



Tupac Opens Up In 'The Lost Prison Tapes' Interview

It's hard to find a true introspective interview with a hip-hop superstar who also happens to be consumed with controversy. Most of the writings about Kanye West, for instance, are more about the people he has dissed than his musical genius.

But fans of the late rap icon Tupac Shakur will be happy with the DVD release, "Tupac: Uncensored & Uncut: The Lost Prison Tapes," out on Tuesday, January 25.

The Flatiron Film Company production is an exclusive never-before-seen 1995 interview with Shakur. The revealing 45-minute piece was taped during his incarceration at New York's Clinton Correctional Facility on sexual assault charges.

Shakur opens up about numerous topics that delved deeper than the average hip-hop profile. He discussed spending his first 8 months in jail in solitary confinement for more than 20 hours per day. He spent that time reading books.

Shakur admitted being locked up had given him some time to reflect on his works and consider how he could use his voice more responsibly. But he also defended his T.H.U.G. Life mantra and criticisms from politicians including former presidential candidate Bob Dole and C. Delores Tucker.

Shakur explained that the concept of gangs did not only apply to groups of inner city youth but also defined political parties, and entities like police forces. He was always candid in his interviews, but fans still get to see another side of the artist in the "The Lost Prison Tapes."

The interviewer here, an unidentified man who seemed to be more social worker than music reporter, seemed more concerned with understanding Shakur's views on the inner city and how he has used his influence to make a difference. It is definitely a refreshing break from today's too sensationalistic focus.

Shakur died on September 13, 1996, the result of being shot in Las Vegas.