

= Lecrae =

Lecrae Devaughn Moore (born October 9 , 1979) , mononymously known as Lecrae , is an American Christian hip hop artist , songwriter , record producer and actor . He is the president , co @-@ owner and co @-@ founder of the independent record label Reach Records , and the co @-@ founder and president of the non @-@ profit organization ReachLife Ministries . To date , he has released seven studio albums and three mixtapes as a solo artist , and has released three studio albums , a remix album , and one EP as the leader of the hip hop group 116 Clique . He produced much of his earlier material along with other early Reach Records releases . Lecrae , in reference to his label as a Christian rapper , has stated that his music is just hip hop , though it reflects his Christian faith . In May 2016 , Lecrae signed to Columbia Records in a joint deal between his label and Columbia .

Lecrae debuted with Real Talk in 2004 through Reach Records . His third solo album , Rebel , released in 2008 , became the first Christian hip hop album to reach No. 1 on the Billboard Gospel chart . Rehab followed in 2010 , and Lecrae began attracting mainstream attention when he performed at the 2011 BET Hip Hop Awards Cypher and appeared on the Statik Selektah song " Live & Let Live " from Population Control . On May 10 , 2012 , Lecrae released his first mixtape , Church Clothes , which was hosted by DJ Don Cannon . Considered his breakthrough into mainstream hip hop , the mixtape was downloaded over 100 @,@ 000 times in less than 48 hours . His sixth studio album , Gravity , came out on September 4 , 2012 , and has been called the most important album in Christian hip hop history by Rapzilla and Atlanta Daily World . The album debuted as the best @-@ selling album overall in the iTunes Store , No. 3 on the Billboard 200 and won the Grammy Award for Best Gospel Album at the 2013 Grammy Awards , marking the first time that a hip hop artist received this award . Lecrae released his seventh album , Anomaly , on September 9 , 2014 . It debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 with 88 @,@ 587 copies sold through the first week , the first album to top both the Billboard 200 and the Gospel chart simultaneously .

Lecrae received nominations for Artist of the Year at the 43rd , 44th , 45th , and 46th GMA Dove Awards , the last of which he won , and for Best Gospel Artist at the 2013 and 2015 BET Awards , the latter of which he won , a first for a rap artist . Lecrae 's filmography includes a role in the television film A Cross to Bear (2012) and a brief role as Dr. Malmquist in the comedy film Believe Me (2014) . In the social sphere , Lecrae has advocated for the preservation of responsibility and fatherhood as a value among men in the United States , and in 2013 partnered with Dwyane Wade and Joshua DuBois in the multimedia initiative This Is Fatherhood as part of the Obama administration 's Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative . He has also contributed articles to Billboard discussing racial tension and injustice in the United States , where he has called for willingness to listen to the oppressed as well as pointing out a need for spiritual healing .

= = Life and career = =

= = = Early life = = =

Born and raised by his single mother in Southern Houston , Texas , Lecrae moved often early in life , living in San Diego , Denver , and Dallas . He has stated that he would go to church with his Christian grandmother , but considered it for " older people " and said it " wasn 't for me . " Lecrae never met his father , who ended up becoming a drug addict . In the song " Good , Bad , Ugly " , Lecrae reveals that when he was almost eight , a female baby sitter sexually molested him , an incident which Lecrae believes distorted his view of sexuality , influencing his later promiscuous lifestyle . Experiencing abuse and neglect during his childhood , Lecrae used his ability to rap as a source of significance . According to Lecrae , his grandmother would not allow him to watch rap music videos on television , but he would sneak in late at night . It was in these videos that Lecrae found individuals to look up to . Lecrae states that " there were no Martin Luther Kings or Malcolm Xs , they had all passed away so I had Tupac . " After being shown a gun by his uncle , Lecrae

began looking up to gangsters and turned to a life of crime . Lecrae remembers taking a BB gun and standing in the street pointing it to a car , frightening the female driver , simply for fun . At the age of 16 , he started taking drugs , fighting , was arrested in high school for stealing , and eventually ended up on a gang list . Lecrae tried " pretty much every drug there was to try " except for heroin and crack cocaine .

According to CNN , he became a drug dealer and used the Bible that his grandmother gave him as a good luck charm . After being arrested for drug possession , the officer saw the Bible and let Lecrae go on a promise that he would agree to live by it . He eventually turned from drugs to alcohol consumption and a party lifestyle and became a " misfit of a person . " He has described himself during this period as a thrill @-@ seeker , he would pull stunts such as jumping from a third @-@ story building , and gained the nickname " Crazy ' Crae " . Encouraged by his concerned mother to read his Bible , Lecrae said that " I remember ripping the pages out of the Bible and throwing it on the floor . I don 't want this Bible . I couldn 't wrap my hands around this being true or real . " He began to drink and smoke more and look for more women " as the emptiness became more profound . " At age 17 , his personal , financial , and relationship troubles convinced him that he was at a " dead end . " Wanting to do what he considered the mature thing , through the influence of his grandmother , he desired to start attending church . A girl Lecrae attended high school with was there , and she invited him to a Bible study , where he met Darragh , his future wife . Lecrae was surprised to find that the members of the Bible study " were just people like me . They read the same books and listened to the same music . Their character was just different . They were loving and that 's really what drew me in . " Lecrae says that it was at age 19 that he finally decided to live for God , though " it wasn 't overnight " and he " spent a lot of time making bad decisions . "

= = = = Conversion = = = =

Lecrae attended a conference after being invited by a friend , though Lecrae admits that his interest was to meet girls and experience the big city . When he arrived at the conference , Lecrae was awed by the performance of the Christian hip @-@ hop group The Cross Movement . Lecrae says that he saw " guys who had been shot from being in gangs , girls who were extremely promiscuous in the past , I see rappers , dancers and singers ; I see people who came from the same background I came from , and they still embodied who they were culturally , but they were all in love with Jesus and I had never seen that before . " After hearing Pastor James White of Christ Our King Community Church speak on how Christians are bought with a price and the suffering that Jesus underwent in the Crucifixion , Lecrae says that he remembers articulating " God get me out of this , don 't kill me ; do whatever you have to do to get me out of this , just don 't kill me . " Later , Lecrae was driving on a highway when he turned too quickly and his car went into a roll . He had no seatbelt and the roof and windshield of the car caved in , his glasses were molded into the frame of the car , but he survived completely uninjured . Lecrae cites this incident as the one which convinced him to commit his life to Christ . Lecrae went back to his college , the University of North Texas , with a printed version of his testimony to pass out on campus . He started volunteering and performing at a juvenile detention center , and the reception he received convinced him that offering " hope and encouragement " through music was what he wanted to do . However , Lecrae still struggled in his faith ? as revealed in " Good , Bad , Ugly " , in 2002 he impregnated a then @-@ girlfriend . Rather than risk scandal , he and his girlfriend had the baby aborted , a decision he says he now deeply regrets .

= = = Early career , Real Talk , and After the Music Stops (2004 ? 07) = = =

Five years after his conversion , Lecrae teamed up with Ben Washer to found Reach Records , and at the age of 25 he released his first album , Real Talk . The following year it was re @-@ released by Cross Movement Records and reached No. 29 on the Billboard Gospel Albums chart , staying on the chart for 12 weeks . The album later received a nomination at the 2007 Stellar Awards . In 2005 , Lecrae co @-@ founded the non @-@ profit organization ReachLife Ministries , which equips local

Christian leaders with tools , media , curriculum , and conferences that are based on the teachings of the Bible and relevant to hip @-@ hop culture . Also in 2005 , the debut album of 116 Clique , The Compilation Album , was released .

After the success of Real Talk , Lecrae released his second studio album on August 15 , 2006 . After the Music Stops charted at No. 5 on the Billboard Gospel Albums chart , No. 7 on the Billboard Christian Albums chart and No. 16 on the Billboard Heatseeker Album charts , and received a nomination for a Dove Award , as was the single " Jesus Muzik " , featuring Trip Lee . In 2007 , 116 Clique released its second album , 13 Letters , reaching No. 10 on the Gospel Albums chart and No. 29 on the Christian Albums chart . 116 Clique also released the remix EP Amped , which peaked at No. 24 on the Gospel Albums chart .

= = = Rebel (2008 ? 09) = = =

On October 8 , 2008 , Lecrae 's third album , Rebel , entered the Billboard charts at No. 60 with 9 @ , @ 800 units sold and topped the Billboard Gospel Album charts for two weeks , the first hip @-@ hop album to do so . It also charted at No. 2 on the Christian Albums chart and No. 15 on the Top Independent charts . In 2009 , the album received a nomination at the 40th Dove Awards , as did the Flame song " Joyful Noise " , which featured Lecrae and John Reilly . 2009 also saw Lecrae 's first film role , when he appeared in the documentary Uprise Presents : Word from the Street by the UK @-@ based TV channel OHTV .

= = = Rehab series (2010 ? 11) = = =

On February 5 , 2010 , Lecrae released a charity single entitled " Far Away " , a tribute to the victims of the 2010 Haiti earthquake . Lecrae promised that all proceeds from the single 's sales would go directly to the Haiti relief effort .

On July 7 , Lecrae announced on the Reach Records website that the title of his new album would be Rehab . On August 5 , 2010 , Rapzilla released a new song from Lecrae called " Amp It Up " . Lecrae subsequently clarified on his Twitter account that the song was not a single from Rehab , but rather a theme song for Kanakuk Kamps , a chain of Christian camps for which he writes songs annually . On August 31 , 2010 , Reach Records revealed the track list for Rehab , released it for preorder , and premiered a promotional video " Idols " . A second promotional video , entitled " I Am Dust " , debuted on September 9 , 2010 . Upon its release , Rehab hit No. 16 on the Billboard 200 chart , making it one of the highest selling Christian hip hop albums at that time .

On September 22 , 2010 , Rapzilla reported that the Rehab packaging came with an advertisement encouraging buyers to purchase another upcoming album , Rehab : The Overdose , which saw release on January 11 , 2011 . It included 11 new songs and featured several other Christian artists such as Thi 'sl and Swoope . Rehab : The Overdose debuted at No. 15 on the Billboard 200 . On August 29 , 2011 , Lecrae announced through Twitter that on September 27 , 2011 , he would release a special edition of Rehab , entitled Rehab : Deluxe Edition . On the same day , 116 Clique released their fourth album , entitled Man Up .

On September 7 , 2011 , Rapzilla announced that Lecrae would be featured on the BET Hip Hop Awards Cypher on October 11 , 2011 . Lecrae gained popularity after his verse on the cypher trended nationwide on Twitter and was featured on AllHipHop . Lecrae then appeared as a feature on Statik Selektah 's song " Live and Let Live " from his Population Control album .

= = = Mainstream breakthrough , Gravity , and Church Clothes series (2012 ? 13) = = =

On February 16 , 2012 , Rapzilla announced that Lecrae was preparing to release his first mixtape , Church Clothes . On May 3 , 2012 , Lecrae premiered his music video for the title track of his Church Clothes mixtape online on XXL . The video was noted for including cameos by Kendrick Lamar and DJ Premier , and attracted almost 20 @ , @ 000 views in less than a day . Hosted by Don Cannon , the mixtape featured the song Darkest Hour , in which Lecrae collaborated with No Malice

of Clipse . Church Clothes was downloaded more than 100 @, @ 000 times in less than 48 hours on DatPiff.com , and in less than a month reached 250 @, @ 000 downloads , a platinum rating on the website . On June 25 , 2012 , a remastered version of the mixtape , without DJ Don Cannon , was released as an EP for sale on iTunes . Due to issues with sampling , this version was much shorter with only seven songs . Upon its release , the EP debuted on the Billboard charts at No. 10 on both the Christian Albums and Gospel Albums charts for the week of July 14 , 2012 .

On April 27 , Lecrae announced that his next album , Gravity , was to be released in late 2012 , and recording sessions began in May . On June 21 , 2012 Lecrae appeared live at the Apple Store in Chicago for Black Music Month . The release date for Gravity , September 4 , 2012 , as well as the album artwork was announced on July 19 , 2012 via Rapzilla .

On August 30 , 2012 , the rapper Saigon announced that Lecrae would be one of the featured artists on his upcoming album The Greatest Story Never Told Chapter 2 : Bread and Circuses , due November 6 , 2012 .

Gravity was released on September 4 , 2012 to critical acclaim . Upon its release , Gravity debuted at No. 3 on the Billboard 200 , with 72 @, @ 000 units sold . The album also debuted at No. 1 on the Christian , Gospel , Independent , and Rap Album charts , No. 3 on the Digital Albums chart , and 24 on the Canadian Albums Chart . After the iTunes deluxe version of the album hit No. 1 on that vendors charts , and the regular version at number No. 2 , Time wrote an article about Lecrae and his success with the album .

On November 7 , 2013 , Lecrae released his second mixtape , entitled Church Clothes Vol . 2 , hosted once again by Don Cannon . The mixtape debuted at No. 21 on the Billboard 200 , No. 1 on the Billboard Christian Albums and Gospel Albums charts , and No. 3 on the Rap Albums chart . On Datpiff.com , the album was download over 146 @, @ 000 times by November 26 , 2013 .

= = = Anomaly , Church Clothes 3 , first book , and new record deal (2014 ? present) = = =

On June 3 , 2014 Lecrae announced through social media that his seventh studio album would be titled Anomaly . The album released on September 9 , 2014 . It is supported by the single " Nuthin " . It debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 with over 88 @, @ 000 copies sold through the first week . It is the first time an album tops both the Billboard 200 and the Gospel Albums chart . Lecrae also became the fifth artist following Chris Tomlin (2013) , TobyMac (2012) , LeAnn Rimes (1997) and Bob Carlisle (1997) to score a number one album on both Christian Albums and the Billboard 200 . Anomaly also marks the sixth time that Lecrae topped the Gospel Albums chart and the fifth time he topped the Christian Albums chart . In its second week of sales , the album sold 31 @, @ 000 copies , bringing the total to 120 @, @ 000 copies sold . In its third week of sales , the album sold another 17 @, @ 000 copies , bringing the total to 137 @, @ 000 copies . As a reward to fans for their support in helping his album go No. 1 on Billboard , Lecrae released a new song , " Non @-@ Fiction " , as a free download on September 17 . The song was subsequently released on October 21 , 2014 in the iTunes store . In August 2015 , Lecrae announced that he will be releasing a memoir titled Unashamed , it was released in May 2016 . On January 15 , 2016 , Lecrae released his third mixtape Church Clothes 3 . In May 2016 , Lecrae signed to Columbia Records , which will release future recordings in conjunction with Reach .

= = Influences and musical style = =

Lecrae 's musical genre is predominantly Southern hip hop , and has been described as falling under the styles of crunk , gangsta rap , and hardcore hip hop . On his third release , Rebel , Lecrae slowed down his style on many songs . Rehab was noted for its stylistic diversity , particularly on the song " Children of the Light " , which featured Dillavou and Sonny Sandoval and incorporated rock , and reggae influences . With the release Gravity , Billboard described Lecrae as incorporating reggae and soul influences into his " signature brash sound . "

Regarding which musical artists have influenced him , Lecrae , in an interview with Essence , cited Tupac , Nas , DJ Quik , Scarface , and The Cross Movement . In an interview with The Christian

Post , Lecrae listed his top favorite five hip hop artists as Tupac , Nas , The Ambassador , Snoop Dogg , and , though for his business approach rather than his music , Jay Z. Lecrae also names Outkast and Lauryn Hill as major influences , particularly their albums Aquemini and The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill , respectively , and considers Hill 's song " Adam Lives in Theory " as the top song that nourishes him spiritually . In the song " Non @-@ Fiction " , he lists the Tunnel Rats alongside The Cross Movement as an influence when he was newly converted to Christianity . Theologically , Lecrae follows the Reformed tradition of theology and is considered an influential figure in the New Calvinist movement . He cites Tommy Nelson , John MacArthur , and John Piper , among others , as early influences on his Christian faith , and Lecrae even titled one of his hit songs , " Don 't Waste Your Life " , after the book of the same name by Piper . Lecrae explains that through Nelson , MacArthur , and Piper , he subsequently discovered Spurgeon , Calvin , and Francis Schaeffer , the last of whom Lecrae calls his " personal hero " . Other theologians cited by Lecrae include Tim Keller , Andy Crouch , Randy Alcorn , and Abraham Kuyper . He also looks to Martin Luther King , Jr. for inspiration on working out faith in social issues .

He frequently tells the press that " My music is not Christian , Lecrae is . " He told Miami New Times 's Crossfade that " I think Christian is a wonderful noun , but a terrible adjective . Are there Christian shoes , Christian clothes , Christian plumbers , Christian pipes ? I think if you 're going to , you should label it hip @-@ hop ... hip @-@ hop is a particular poetic style . Labeling it with the faith assumes that the song is going to be some kind of sermon , but there 's a lot of social and political things that I don 't think make it gospel or Christian music . " He also stated , " I like to wrap my mind around a total situation . I 'm a social anthropologist . If I never been homeless , let me try to be homeless for a week and soak up that information . More like a method actor . So for me it 's spending time with people and talking about things from their perspective . "

= = Popular culture = =

Charlotte Hornets guard Jeremy Lin recommended Lecrae and Hillsong in an interview when asked about his pre @-@ game music . Former NFL quarterback Tim Tebow and professional wrestler Ezekiel Jackson have also endorsed Lecrae . During March 2014 , Lecrae signed a ten @-@ day contract with the Atlanta Hawks , and on April 4 , 2014 , he performed live at Philips Arena after the Hawks game . " Dum Dum , " a song by Tedashii featuring Lecrae , was used on an episode of So You Think You Can Dance .

= = Social activism = =

In 2011 , 116 Clique and ReachLife Ministries , both headed by Lecrae , launched a media campaign entitled Man Up , intended to mentor male urban youths on fatherhood and biblical manhood . It features concert tours and a curriculum centered on a short film and a studio album , both titled Man Up , and since 2012 has also featured a string of conference events .

In May 2013 , Lecrae partnered with NBA player Dwyane Wade , filmmaker Art Hooker , and Joshua DuBois , the former head of the Office of Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships under the Obama administration , to create the national media campaign This Is Fatherhood , an initiative " devoted to restoring America 's commitment to healthy fatherhood . " The campaign began on May 1 with a " This is Fatherhood Challenge " , in which contestants could submit videos , songs , and essays about fatherhood through June 10 . The winners received cash prizes and a trip to Washington , D.C. , for a ceremony on Father 's Day . In addition , Lecrae offered studio time and mentoring to the grand prize winner . Lecrae , Wade , DuBois , Jay Z , and U.S. President Barack Obama all made appearances in the campaign 's promotional public service announcements .

Lecrae has also contributed op @-@ ed articles to Billboard on the 2014 Ferguson unrest and the 2015 Charleston church shooting , and has called for understanding and empathy across racial divides and willingness to listen to the oppressed , and also pointed out the need for spiritual healing through Jesus Christ .

= = Personal life = =

Lecrae currently resides in Atlanta since relocating there from Memphis in 2009 , and is married to Darragh Moore . The couple has three children together . Darragh handles the administration for Lecrae 's tours . Lecrae is a graduate of University of North Texas . In an interview with Hip Hop DX , Lecrae stated that Clipse member No Malice sought him out as a spiritual advisor .

On March 14 , 2016 , Canada Christian College bestowed an honorary Doctorate of Music to Lecrae whilst visiting Toronto on his Higher Learning Tour , making him the youngest recipient of such a degree from the college .

= = Discography = =

Real Talk (2004)
After the Music Stops (2006)
Rebel (2008)
Rehab (2010)
Rehab : The Overdose (2011)
Gravity (2012)
Anomaly (2014)

= = Production discography = =

Self @-@ release ? Real Talk (2004)
Json ? The Seasoning with So Hot Productions and C.I. (2005)
Self @-@ release ? After the Music Stops with So Hot Productions , Mac the Doulous , DJ Official , and Tony Stone (2006)
Trip Lee ? If They Only Knew with DJ Official , Tony Stone , Mac the Doulous , So Hot Productions (2006)
Tedashii ? Kingdom People with Ben Washer (2006)
02 . " Houston We Have a Problem "
04 . " Off Da Hook "
09 . " Lifestyle "
15 . " No More "
19 . " In Ya Hood (Cypha Remix) "
Sho Baraka ? Turn My Life Up with Bobby Taylor , DJ Official , BenJah , and So Hot Productions (2007)
Self @-@ release ? Rebel (2008)
09 . " Change "
Self @-@ release ? Gravity (2012)
Self @-@ release ? Anomaly (2014)

= = Filmography = =

= = Awards and nominations = =

Lecrae has won many music awards over the space of his career , including two Grammy Awards and seven Dove Awards . In 2013 , he became the first hip hop artist to win the Grammy Award for Best Gospel Album , which was awarded to his sixth album , Gravity , and in 2015 became the first rapper to win the BET Award for Best Gospel Artist .