



Fresh Face Fresh Prince

Aubrey Drake Graham

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> Aubrey Drake Graham has taken the pop charts by storm with three top singles. You may know him as 'Drake' or as Jimmy from *Degrassi: The Next Generation* or maybe you haven't heard of him yet, but you will.

The 24-year-old Canadian actor and recording artist is a quadruple threat to other rap artists because he not only acts, raps and writes his own music but he sings his choruses sans auto tune and is reminiscent of R&B singers of the past.

He released his first mix tape *Room for Improvement* via Myspace, capitalizing on his fan base from his role on *Degrassi*. Drake is the first unsigned Canadian rapper to have his music video debuted on BET.

His songs *Best I Ever Had* and *Every Girl* with their catchy rhythms and repetition managed to both hit top 10 on Billboard's Hot 100 chart in the same week, a feat that has only been achieved by one other artist – ever.

Numerous record companies clamored over the new artist, seeing green in their eyes, and finally in June 2009 Drake signed with Young Money Entertainment, Lil Wayne's musical empire.

Music runs in Drake's blood. His father is a Memphis Tennessee drummer who worked with Jerry Lee Lewis and his uncle is musician Teenie Hodges. He has been writing music since the tender age of 10 and has since penned numerous hits for other artists like Larry Graham, Al Green and Dr.Dre.

There are no dark-sides to Drake's success story, no tabloid-worthy gang affiliations or torrid love affairs, he's just a nice young man who happens to be extremely multi-talented. He proved he has the musical chops to top the charts before he was even signed with a record company.

You can listen for the first single off of his upcoming album called *Shut it Down*, featuring *The Dream*, in the near future. The song is atypical for rap and aimed at empowering women by saying that their beauty can shut a club down. Many of Drake's songs focus on empowerment, love, family and non-superficial success rather than stereotypical lyrics of the genre.

"You are going to hear me rapping about my life," Drake said in an interview with *Hip Hop Wired*.

Even for those who don't enjoy the rap genre or those who have grown tired of the monotony, there is a fresh lyrical perspective intertwined with melodies for all.

Drake just wrapped up a national tour with Lil Wayne, where he injured his knee while performing. With his determination to overcome injury, he set an ambitious date for his first studio album release. *Thank Me Later* will hit shelves in February 2010. Until then, you are sure to hear more about this young up-and-coming rapper/singer/actor/writer who already has two young artist awards under his belt and has worked with Jay-Z, Kanye West, Lil Wayne, Mary J. Blige and many more.

Reminiscent of Will Smith this new *Fresh Prince* is sure to make a lasting impact on the music scene and maybe even the silver screen. <

