

DATE

HAND DELIVERED

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Attn: David Brown, Investigations and Hearings Division
Enforcement Bureau – Room 4-A462

Re: Station WFMU(FM)
East Orange, NJ
File No. EB-04-IH-0418

Dear Ms. Dortch:

This letter constitutes the response of Auricle Communications (“Auricle”) to the letter inquiry (“Inquiry”), dated October 20, 2004, concerning allegations of the broadcast of indecency and/or profane material over noncommercial educational FM Station WFMU(FM), East Orange, New Jersey, of which Auricle is the licensee.

- 1. State whether the Licensee broadcast the Expletive over Station WFMU(FM) on May 31, 2004, during an airing of a song that took place at approximately 1:55 p.m., and/or an identical song that took place on that or any other date between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.*

On May 31, 2004, at approximately 1:55 p.m., Auricle broadcast a portion of a song entitled “Showdown Rehearsal” by Starchild and 2nd Showdown Crew simultaneously on Station WFMU(FM) and Station WXHD(FM), Mount Hope, New York. Both of those stations are licensed to Auricle. A recording of the broadcast of that song is included herewith as Track 1 on a compact disc (CD-R), and a transcript of the portion of the song as broadcast is included as

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Attachment A hereto. Review of the recording indicates that the words “mother” and “fucker” appear to have been sung at approximately 1’19” into the song, and what appears to be the expression “fuckin’ it” appears at approximately 2’49” into the song. While the complaint attached to the Inquiry alleges that the “obscenity ‘Motherfucker’” was “screamed . . . over and over”, it is clear from the recording that the artists do *not* repeat that word “over and over”. Instead, approximately one minute into the song, the phrases “tear the roof off the sucker” and “tear the roof off the mother, sucker” are repeated, in apparent homage to the early funk classic “Give Up the Funk” by Parliament, from its 1976 album, “Mothership Connection”. That earlier song featured an introductory chorus which included the repeated phrases “tear the roof off the sucker” and “tear the roof off the mother, sucker”. The complainant may have mistaken the repeated lyrics “sucker” and “mother[,] sucker” for “motherfucker”. While the recording of Showdown Rehearsal is not crystal clear, it does appear that in one repetition of the phrase “tear the roof off the mother, sucker” (which occurs, as noted above, at approximately 1’19” into the song), one of the singers may have sung “tear the roof off the mother, fucker”.

To the best of Auricle’s knowledge, this was the only time that this song has ever been broadcast, in whole or in part, on either Station WFMU(FM) or WXHD(FM).

Auricle notes that Inquiry 1, as phrased, could be read to ask whether Auricle has broadcast “the Expletive” (*i.e.*, “the word ‘fuck’ or a variation thereof”) on either of its stations at any date in the past between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. Auricle’s internal policy prohibits the broadcast of material containing, *inter alia*, the word “fuck” (including variations thereof) from 5:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. To the best recollection of Ken Freedman, an officer and director of Auricle and the stations’ General Manager, no broadcasts containing the word “fuck” or any variations thereof have occurred since Auricle’s stations’ licenses were last renewed in 1998-1999, with the obvious exception of the incident which is the subject of the present inquiry.

On May 31, 2004, “Showdown Rehearsal” was broadcast inadvertently when John Allen, the station’s on-air announcer, included it in a set of songs without realizing that that particular song contained the Expletive. Upon hearing the song’s content as it was being broadcast, Mr. Allen realized that the song violated station policy. Accordingly, approximately half-way¹ through “Showdown Rehearsal” (and only a matter of a few seconds after the second of two instances of the Expletive), he cued up and began playing another, unobjectionable, song as he removed “Showdown Rehearsal” from the air. At the conclusion of that particular set of

¹ For the convenience of the Commission, in addition to a recording of the broadcast, Auricle is also including, as Track 2 on the accompanying compact disc, a copy of “Showdown Rehearsal” in its entirety. The fact that Mr. Allen cut the broadcast of the song short is evident from the fact that the full song runs more than five minutes in length, while the version as aired is less than three minutes in length.

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music, Mr. Allen acknowledged that he had had to remove "Showdown Rehearsal" from the air, and he apologized to his audience. A recording of Mr. Allen's apology is included as Track 3 on the accompanying compact disk. A transcript of that statement is included as Attachment B hereto.

By way of explanation for this inadvertent broadcast, Auricle offers the following information.

"Showdown Rehearsal" appears on "The Third Unheard", a CD compilation of hip-hop music recorded in Connecticut in 1979-1983. That CD has been reported on by, *inter alia*, NPR, the Village Voice and the New Haven Advocate.² It consists of songs recorded more than two decades ago, long before the prevalence of potentially objectionable language in many examples of current popular music. It is a retrospective, historical document rather than a contemporary "new" release.

When "The Third Unheard" was received by Auricle, the station's Program Director listened to it pursuant to established station procedure and determined that its contents were, with the exception of "Showdown Rehearsal", acceptable for airplay. He flagged that one objectionable cut by hand-writing, on the cover label of the CD, "Curse 13", which was intended to indicate that the 13th track on the CD, *i.e.*, "Showdown Rehearsal", included language unacceptable for broadcast. A copy of the annotated cover is included as Attachment D hereto. He then placed the CD, with the "Curse 13" cover notation, into a "new releases" bin which contains recently-acquired music approved by the Program Director and available to the station's announcers for broadcast. Mr. Allen picked the CD out of that bin but inadvertently failed to observe the notation on its label. As noted, when he heard the prohibited language as it was being broadcast, he took prompt action to remove the song from the air.

2. *With regard to each broadcast referred to in response to Inquiry 1 above, if the programming described in Inquiry 1 above does not accurately reflect the material broadcast over Station WFMU(FM), describe the inaccuracies. Indicate, in particular,*

² A copy of the New Haven Advocate article is included as Attachment C hereto. The NPR report may be found at <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1960239> (visited November 11, 2004). A portion of "Showdown Rehearsal" is included in the NPR report, which focuses on the historical significance of the early hip-hop, or rap, artists from Connecticut featured on the CD. According to the interview in the New Haven Advocate article, the artist responsible for "Showdown Rehearsal", Melvin Lowe, Jr., a/k/a "Starchild", is a deacon. The Village Voice review may be found at <http://www.stonethrow.com/3rd/voice.html> (visited November 16, 2004).

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whether the material was edited before broadcast to remove the Expletive. Provide Documents to support the responses to this inquiry, including a recording of each broadcast on compact disc (CD-R), and a written transcript of each.

As indicated above, the complainant's description of the material broadcast is inaccurate to the extent that the complainant asserts that the word "motherfucker" was "screamed" "over and over". To the contrary, the word "motherfucker" was broadcast, at most, only once.

The material in question, *i.e.*, "Showdown Rehearsal", was not edited before broadcast. As indicated above, the broadcast of the song *was* interrupted and terminated in the middle of the song by the announcer.

3. *If the material broadcast by Station WFMU(FM) includes the Expletive, with regard to each broadcast referred to in the response to Inquiry 1 above, provide a recording of the broadcast. Provide any and all such recordings on compact disc (CD-R) and a written transcript of each recording.*

A recording of the broadcast is included on the compact disc submitted herewith. A transcript of the portion of "Showdown Rehearsal" as broadcast is included as Attachment A hereto.

4. *Did the Licensee broadcast all or any portion of the material described in Inquiry 1 above with the Expletive over any station licensed to it other than WFMU(FM)?*

As discussed above, the broadcast of "Showdown Rehearsal" on May 31, 2004 at approximately 1:55 p.m. was simulcast on both Station WFMU(FM), East Orange, New Jersey and Station WXHD(FM), Mount Hope, New York, both of which are licensed to Auricle. The recording included on the accompanying compact disc reflects the material as broadcast on both stations.

5. *If the answer to Inquiry 4 above is "yes", provide, for each such broadcast:*
 - a. *the call sign, community of license and licensee;*
 - b. *the date(s) and time(s) of the broadcast(s); and*
 - c. *any and all compact discs, audio tapes, transcripts or other Documents reproducing, discussing, or otherwise relating to the material so broadcast over the station. Provide any such recordings on compact disc (CD-R). Also provide a written transcript of the material contained in each recording.*

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See responses to Inquiries 1-4.

6. *Provide copies of all Documents that provide the basis for or otherwise support the responses to Inquiries 1-5, above.*

See Attachments hereto, which include: a transcript of the portion of "Showdown Rehearsal" as broadcast (Attachment A); a transcript of the statement made by Mr. Allen at the conclusion of the musical set in question (Attachment B); a copy of the New Haven Advocate article concerning "The Third Unheard" (Attachment C); a copy of the cover label of the station's copy of "The Third Unheard" bearing the notation by the station's Program Director (Attachment D); Declarations under penalty of perjury by Messrs. Freeman and Allen (Attachments E and F, respectively). Also included, as noted above, is a compact disc (CD-R) containing three tracks: the aircheck reflecting the broadcast of the portion of "Showdown Rehearsal" (Track 1); a complete copy of "Showdown Rehearsal" (Track 2); and the aircheck of Mr. Allen's statement at the conclusion of the broadcast in question (Track 3).

Further Comments

In addition to the foregoing information, which is responsive to the Commission's Inquiry, Auricle believes it important to emphasize that the broadcast at issue here occurred inadvertently and was inconsistent with Auricle's established and heretofore effective prohibition against such broadcasts. Moreover, it is clear from the circumstances that the partial broadcast of "Showdown Rehearsal" was not intended to pander or titillate because, once Mr. Allen realized that the song contained inappropriate language, he removed it from the air and apologized to his audience. Nor did the broadcast dwell on or repeat at length the inappropriate language; to the contrary, as indicated above, within a matter of a few seconds of the second, unexpected appearance of such language, the broadcast of the song was terminated by the announcer.

Response of Auricle Communications
To Letter Inquiry dated October 20, 2004
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Attachment A

Transcript of "Showdown Rehearsal" by Starchild and the 2nd Showdown Crew
(partial – as broadcast on WFMU(FM)/WXHD(FM) on May 31, 2004)

(fade in)

She and her man didn't give a damn
I told her my name was Mr. Bozack
So I gave her some slack
Cause her man's a wack
He don't got money
He don't have clout
So come on sweet baby
Come on over to my house
Pull off your pants
Do the freak dance
Rock to the (unintelligible)
sweet romance

I wanna go, I wanna go out
To the city, cooling out
I wanna go, I wanna go out
To the city, cooling out
I wanna go, I wanna go out
To the city, cooling out

I walked up to a record shop
I said, oh shit, I gots to stop
So I went inside, I browsed around
The records inside was throwin' down
They had everything for my heart and soul
They even had Schooly Gee and Kurtis Blow

That beat
Gotta make the freak
Start trying make you freak seven days a week

(unintelligible)
Yo, tear the roof off the mother, sucker
Roof off the mother
(unintelligible)
Tear the roof off the mother
Tear the roof off the mother
Tear the roof off the sucker
Pick up on this
Tear the roof off the mother
Tear the roof off the mother
Tear the roof off the sucker
Shake it baby
Tear the roof off the mother

Tear the roof off the mother, fucker
Tear the roof off the sucker
Eat it
Eighty-two, I was going to do
(unintelligible)
[Tear the roof off the mother
Tear the roof off the mother
Tear the roof off the mother, sucker]
yeah girl yeah girl yeah girl
Go Jay's team, go Jay's team go
Tear the roof off the sucker
Go Jay's team, go Jay's team go
Betcha five, betcha five, I can make your nature rise
Go Bridgeport, go Bridgeport, go
What're all the brother perpetrators perpetratin' the
fraud
Drummers rollin', we got the juices
(Unintelligible) rockin', disco fillin'
Takes control of your heart and your soul
'cause MC Scrap is such (unintelligible)

Roof off the mother
Tear the roof off the mother, sucker
Tear the roof off the sucker
Tear the roof off the mother
Tear the roof off the mother, sucker
Tear the roof off the sucker
Did you hear any noise
It's me and the boys
Isn't it
Go Jay's team, go Jay's team go
Betcha five, betcha five, I can make your nature rise
Go Bridgeport, go Bridgeport go
What're all the perpetrators perpetratin' the fraud
Drummer rollin', we got the real
Freakin' rockin' with your feelin'
Feelin', feelin', feelin'
Takes control of your heart and your soul
'cause MC Scrap with such (unintelligible)
Feelin', feelin', feelin'
If you hear any noise, it's just me and the boys
Fuckin' it
Go Jay's team, go Jay's team go
Betcha five, betcha five, I can make your nature rise

Response of Auricle Communications
To Letter Inquiry dated October 20, 2004
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Attachment B

Transcript of Statement by John Allen
(as broadcast on WFMU(FM)/WXHD(FM) on May 31, 2004)

You're tuned to WFMU in East Orange, WXHD in Mount Hope and wfmua.org on the world wide web. Music from Anthony Rother and a 12-inch from back in '97. Red light combat from, uhm, and we also heard music from Nicolette Larson, "A Lotta Love", when she started going a little more towards the soft contemporary market. She comes from a country background. Played with Commander Cody and backed up folks like Neil Young, and uh, Linda Ronstadt, Guy Clark, Jesse Young and, uh, Emmylou Harris. That's her closest stab at disco. Until Michael McDonald came along in 1980, a whole other story. We heard music from, uh, Don Ray, "Body and Soul" from 1978.

Starchild and Second Showdown Crew, "Showdown Rehearsal" is what we heard from them. And, uh, I am sorry. I did everything I could. It was out of my hands. I did the best I could. We had to yank them off. Starchild, that's from the, uh, compilation called "The Third Unheard - Connecticut Hip Hop from 1979 to 1983". And we heard something off of that on the new Stone's Throw record label. Great compilation of a history of hip hop a lot of people are just not aware of. We heard from Starchild and the Second Showdown Crew.



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Connecticut HIP HOP History A new CD celebrates the state's rap pioneers

by [Christopher Arnott](#) - May 27, 2004

Reading the Unheard

In penning the exhaustive liner notes to *The Third Unheard*, Egon says he was trying "not to put superlatives on this stuff. I wanted the music to speak for itself." Where most liner notes gush, or gloss over facts which are too much trouble to research, Egon's *Third Unheard* essay is a model of enthusiastic, informative yet restrained writing, bursting with background data and you-are-there usefulness.

Here's an excerpt:

[Mr. Magic] developed a novel concept - to increase his chances of breaking a new musical form in Connecticut, he would write a meandering rap that would start off with a nod to the state ("You know some people say Connecticut can't rock/But I'm here to make you all hip and hop") and end with all of Connecticut's major cities (and some obscure towns such as Ansonia and Meriden) responding "We're down!" to his roll-call. However this record would never be recorded as planned. The disciplined Mr. Magic had a self-imposed deadline—he wanted to be the first New Englander to release a rap record and, gauging by the gaggle of 12-inches lining the shelves of his record store, he felt nervous that some go-getter would beat him to the punch. Thus, when it became apparent that Reggie Reg and DJ Gary needed time to perfect their sections of the song, Mr. Magic removed their names, transcribed his rap onto a series of cue-cards and contacted a studio in Bridgeport to book a hasty recording session. ...

For Egon's complete essay, buy the disc or go to www.stonethrow.com/3rd/index.html.

Stamford--We're down!

Norwalk--We're down!

Bridgeport--We're down!

New Haven--We're down!

Ansonia--We're down!

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Hartford--We're down!

Meriden--We're down!

Middletown--We're down!

Waterbury--We're down!

Now, just because I didn't name your town doesn't mean that you can't get down

...

--"Rappin' with Mr. Magic"

The beats. The claps. The calls to "Come on" or "Get down" or "Check it out." The infectious vibrations, rumbles and urgent rhythmic raps. The references to pugilist poet Mohammed Ali. The bulging bass and trembling chords. The hyper hoots of "Ho-oh." The raw sound of pure early Hip Hop is as exhilarating and overwhelming as the recordings of young Elvis, or Billie Holiday on the radio, or Miles or Marvin Gaye at their most progressive, or any other genre you care to name. It's a sound which still packs immediacy, personality, and a hearty party. You're excused for not realizing it, but Connecticut had a place in the nascent world of Hip Hop, which grew organically from parties and dancing and street gatherings and began to take its own shape in the mid- and late 1970s.

Mr. Magic's transformation from a DJ into the man who, by his own admission, "started Hip Hop in Connecticut," was just one of his awesome magic tricks. As a performer, he wrote and recited the Connecticut Rap, aka "Rappin' with Mr. Magic." As a promoter, he enlisted his 12-year-old nephew (whom he dubbed "Pookey Blow") to rap about staying in school, and added a mindblowing kazoo solo to the mix. As a producer, he recorded much of the evidence which proves that there was any kind of '70s/'80s Ct. Hip Hop scene at all.

And, just as importantly, Tony Pearson--who hasn't gone by his Mr. Magic monicker in years--doesn't live in the past. He still promotes music, only now he does it as "Big Tony," through the TV show Holla Back, which airs on public access cable stations in some 20 Connecticut towns (including CTV in the New Haven area, Saturdays at 11 p.m. on Comcast channel 29)

The lifelong New Haven resident hopes that all the attention from the new compilation *The Third Unheard*--a disc dominated by Mr. Magic productions--won't change people's opinions of him now. When he was originally called about the project, Pearson says he told compiler Eothen "Egon" Alapatt that "I'm not really a nostalgia type of guy. I'm proud of what I did, but it's in the past."

While others who were rapping or Hip Hopping in the state 25 years ago conjure up images of a small but tightknit scene, the erstwhile Mr. Magic states unequivocally that "it wasn't that close, though it was closer than it is now. There hasn't been any progress made in the the Hip Hop scene. And that was always the problem--we had no identity. There were so few rappers at that time. That was the whole scheme behind "Rappin' with Mr. Magic." I chose the towns carefully which I shouted out to on that record."

When Pearson put out his first Mr. Magic records, "I had only heard two or three rappers, mostly Kurtis Blow. While I was working on my record, the Sugarhill Gang came out with theirs"--namely "Rapper's Delight," a national hit which led to regional rap scenes springing up around the country. When rap

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began to hit, Mr. Magic was already an established name in the Connecticut club scene as a DJ, spinning "old soul records, Jimmy Castor," and of course disco.

Mr. Magic worked hard to establish himself in Connecticut and beyond, but he was ahead of his time. He did 30 to 40 radio interviews and devised all sorts of promotions, "but the only stations playing Hip Hop back then were college stations," and airplay on 10-watt student radio can only take you so far toward the mainstream. Besides, he felt "so much hate here in Connecticut. Any time you have the element of 'I can do it better,' you have a problem. It's still a problem. How can it be, 20-odd years later, that you still don't have artists [from Connecticut] who are big? Every kid on the street can rap!"

"You had to work real hard to get these cats to play your songs. But I've never shied away from hard work. I did dances, I produced records, I ran a record shop, I worked third shift on another job. I was determined when I was rapping. I did a lot of promotional stuff. I had to be smarter."

But Pearson is the first to admit that, despite his perfectionism and drive, "the production on some of my songs wasn't tight enough. And some of the lyrics could have been better. I wasn't a rapper. I always wanted to be a singer, and this was how I could be a performer."

This self-criticism--rare in a genre known for bragging and bravado--should be tempered with praise for his exceptional instincts regarding a music genre which was barely formed when he immersed himself in it.

Among Mr. Magic's triumphs which don't involve him as a lead performer:

: Producing the L.O.D. Crew from Bridgeport, who had heard his records and sought him out.

: Recording a rap record with a ventriloquist and his dummy. Willie Brown & Woody's "Ventriloquist Rap" is now immortalized on The Third Unheard. "When I sat down with him and wrote lyrics," Pearson recalls, "he had to have his dummy with him, and after a while you'd find yourself talking to the dummy. I finally said 'Put that dummy in a box!' He did the whole rap with his mouth closed whenever it was the dummy's part, so the voice would sound right."

: Convincing his tweeny nephew to record a stay-in-school rap as Pookey Blow (a pseudonym which Pearson hoped potential record-buyers would confuse with pioneering rap star Kurtis Blow). The phenomenal break on "Get Up and Go to School," where Pookey abruptly announces that he's "gonna play this here kazoo," Pearson confirms, was "my idea."

After a mere handful of recordings and more fame than he cared for, Pookey retired at the ripe age of 16. He's now a staff sergeant in the U.S. Army and just returned from a stint in Baghdad.

Tony Pearson says he's "not in touch with the other artists" on The Third Unheard anymore, but he still loves Hip Hop. "There is no other music like Hip Hop to me. I listen to everything--Jay-Z, 50 Cent, you name it. I'm so amazed at where Hip Hop is now. That there are two big Hip Hop stations in Connecticut now, that tells the whole story, when two years ago there weren't any."

Finally, he says "I may still get involved in music again if I find the right artist."

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But he's not looking to recapture old Magic, or rest on any laurels. Tony Pearson is his own man, marching to his own beat. We can only hope he'll let us follow.

Eothen "Egon" Alapatt is too young to have been part of the first Hip Hop scene in Connecticut. But he's dug it up and he's absorbed it. And he's feeding it back to a worldwide audience which is raving about Egon's new CD compilation *The Third Unheard--Connecticut Hip Hop 1979-1983*.

"I spent a lot of time in Bridgeport," says Egon, who's also lived in Oxford and Scymour but now resides on the West Coast, where he's the "label manager" for Stones Throw Records and also runs his own label Now and Again. "In 1992, when I was 12, 13, I'd take the bus to New Haven and hang out at 10X Dope," the now-defunct Hip Hop shop on Crown St. which was a central hang-out for that era's rap and Hip Hop scenes. "I didn't know the old-school guys, but I came up under guys like Dooley-O, Chris Lowe and X-tra--the guys who were schooling the kids on beats and breaks. These were really deep-dish dudes, y'know?"

"Connecticut holds a special place in my heart. The people who really gave me an appreciation for Hip Hop and funk were people who grew up on this music. I learned my history quickly."

The results of that scholarship led to a passion and a career--"I just love researching scenes that mean something to me." Egon has been putting together anthologies of various regional Hip Hop and funk records for Stones Throw since 2000. A couple of years ago, his friend Cut Chemist (the turntablist and producer for Jurassic 5), played him an obscure disc by an act known only as The Outlaw Four. Egon was enthralled, overcome by this seminal Hip Hop masterpiece. One of the only clues to the record's origins, he was told, was a phone number with a 203 area code. "I said, my god, that's Connecticut!"

The Outlaw Four remain outside society; their sly, slick, still-stunning and undeservedly unknown track can be found on *Third Unheard*, but the band can't be found outside those rare grooves. (Any royalties due the act will be kept in escrow until they can be claimed, a common practice in the CD-anthology game.) But this invisible band set off a major search for other songs which represented a lost chapter in Connecticut and Hip Hop history. Egon worked on the project "after hours, outside of Stones Throw time, for a couple of years," and uncovered major talents such as Mr. Magic (not to mention his nephew Pookey Blow), Starchild, Terrible T and Superman Jay from the Skinny Boys (see related stories). When he contacted some of the artists in hope of retrieving master tapes or memorabilia, "some went way above and beyond the call. Starchild brought me down to his basement to listen to reel-to-reels. He'd recorded over most of them, because he's still a DJ and he had all these house mixes. We finally pieced together a track out of his old rehearsal reels. It was painstaking." Of the 14 tracks on the CD, only one came from a master tape; the others had to be taken from vinyl records and then carefully cleaned up soundwise.

By the early '90s, when Egon was cutting his teeth on local Hip Hop, he says "Mr. Magic was not rapping anymore. Pookey Blow had retired in 1983, at the age of 16. L.O.D. had morphed into two entities." None of the acts on *Third Unheard* made any major waves nationally, and only a few, like the Cuzz Band had any longevity locally. "The Cuzz Band, Superman Jay, Starchild ... they're all still at it, but it's nothing like what they used to do."

Now Egon's preserved those crucial early years, could there be a sequel to the Third Unheard--a Fourth Unforced, perhaps? "If you did the mid-1980s, yes. But the early '80s? This is it."

Forty-three-year-old Stamford native Tyrone Dunmore sits in his Stratford house in the company of his wife, six children, dog and fish and remembers his days at the vanguard of rap. When he was less Tyrone and more DJ Terrible T. When beefs were settled with onstage rap or DJ battles rather than firearms.

"The climate has changed," he said. "The battles then were for publicity. All it did was bring people in [to a show]. It was a sales pitch, a marketing gimmick."

Dunmore lacks a track on The Third Unheard anthology, since recordings have a tendency to disappear into the ether over the years. The CD's compiler, Eothen "Egon" Alapatt, says the record he most regrets not finding for the project is Terrible T's "Now Whatcha Know About That." While a flimsy acetate of the song is rumored to exist, Egon says "it's impossible to find."

An accomplished bassist who began playing at age 9, Tyrone Dunmore's always craved music. His R&B group New Creation won the silver at the Apollo Theater's famed Amateur Nights, finishing behind a group of female dancers from Harlem. "It was fixed," he says with a shrug.

He succumbed to rap after seeing Bambaata, Soulsonic Force and Mount Vernon's own Collins Brothers perform in Stamford.

Tyrone turned to the turntables after watching Grandmixer DST (for Delancey Street) on the wheels of steel. Dunmore had DJed before, playing parties while a student at Eastern Connecticut State. But he'd never seen anything like DST--"he was great and never got the credit." So Dunmore watched and learned--scratches, cuts, fades. "They [DST and others] never taught us anything. We just watched and figured out how to do it, what equipment we needed," Dunmore says.

As Dunmore's skills evolved and his New York network expanded and the Stamford crew, T Force, got tighter, Dunmore promoted shows featuring the likes of LL Cool J and Kurtis Blow. He turned Stamford's Yearwood Center into his home base, throwing party after party. He also emerged from behind the turntables to take the mic himself, laying down rhymes for a seven song promotional record, Rappin' Down Beat Street.

Eventually, Dunmore recorded a demo--that great lost song, "Now Whatcha Know About That"--and was offered a recording deal with Celluloid Records. And that's when his Hip Hop dreams ended.

By that time, the mid-'80s, violence was creeping into Hip Hop. There was a shooting outside one of the gigs. At another, two DJs were robbed of their coats. And Dunmore had a growing family. Responsibilities. Adulthood.

Dunmore says he doesn't regret a second of his life in Hip Hop. Nor does he regret passing on the record deal.

"We never looked at it as a career," he says of himself and others at the forefront of Connecticut Hip Hop. "We didn't see it as an industry. We partied, traveled, had a good time. No one knew it would turn into a multi-trillion dollar business."

Since January, Dunmore and his partner, Gregory Prior, have been running a DJ business they call The Masters of Sound. Dunmore has a standing engagement DJing at Club Novella on Stratford Avenue in Bridgeport. He's getting back in the game, doing with CD players now what he did with turntables more than 20 years ago.

But he's no longer Terrible T. He's Master T, a title conferred by his martial arts teacher and earned through years of experience.

Oh, and what Dunmore and his contemporaries did? Don't call it "Old School." "It's 'Original School'," Dunmore says with pride.

Melvin Lowe Jr., aka Starchild, was born in Bridgeport in January, 1962. He's represented on The Third Unheard by the raw, charming "Showdown Rehearsal Live," intricately pieced together from reel-to-reel tapes which have been lying in his basement for decades. "Work me, work me," he cries, in unison with the 2nd Showdown Crew: "Hurt me, hurt me ... If you hear any noise, it's just me and the boys."

Where did you grow up?

Bridgeport and New Haven--half and half.

What was your childhood like?

Great, lots of very fond memories of my family members and cousins. There were a lot of kids on the street, so they'd close the street up and play games--kickball, badminton, "hot peas & butter." I was the oldest boy. I had two older sisters and a little brother.

At what age did you start rapping?

I started DJing at age 14. I got into that when I went to a party and I heard a DJ by the name of Pleasure, Preston Powell. I give a lot of thanks to Preston Powell for getting me started.

I lived with my mother at this time and she was into music. I started borrowing her records--R&B, soul, Earth Wind & Fire. I moved to Bridgeport when I was 16. I played everywhere, all the halls. I even used to DJ at the high school basketball games.

Why did you begin rapping?

I had been DJing for a while. I used to work at West Haven High School. I'd come on like five minutes before class started and play some music and talk about new music that was out. My peers' response: enthusiastically def.

Who were your musical influences?

Of course at that time there was War, Parliament Funkadelic, the Jimmy Castor Bunch. Rap came after that. The influences from rap were Grandmaster Flash and Cool Herc.

What was your first rhyme about?

Basically, it was fun, just rhyming about good things, the fun things in life. Travel, good food, good friends--totally different than rap is today. I rapped about being a man, growing up in a single household as a young teenager, and

being responsible. One of my favorite rhymes was "On and on and on and on, like hot butter and popcorn." It meant to keep dancing, to keep partying, to keep having fun, non-stop. We would just say words in repetition--"and don't stop, and don't stop ..."

When we were coming up, everything was fun. Then there was the drugs and abuse--in the music world there was always drugs, sex and rock & roll. When those things were going down and rap was questionable, I found myself not going with it.

We were ahead of our time. The industry couldn't get with us because we were beyond. The live show we could do was totally different from what they do today. We would go to a party and have seven different microphones and beats, and only have 30 seconds of a beat to use. It needed to be mixed so well. Now they have drum machines, synthesizers and technical help, truckloads of records, two turntables ...

What are you doing now?

I'm an audio engineer.

Aren't you also a deacon?

A deacon and an audio engineer. I have a family. My children love it when I start rapping; they look at me in awe.

Use our contact form to write to [Christopher Arnott](#).



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The Third Unheard

Connecticut Hip Hop
1979 - 1983

CML

13

WFMU

5-21-04

DECLARATION

John Allen, under penalty of perjury, hereby declares the following to be true and correct:

1. I am an on-air announcer on Station WFMU(FM), East Orange, New Jersey, and its commonly-owned sister station, Station WXHD(FM), Mount Hope, New York. I am preparing this Declaration for submission to the Federal Communications Commission in connection with Auricle's response ("Response") to a letter inquiry, dated October 20, 2004, concerning the alleged broadcast of the word "motherfucker" "over and over" on Station WFMU(FM).

2. On May 31, 2004, at approximately 1:55 p.m. I was on the air. I played a set of songs which included a song entitled "Showdown Rehearsal" by Starchild and 2nd Showdown Crew, which appears on a CD entitled "The Third Unheard". I had obtained that CD from a bin at the station containing CD's previously approved for airplay by the station's Program Director. In picking out "The Third Unheard", I inadvertently failed to notice that the Program Director had hand-written a note - "Curse 13" - on the front label of the CD to alert announcers that Track 13 on that CD contained apparently objectionable material and should not be broadcast.

3. As the song was being broadcast, I heard what I believed to be the word "fuck" (or a variation of it) in the lyrics. Station policy prohibits the broadcast of such language between 5:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. To correct the situation as best I could under the circumstances, approximately half-way through "Showdown Rehearsal", I cued up and began playing another, unobjectionable, song, and I removed "Showdown Rehearsal" from the air well

before its conclusion. At the conclusion of that particular set of music, I acknowledged that I had had to remove "Showdown Rehearsal" from the air, and I apologized to the audience.

John Allen

Date: _____

DECLARATION

Kenneth Freedman, under penalty of perjury, hereby declares the following to be true and correct:

1. I am an officer and director of Auricle Communications ("Auricle"), licensee of noncommercial educational Stations WFMU(FM), East Orange, New Jersey, and WXHD(FM), Mount Hope, New York. I am also the General Manager of both of those stations. I am preparing this Declaration for submission to the Federal Communications Commission in connection with Auricle's response ("Response") to a letter inquiry, dated October 20, 2004, concerning the alleged broadcast of the word "motherfucker" "over and over" on Station WFMU(FM).

2. On May 31, 2004, at approximately 1:55 p.m., Auricle broadcast a portion of a song entitled "Showdown Rehearsal" by Starchild and 2nd Showdown Crew simultaneously on Station WFMU(FM) and Station WXHD(FM). A recording of the broadcast of that song is included on a compact disc (CD-R) submitted with Auricle's Response, and a transcript of the portion of the song as broadcast is included as an attachment to the Response. To the best of my knowledge, this was the only time that this song has ever been broadcast, in whole or in part, on either Station WFMU(FM) or WXHD(FM). Also to the best of my recollection, no other broadcasts containing the word "fuck" or any variations thereof have occurred since Auricle's stations' licenses were last renewed in 1998-1999. Auricle's internal policy prohibits the broadcast of material containing, *inter alia*, the word "fuck" (including variations thereof) from 5:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

3. The May 31, 2004, partial broadcast of "Showdown Rehearsal" occurred inadvertently. I have been told by John Allen, the station's on-air announcer at the time, that he

included it in a set of songs without realizing that that particular song contained the Expletive. Upon hearing the song's content as it was being broadcast, Mr. Allen realized that the song violated station policy. Accordingly, approximately half-way through "Showdown Rehearsal" (and only a matter of a few seconds after the second of two instances of the Expletive), he cued up and began playing another, unobjectionable, song as he removed "Showdown Rehearsal" from the air. At the conclusion of that particular set of music, Mr. Allen acknowledged that he had had to remove "Showdown Rehearsal" from the air, and he apologized to his audience. A recording of Mr. Allen's apology is included as Track 3 on the compact disc accompanying the Response.

4. "Showdown Rehearsal" appears on "The Third Unheard", a CD compilation of hip-hop music recorded in Connecticut in 1979-1983. That CD has been reported on by, *inter alia*, NPR, the Village Voice and the New Haven Advocate. It consists of songs recorded more than two decades ago, long before the prevalence of potentially objectionable language in many examples of current popular music. It is a retrospective, historical document rather than a contemporary "new" release.

5. When "The Third Unheard" was received by Auricle, the station's Program Director listened to it pursuant to established station procedure and determined that its contents were, with the exception of "Showdown Rehearsal", acceptable for airplay. He flagged that one objectionable cut by hand-writing, on the cover label of the CD, "Curse 13", which was intended to indicate that the 13th track on the CD, *i.e.*, "Showdown Rehearsal", included language unacceptable for broadcast. A copy of the annotated cover is included as an attachment to the Response. He then placed the CD, with the "Curse 13" cover notation, into a "new releases" bin

which contains recently-acquired music approved by the Program Director and available to the station's announcers for broadcast.

Kenneth Freedman

Kenneth Freedman

Date: 11 / 16 / 04