book, better than a monograph. This is a better way to commemorate than to write a book.

S

Stevie Johnson 19:07

Absolutely. And that's been my, my argument slash frustration within the Academy. Like, this is a body of work that was not in the Academy. That was me understanding how I wanted to be seen in the world. I've always seen myself as a communal scholar, never really saw myself as a tenure track professor at the Ohio State University, it was never part of the plan. It was always this work. I'll give you another example, like this work of "Fire in Little Africa", exposed me to the fact that my hometown was a part of Red Summer two years prior, and I had no clue. And

so this work has felt very purposeful, ancestral. Yeah, just very, like spiritual work. That's really all I can say. And so yeah, like the music, the history, bridging those, the sound, higher education. It's really me just saying, I'm just trying to convict people. Through the music, through the lyrics, through the visuals, and just provide a different way of seeing scholarship, which I think with where the Academy is headed and the students that we have, and we're in a very TikTok, Twitter, Instagram, very like, to the point, you gotta meet people where they're at, and I'm trying to do that with the scholarship.

D

David Staley 20:25

Let's build on this. Your PhD is from the University of Oklahoma, 2019. Your dissertation is called "Curriculum of the Mind: A BlackCrit, Narrative Inquiry, Hip Hop Album on Anti-Blackness and Freedom for Black Male Collegians at historically white institutions". It's very long. I also want to point out that it won the Bobby Wright Dissertation of the Year Award from the Association for the Study of Higher Education, which is, you know, congratulations.

S

Stevie Johnson 20:53

Thank you.

D

David Staley 21:01

What's a hip hop dissertation?

S

Stevie Johnson 21:04

I can really only speak for myself, but a hip hop dissertation is a community body of work. And so, particularly with this dissertation, black males have the lowest retention and graduation rates amongst any student population, amongst any institution type. And for me, particularly being a black male in higher education, I was just reading a lot of literature about black males not being academically prepared or all these just very negative deficit mindset type of things. And, I was in a space where like, I wanted to really interrogate and provide a counter narrative of... it's not that they're academically unprepared, it's because of the racial environment that they encounter each and every day. Particularly at the University of Oklahoma, there was a lot of blackface that was going on on campus. There was a lot of organizations that would say there'll never be another "N-word" in our organization. Or there would be students who would be racially profiled, like campus police would ask for their ID like, are you a student here? Or these microaggressions of, hey, are you playing sports, like for the institution? And so those things like weigh on the psyche of students. And so how do I develop an ethical and trustworthy dissertation model that allows them to talk about those experiences. Essentially, what I did was, did the traditional dissertation, you know wrote it, but decided, like, I need to build something that is accessible to prospective students, parents, faculty, staff, for them to understand that we all have a role in the success of these students. And what better way for me to get people to understand that than allowing students to get on in a recording studio and articulate those experiences. So, I developed essentially a dissertation album where the entire setting was a hip hop recording studio. And the first two sessions I asked students or



participants to bring in artifacts that represented their notion of freedom. And these individuals identified as campus leaders, photographers, visual artists, DJs, producers, engineers, or just what we call as hip hop heads, like folks who just are well versed. I would even argue that most hip hop heads are ethnomusicologists because they just understand the culture, like current events, able to like, really blend and merge the different things to create new content. And so, one individual identified as a photographer, and they brought in a Polaroid camera, and they said the only time I ever feel free is when I take pictures. But they also said, in relation to anti-blackness, "I know my freedom is limited because even with the Polaroid, there's always a white border around it." And so imagine being in a group, a black man, which ironically enough, just being in a place of healing and just being able to talk transparently about our experiences is great in and of itself. But being able to take that artifact, that story, and connect it to a song to put on the album- which one of the songs on this dissertation album is called Polaroids- and so, someone takes that and makes it part of their lived experiences, but also connects it to these larger systemic issues in society. So hook goes, "I was looking at these Polaroids and books I got loans for. I didn't know about Black Wall Street till I was 24." So context, I graduated from an institution in Oklahoma of higher learning. I'm looking at these Polaroids. I'm looking over my experiences in college. I'm looking at these Polaroids and books I got loans for, I've accrued debt over time. I'm looking at these Polaroids and books I got loans for, I didn't know about Black Wall Street until I was 24. So imagine, K-12, college, obtaining a degree, accruing debt, and yet I live an hour, two hours away from Black Wall Street, and I don't know any history about it. So it's really an interrogation to higher education to say, like, what is the problem? My history, my lived experiences should be conveyed in the curriculum, but it's not. So those are the ways I feel, you know, the scholarship, Curriculum of the Mind, is a way to truly articulate this new body of scholarship that I feel like is coming down the pipeline.

D

David Staley 25:44

So, you are the 2023 Nasir Jones Hip Hop Fellow at Harvard University. Congratulations.

S

Stevie Johnson 25:51

Thank you so much.

D

David Staley 25:51

Tell us about this fellowship.

S

Stevie Johnson 25:52

Yeah, the fellowship is named after Nasir Jones, a.k.a Nas. Famous, iconic emcee. Ironically enough, you know, Nas never finished school, never finished high school. So, I think it's serendipitous that, you know, they have this fellowship program named after someone who didn't finish school at the first institution that was ever built in 1636, right? So it's been around since 2013. 9th Wonder, famous producer, he's also a professor as well, was the first fellow to

do the program. His project was around hip hop sampling, so developing like, sampling trees, like family trees. So imagine a Tribe Called Quest record, and you can see the lines of how many people have sampled that record.

D

David Staley 26:39

Nice.

S

Stevie Johnson 26:39

I came in in the tenth year of the program. Dr. Henry Louis Gates, a.k.a. Skip, is over the program. It's housed in the African American Studies Department. And when I found out about it a year prior to going to Cambridge, I was like, I have to fundraise to bring "Fire in Little Africa", the entire collective, to Harvard. And the reason why... All the artists. And the reason why I did that was because with hip hop, hip hop studies, one thing I didn't mention is this idea of collective knowledge production. When people make records, when you look at liner notes, when you look at credits, you don't see just one name on there. You see producers, you see musicians, and there's a lot of, you know, mixing engineers, there's so many people, things that are happening to make a successful record, an album. And for me particularly, representing Coastal Oklahoma and Black Wall Street and everything that it represented, the Black Dollars circulated 19 times before it left the community in the 1900s. Like, what type of scholar would I be, particularly identifying as a communal hip hop scholar if I don't bring the community with me? And so, I fundraised to bring the entire collective to Cambridge, which has never been done before. First time that a hip hop fellow has ever performed on campus. I did a colloquium, an academic talk to the campus public, we did a documentary screening while we were there, as well as did a performance of the album, and we brought our band, we brought our live stream team, we brought our babies, so we have seven 4th to 5th grade students that are part of an all Black youth orchestra. They came with us as well as their parents, and so not only did they get to be a part of that, but we had like college tours set up for them while they were there just for them to get out of Tulsa. A lot of these people have never left Tulsa, have never been on a plane, so let alone being able to go to Harvard and perform and just be in the mix and really understand... I don't think as we were making the album, it's very difficult to articulate what is happening in the moment, and I think that was an opportunity for us to be still and recognize like how much we actually did collectively. But, also for me to articulate my story and how all this kind of came about. The beauty of it is, you know, in October of 2023, the Oprah Winfrey Network has developed a six part docu series called Rebuilding Black Wall Street, and we have our own episode, and that episode is called The Mansion. I mentioned, like, us recording the album in this former KKK house, but it shows us going to Harvard and everything that came about with that. So, yeah, I'm really excited about not only people being able to see that, but to see like, the love and the community aspect of what we're trying to.... that's what hip hop is, at least for me. It's not about the commercialization. It's not about how many Spotify streams or whatever. It's really about people are really fighting each and every day to to live, and how can I provide joy with my sensibilities as a hip hop producer and DJ, and now professor, to make some change and hopefully just provide some inspiration to so many people.

D

David Staley 27:05

All the artists? So Dr. View, I gotta ask, you're a D.J, and a producer and an emcee and a documentary filmmaker. Why on earth would you want to be a professor?

**S** Stevie Johnson 30:23

I don't know. No, I'm just kidding. Um, so ironically enough, got Dissertation of the Year 2019 and I tried to get on the job market and couldn't find anything. And I think it was a point where I'm like, hey, I don't think this is just a space for me. And so ironically enough this past year, a colleague of mine tagged me on Twitter. It said, "Hey, there's a position at Ohio State. It has your name written all over it. You should look into it." And I laughed it off. I didn't even open it. Just like, it's not for me. So they DM'd me and was like, you just really need to look at it. And so I just clicked on it, and I was very intrigued by the dual appointment between the School of Music and African American African Studies. In my mind, I come from higher education, Student Affairs background, so I understand bureaucracy and politics, and the School of Music, AAAS, on paper that just doesn't sound like a good collaboration. But I was just really interested, but also just want to keep my name relevant. So I just applied just to be kind of nosy, and just kind of see if it would be a good fit. I must say when I got off the plane and ironically enough, the week I interviewed was the Grammy ceremony and they were doing the 50th hip hop kind of commemorative piece. And I just remember being in the hotel, like hip hop never thought it would do what it's doing right now. In the moment, I just wanted to put my best foot forward, and if I didn't get it, it just wasn't meant for me. But I put my best foot forward, and I believe that Ohio State is one of the first times I've ever been affirmed in the Academy. Mike Smith, who's in Jazz Studies here at Ohio State, the first thing I did when I got off the plane, was I had dinner and he didn't even introduce himself. He just said, "Dr. View, I can't wait to talk about Fire in Little Africa," and I knew it was just some different energy, I felt that and am just truly grateful to be here. So, it was by happenstance. I was not looking for this position, I'm just grateful that I took a chance.

**D** David Staley 30:43

Tell us what's next for your research.

**S** Stevie Johnson 32:46

Re-releasing Curriculum of the Mind- it's the five year anniversary. The University of Michigan has a peer reviewed album process, I'm submitting that to the University of Michigan Press, so I'm really excited about that. The collective that came about the Curriculum of the Mind, it's called The Space Program. We are developing our next album called Higher Learning, which is coming out in 2024. In addition to, I'm working on a commemorative album for my mother, it's called Tidy. She was a hip hop feminist before Dr. Joan Morgan coined the term. She gave me my first "foundational texts"- I'm using quotations because the texts were albums. The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill, which was the last hip hop album in '99 that ever received Album of the Year from the Grammy Recording Academy, as well as Tupac's Greatest Hits. And so my mom is also an All-American point guard, and she still holds a national high school assist record, it's like 40 years and counting. What I'm basically conveying is, you know, traditional point guard is a facilitator on the court. They're more like a player's coach. And I essentially am equating what she's given me as being my mother and a coach and a facilitator and always

being selfless to say those are the exact same things I've been doing as a hip hop scholar, particularly in Tulsa and the community. And so I'm developing a basketball themed Mother's Day album for my mom. And so, really excited about that. Just excited about future opportunities, I just came back from New York City. Dr. Patina Love, which is a dynamic hip hop, but also just education scholar, came out with the book Punished for Dreaming, and she called and said, "Hey, uh, I need a, I need an album for this." Developed an album for the book. Ironically enough, I didn't have the book before I made the album, so I just kind of had to make the album based upon these points that she gave me. And so I just came back from Columbia University in Schaumburg in New York. And yeah, it's just been great. I'm just really grateful for this position in creative practice and popular music here at Ohio State, and just hoping to provide some impact and some change here as well.

**D** David Staley 35:09  
Dr. View. Thank you.

**S** Stevie Johnson 35:11  
Thank you so much. Thanks for having me.

**E** Eva Dale 35:15  
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