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Lesa Boykin Interview

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Fusing spoken word and melodic beats,
poet Lesa Boykin debut cd BE INSPIRED
seems to give you an in-depth look at the
young woman who wrote 12 of the 14
tracks. She is also the executive producer of
the project. A natural talent, Boykin freely
shares all she is in her written word,
delivering a beautiful insight into who she is
and what she hopes to accomplish. Our
conversation explores her beginnings and
what she sees as the future for the art that

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is spoken word.



What was the first thing you can remember writing?

I started writing many moons ago. I don't exactly remember the first writing as in a song or a poem but I have kept a diary since I was around 13 years old. I love writing.

Did you share it with others or was it just for yourself?

I used to teach the choirs that I played for the songs that I had either written or arranged. The songs were always well received. This was great encouragement for me.

Lesa, to already have a spoken word cd out at your age is an incredible achievement. Tell us what led to taking that step and why did you think your voice needed to be heard?

I had experience a lot of emotional pain in my life and I felt that if I didn't let it out that I was going to die. It was just that serious. I felt like I was running for my life.

There are many people out there who like to write, whether its poetry or lyrics but they are afraid of sharing them with others. Did you ever experience that type of fear and if you did, how did you overcome it?

After I survived the emotional battles that I experienced, I came to the conclusion there wasn't anything else to be afraid of. Been there,

done that. You just have to get to the point where you are running for your life. It's crucial in living the best life possible.

I have listened to your cd BE INSPIRED and was both impressed by it and amazed at your growth as a poet. The tracks seem to be quite personal. Was it hard for you to share so much of yourself with the world?

At first, I struggled with one of my spoken word pieces, "I've Been Focusing on the Wrong Things," because it has never been my intention to embarrass or shame my birth parents. All at the same time, I had to give a truthful account of my experiences. And the thing about truth is that it ain't all good. More importantly than discussing the rejection I felt surrounding my adoption, I wanted to convey the love that was shown to me by my grandmother. I wanted to thank God for the lessons she taught me. I wasted time focusing on the wrong things, like the pain instead of the plan. I felt compelled to share the lessons learned.

Walk us through the collaborations that took place to get the cd together?

The "Be Inspired" project completely consumed me. I kept my lap top on my bed and would wake up during the night and start writing. It felt so good to put 100% effort into my dream. For a great deal of my life, I had felt numb but when I started this project, I felt alive. It was a beautiful experience. Going to the studio several times a week, listening to the master CD to make sure that the music was in order, designing the CD cover, getting the photographs taken, securing rights to photographs and music and planning the debut concert completely consumed me. I felt so alive and it was beautiful.

It's one thing to go into the studio and record, but getting up in front of others and sharing ourselves live. Do you remember the first time you got on stage and how has that process evolved for you?

I remember playing the piano for my kindergarten teacher. She was impressed and told Mama that she thought I had a gift and should take lessons. When I was ten I started playing piano for a church and have throughout the years. For the most part, I'm real comfortable on stage. However, there are a few times when my leg starts shaking. I'm like, "what in the world is going on?" But, I just ignore

it and keep on singing. It eventually stops. It's actually quite funny.

Lesya, poetry doesn't get the kind of attention that other forms of entertainment might. When you listen to some of those in the neo-soul movement like Jill Scott, Maxwell, India.Arie, Musiq Soulchild and others, why do you think they aren't able to reach the levels of other mainstream artists?

I think the people that you mentioned are deep thinkers and quite frankly, many times the mainstream media is not looking for deep thinkers. But it's changing because deep thinking artists are standing together saying we want music with substance and character, music that means something. Music that will stand the test of time. C.A. , don't get me started with this one. Whew!

What's next for you?

Well, I am in the process of releasing another CD. It will drop within a year from now, prayerfully. Also, I have been developing a cartoon that I'm very excited about. I have just about completed drawing the main characters. It's so cool but I can't really talk about it yet.

Can you tell us what you would like to do with your poetry that maybe you haven't been able to so far?

I would like to perform my poetry around the world. I also want to publish a book of poetry. We'll see what happens.

How can others find out about your events and purchase your cd?

I keep my website updated with all of the latest news. Just visit www.lesaboykin.com for more info. As always, my CD may be purchased through my website but currently you may visit Music-Go-Round in Clinton and Borders located on Lakeland Blvd in Flowood to purchase a copy.

Thank you for your time, Lesya. Do you have any words of encouragement for others who might want to follow the path you have blazed?

People say it all the time but it's really true . Don't give up. Also, get out and read your poetry and perform your music for people. You never know how it might inspire them. Better yet, you never know how the experience might inspire you.

Web Site: [Official website for Lesa Boykin](#)

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