



One of these guys is Pyro. If you know, win a prize.

by Fritz the Cat

Pyro is one of the most intelligent people in this world of hip-hop. A graduate of Berkeley in the Bay Area, and current graduate student at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at

Harvard, where he studies things like Real Estate Finance & Development and Negotiation & Conflict Resolution, Pyro also knows how to put his complex thought down on paper in rhyme form, and deliver in his intimidating baritone voice in a way that'll make you shiver.



*DS: So tell us how y'all got started.*

P: Well, the Kraken, that's me, Pyro, Cyrus, and Able One. We all went to Berkeley together, and actually me and Cyrus, went to high school together, and we're all from L.A. as well. A lot of our influence, a lot of our inspiration to start into rap, was what was going on in the underground scene in the bay area at the time. This was around the time of Souls of Mischief and their first album coming out, Hieroglyphics was just blowing up. Another group that was around at the time was Mystik Journeymen, before Living Legends and all that crap, and the third group was the whole Hobo Junction click, the Whoridas, Saafir, they were doing their thing at the time too. We weren't even trying to get signed, we weren't even on that level yet, we just want to put out tapes and be like the rest of our peers in the hip-hop scene that's going on in the east bay basically.

*DS: So when was Abstract and Cognac released?*

P: Abstract & Cognac came out in the spring of '96, about one or two months before I graduated actually, so that was kind of like weird timing, because when I graduated I went immediately to Washington DC, and was living there for like 3 months, and also at that time, to not go into detail, there was some internal problems with the group, so it was pretty much decided like pretty much after abstract and cognac came out that I wasn't going to be in the group any longer, and that Cyrus and Able were going to continue on as the group the Kraken.

*DS: So what's next for you?*

P: What I want to do next year is release two EPs and another single, all in '99. I can't afford to lose the buzz that I create every time I release something, so I'm really trying to step up the pace, and the visibility of me as an artist.

*DS: Tell us about Propaganda/Status Quotient.*

P: Well, when you listen to Abstract & Cognac, I like my verses on A&C, but me as a person, you're just one in a group of three, so it's not completely your vision, obviously, I mean that's what being in a group is about. And you can kind of tell, like I'm only on three songs on A&C, and Cyrus and Able both have solo songs on A&C, plus they did that song together. So I think Propaganda/Status Quotient showed a lot of my growth since A&C, I didn't want to do some "You're wack and I'm the best MC" type of shit. I'm not pointing that out as being a bad thing, but me personally, I wanted to move away from that. I'm like hey, I graduated from University, 90% of the hip-hop community is rapping about the same shit, so why don't you use the knowledge that you have and start rapping about something else. Why don't you be in that other 10%, and really do something, so that even if no one goes out and buys my shit, maybe some historian 50 years from now will see that, that's an example of something that maybe wasn't as commercially successful, but as was on the cutting edge of underground hip-hop in the late 90's.