

Mutamassik's LETTER TO SCRATCH MAGAZINE - November 1, 2006

In response to Thomas Golianopoulos' article in issue #13 'where the female mcs?': who gives a fuck. Where the female PRODUCERS?!!! Here's one theory for why there aren't more women producers: from an early age, it is proved to a girl over and over that alot of doors open for her just by looking good and sexy. The weak ones take this easy road. The message is: the world will reward you instantly if you just concentrate on looking desirable. Show a little sumpin'sumpin' and alot of doors will open. Why bother sitting all alone in a room looking busted, breaking your head over OMS, m-points, extension conflicts, bass lines, serial & firewire cables, NS-10 fuses, phasing, hot kicks, old SCSI ports & rca shorts? There is no time to perfect wily feminine affectations when you're hunkered down in the lab. You best believe that. (And i do not wanna see a chick trying to rock an MPC with a french manicure unless she's Flo-Jo or Sheila E.). Yes, I've seen your little spots on CynnaMixx & Miri Ben-Ari(#6), Tachelle(#10), Dj Naturally, Spinderella and Stoni (all issue #5), but only a couple of them are actual beat-makers and please leave the bitch in camel-toe shorts (#13) & the worse-than-useless Trina spot (#8) for your dumb cousin XXL ! Let me be clear by saying that this is not about affirmative action- put a woman on just cos she's a woman neither, cos if women aren't gonna come correctly they may as well stay in the salon. This brings up another topic: the fact that most of these so-called 'super producers' don't even touch all their gear! Call me naive, but i was convinced the heavy producers won their title cos they were bangin' out the beats, sampling, sequencing, recording into protools, editing & mixing, in addition to bringing the creative juice. The trusty excuse is that these guys get big and upgrade to working in expensive studios where you can't just come in and rock an SSL after running your Mackie for a decade. Fair enough. But some of the hottest tracks i've ever heard was when these guys were still hungry, making tracks by any means neccessary, on any piece of gear they could get their hands on. Resourcefulness is the soul of hip-hop and the undisputed hot shit! So because the term 'producer' is so misleading these days, let me clarify. Why your magazine was kicking ass is because it's been speaking to the active producer: the hands-on-the-gear-diggin'-in'-the-crates-wiring-they-own-patchbay-producer as opposed to the the passive producer, i.e., the-sit-on-the-couch-at-the-back-of-the-studio-smackin'-on-popeye's-chicken-giving-orders-kind-of-'producer'. I got my start producing in '96 on the Ensoniq ASR 10 & EPS 16+, then on an Atari ST 1040, Akai S900, 2 turntables and a mixer, then moved on to a Mac, Topaz 24 track board, E-mu SP-1200, Akai S3000, Cubase vst, Lexicon mpx-1, blah blah, etc. I play & record drums/instruments into my Mac, loop them, sample hits into my Akai, scratch from the Technics hooked up to distortion pedals, play bass lines, bang on the SP, mix it, etc. Shit, it's humble, but i thought that's what i was supposed to do as a 'producer'. Take this letter as a roll call, first for all the hard-working producers who take pride in being on top of their vision from start to finish and secondly, for men and women to awake from their mental death chamber. And to address another reader's (Slash) on-point letter in the last issue--please, please, please don't sell out, i.e., forsake the dedicated producers by taking the short-cut to what you think the masses want to chew on because don't we all know it, there is so much bullshit out there. That's why your magazine was so exhilarating. Y'all responded to his plea to leave the artists off the cover with this: "great producers are DEFINED by breaking artists". This statement is only valid from an a&r, money-grubbing point of view, not a musical one. CASE IN POINT: how many straight accappella albums have rappers put out vs. how many instrumental albums have

producers put out? (I'll be generous and guess it's 1 to 1000). And of all people, why couldn't Primo have his own cover (#9)? The dude is blessed producer-general magic and you had him all squashed up against a wall behind Nas like an unwanted step-child! (p.s. Jerry, i know your job is mad stressful. You gotta deliver to the man. Welcome to the modern slave trade. Was it Mr. Rheingold that made you add the rapper-starlets on the cover to up the sales? I appreciate the energy you're putting in so please help uplift colored people by staying on track. I promise to God, I will sacrifice making that extra cash for my son in exchange for him knowing that there are some people trying to live in truth. Word on my seed and fruit! p.p.s. Lizz, I know you gotta care about this subject as a top-position woman of color.) -Mutamassik