

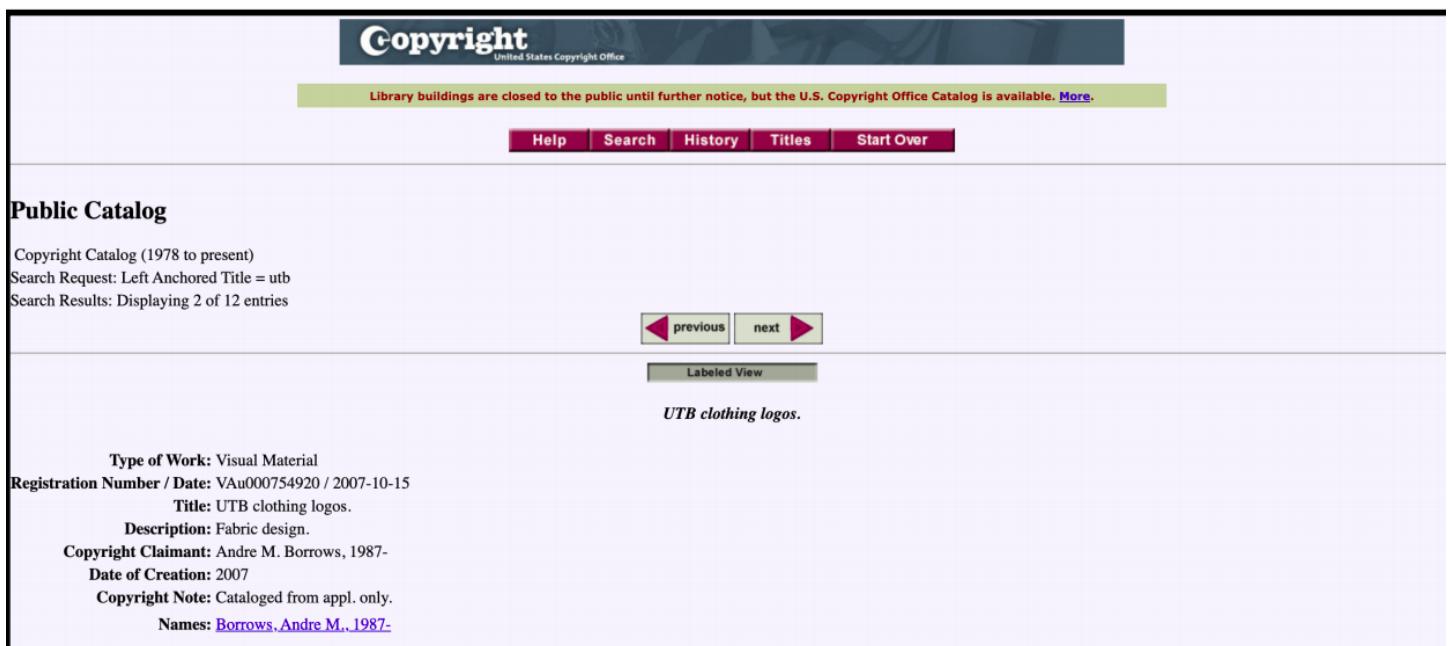
journal entry #1:



when you see the image above, what ideas does it inspire? perhaps motivation, ambition, greed, or good fortune? you associate it with whenever someone's gettin' money, thinkin' about gettin' money, or otherwise eyes fixed on securing the prize of life.

you'll no doubt recognize the image as an emoji; a universal digital symbol that articulates your biggest dreams, greatest joys, and darkest fears in one keystroke. The 💰 emoji holds particular relevance in the crypto world, as we naturally use the internet language for money to express our experience of internet money made language. nfts bring the promise of embracing the cultural milestones that emerged from this technological revolution, and honoring their creators.

you may or may not recognize the original image that directly preceded the 💩 emoji: the Money Mouth Smiley© design, [copyrighted](#) by pioneering Black-founded lifestyle brand Under the Bottom (UTB) as their logo in 2007, a full 8 years before, without attribution to or authorization by UTB, the 💰 emoji entered the unicode.



The screenshot shows the 'Copyright' website of the United States Copyright Office. The top navigation bar includes links for 'Help', 'Search', 'History', 'Titles', and 'Start Over'. A banner at the top states: 'Library buildings are closed to the public until further notice, but the U.S. Copyright Office Catalog is available. [More](#)'. Below this, the 'Public Catalog' section is displayed. The search request is 'Left Anchored Title = utb' and the results show 'Displaying 2 of 12 entries'. The results list includes:  
**Type of Work:** Visual Material  
**Registration Number / Date:** VAu000754920 / 2007-10-15  
**Title:** UTB clothing logos.  
**Description:** Fabric design.  
**Copyright Claimant:** Andre M. Borrows, 1987-  
**Date of Creation:** 2007  
**Copyright Note:** Cataloged from appl. only.  
**Names:** [Borrows, Andre M., 1987-](#)

UTB made the Money Mouth Smiley© as their logo before emojis existed!

since the 1990s, unicode has acted as the standardizing organization for digital communication. but only starting in 2010, capitulating under corporate pressure, did they consider it a "priority" to add emojis to their standard.

when emojis first debuted on iphone 5 in 2011, one needed to import a special keyboard to use them. by then, UTB had already established themselves as more than a clothing line, but a marketing agency, A&R company, and accomplished lifestyle brand in their own right. Tyga, Diddy, and Mac Miller had appeared on camera wearing UTB gear. UTB threw Wiz Khalifa's first show in southern california, leading the future rap megastar to enlist UTB to brand his entire Taylor Gang merch empire, and heavily feature the UTB smiley in his video for "Taylor Gang", one of the most streamed independently released singles of all time.

more on that later, but even today, when i pull up on UTB in person at the inland empire creative studio they operate out of, i bear witness to their influence in the flesh: an interconnected legion of rappers, producers, designers and creators in every medium all rockin' UTB gear, be it a lanyard adorned in a UTB smiley collage design; jackets with subtle UTB smiley print pocket lining; denim with the money mouth insignia spraypainted on the legs; or the UTB smiley not on any fabric at all but tattooed on a supporter's skin. you would think you had crashed an officially scheduled UTB photo shoot, but this is their every day (though you'd likely see UTB-affiliated photographers snapping photos as well). the same way punk or bored ape nfts signify belonging to a cryptoart community, UTB built an irl community of socal art hustlers, for whom the UTB logo signifies their vision for more and their undying drive to manifest it.



(left to right) UTB co-founder Dre Skywalker, UTB recording artist Jae Harp and others rocking UTB gear, with a "1,000,000" UTB trademark, Taylor Gang collab, and "#BetAMill" UTB hashtag on full display.

Thursday, August 5th, 2021, on the 14th anniversary of their inception, UTB will auction the original copyrighted files for their now ubiquitous Money Mouth Smiley© design as a 1/1 nfts, on the KnownOrigin nft gallery marketplace and curated by future modern. we offer you cultural alpha captured through nfts - an iconic image made word without language barrier, made artistic asset whose ubiquity can now become its value. to properly weigh the significance of this nft drop, we must understand UTB's story and why nfts make so much sense as their next chapter.

## utb nft origins

in the summer of 2007, founders Dre Skywalker and Treem Heff inceptioned UTB and its time-honored Money Mouth Smiley© logo in their respective Cal Baptist and Arizona State dorm rooms over sidekicks and tmail. Dre had just finished up the first year of his basketball scholarship and, as a broke college athlete, set his mind on two summer goals: get money and get better, which meant a job and somewhere to stay near an la fitness.

but with gas hitting \$4 a gallon for the first time ever, he needed to hatch a plot to do both while on pre-covid lockdown from a combo of global oil markets and the southwest's notorious lack of sufficient public transportation. When Dre reached out for support, his childhood friend Treem reached back, so Dre confided in Treem his vision for a brand that would establish the roots of a money tree from "under the bottom, never ova the top", with a logo that loudly broadcasted that mission: a straightforward depiction of that "money vision" that anyone with eyes on a prize in life can get behind. it clicked immediately for Treem, and they got to work coming up with the logo that speaks this language forming in their minds.

after a month of brainstorming over tmail and AOL instant messenger correspondences, Dre visited Treem in Arizona to settle on a logo design out of Treem's sketches. they watched Pharrell's Ice Cream Skate Video during that visit, which inspired them to drive their own brand through multiple logos. a month later, by August 2007, they were trappin' merch samples out of the IE and Arizona, and UTB was born.

in october of that year, UTB mailed a CD (y'all remember those?) with roughly 15 of these designs to the patent office and secured their copyright. subsequently, UTB didn't abandon the designs in some dank basement filing cabinet, only for some lucky opportunist to stumble across them, dust them off and do the real work to raise the iconography to its current stature. instead, from the jump of their 2008 Season 1 release, UTB cultivated a momentous grassroots creative movement expanding beyond the industrial outskirts of los angeles to achieve global reach while still maintaining its local, community-based roots. these relationships formed the basis for "creator economies" before everyone talked about creator economies: multidisciplinary coalitions of friends putting on and building infrastructure for each other because the powers that be would not do any such thing for them.

note the parallels with crypto's core value propositions here. in fact, much of UTB's business ethos would reflect those principles that crypto and nft brought to bear before the technologies had caught up. these include:

❖ **scarcity** UTB has always dropped heavily curated, limited run collections, selling items in as few as 15 editions, even one of one sample, then never producing them again. Treem, a fine artist and painter along with a designer, held the instagram handle @rareartgoon before nfts, so there's that.

🎁 **living media** when UTB went on tour with musical acts they branded, they would recognize and pick high-volume customers out of a crowd to come backstage at shows. they combed through their sales records to track down their biggest supporters to give exclusive perks and added value over time, making the UTB experience ever expanding and evolving.

🥚 **metaverses** as early as 2013, UTB conceived of a music video that would display a 2-frame QR code unlocking a gang of exclusive content when scanned. they long embraced the idea of hidden easter eggs in their offerings that unlocked augmented experiences.

UTB always moved like they would get on and stay on by empowering and reinvesting in themselves and their supporters, rather than resorting to fast food style consumerist fashion geared to everyone but reaching no one. similarly, crypto ultimately represents investment, trust, and belief in oneself and one's community rather than external powers. even UTB's frequent replacement of Ss with dollar signs (\$) throughout their typography,

for instance in their slogan, "Have a nice life\$yle" or their tagline, "you ever put a \$tick of butta in the crockpot?", continues on this theme of self investment: bringing to mind stock or cryptocurrency tickers, it says, "treat our art as an asset, not a disposable". and not just for a quick flip either: heating butter takes longer in the crockpot than the microwave, but bears a better return; basically, hodl on for dear life. "to the moon", the phrase which captures the hopes of these ideals within crypto culture, does not just speak to the price of cryptocurrency, but a mindset of achieving freedom and new heights. this parallels accordingly with the equally syllabled UTB hashtag #BetAMill, which does not literally mean bet a specific dollar amount, but emphasizes taking the ultimate leap of faith on yourself, especially in defiance of detractors.

along their journey, UTB would inspire and work with some of today biggest cultural icons, many times propelling those careers to new stratospheres before they became household names. case in point: UTB's partnership with Wiz Khalifa. UTB low key innovated "influencer marketing" before the days of social media, first connecting to Wiz through myspace. in twitter's infancy, when celebrities would still share personal info with fans, Wiz tweeted UTB his email, which launched a legendary partnership...but not without a turbulent takeoff.

at a moment's notice, the opportunity presented itself to sell merch on Wiz's 2010 tour, and UTB needed inventory fast. they didn't have the capital to fund the venture but knew they had the demand, so they took a chance on themselves. Dre and Treem hopped in a sprinter van and pulled up on their local print shop, explaining to them that UTB needed \$20k worth of merch fronted they would pay back in a few days. taken aback at first, the shop agreed due to their rapport with UTB, and UTB drove straight from the print shop to Phoenix, AZ to meet Taylor Gang...only to miss that first show of the tour. they would trek on to tour dates in new mexico, houston, texas, and dallas, texas, selling out all the shirts, paying the print shop back, and putting in another order by that third show. the print shop shipped the reorder to a Florida hotel they stayed at later in the tour.

the tour overall sold so much merch, that Wiz could pitch himself as a not only a recording artist but a commercializable brand, leading to the same label that had just dropped him from a \$1M deal to resign him to a \$10M deal. the rest, as they say, is history.

the design for the 💰 emoji originates from the logo for UTB's lifestyle brand, which, before emojis, pushed forward hip hop and streetwear culture at the onset of those movement's takeover of music and fashion culture more broadly. this nft drop aims to reclaim, preserve, and properly value for its rightful owners a cultural heritage swept up in the "explosion of the internet". let's talk (briefly) about the 💰 emoji, in the context of internet (modern) culture, the emoji's progenitor Money Mouth smiley(c), and its upcoming nft release.

## Money Mouth Smiley, artistic assets and modern culture

art is a conversation, and the UTB smiley hands down harbingered how we would communicate in the future modern digital age.

when UTB first spawned, people would press them with questions like, "how y'all gonna make money off t-shirts?", and "how you gonna make your brand a smiley? that's corny; smileys aren't relevant anymore". imagine then what the UTB community felt when, after weathering hundred-strong hoards of haters to come together as a thriving creative economy rallied around this emblem embodying their "money vision", they were forced to see their coat of arms appropriated on every Apple device keyboard, for every bleacher report betting alert, in every cnbc report on [Elon Musk](#)'s or [Jeff Bezos](#)' newest notch of egregious wealth, on debut cash app

cards, and generally anytime any company, publication, or anything or anyone that touches money wants to seem hip or relatable to the youth. many close to UTB's situation outright boycotted usage of the  at first. while UTB held a far from fatalist outlook on their predicament, there proved little way to regain the upper hand with the tools available to them at the time.

you see, UTB successfully defended their Money Mouth smiley© copyright on multiples occasions before the  emoji came out on iphone in 2015, cease and desisting and collecting damages from many a bootlegger. neither copying UTB's idea nor proving their authorship of the idea started with the emoji. but apple presents a different beast than a copycat clothing company, and lily-livered lawyers would either not take UTB's case at all or not represent them in good faith.

but with the support of the nft community, UTB can turn the tables on the typical story of big tech, mass media and archaic intellectual property law exploiting smaller and marginalized artists, reclaiming the ubiquity of their symbol from value lost into value captured, for them and everyone who rides with them.

UTB may have forefathered the field of "retroafrofuturism": the linking of past, present and future pop culture through the lens of Black experience. they invented a "language of the future" steeped in cultural context by evolving on the happy face smiley concept that entered popular consciousness in the 50s. by the mid noughties when UTB got started, one most likely saw the happy face smiley on a take out box or baggie, along with the phrase "Have a Nice Day", ironically the same slogan the Spain Brothers used in the 70s to rip the most recognizable smiley face design from Harvey Ross Ball and copyright it. by adapting the Spain brothers slogan to "Have a Nice Life\$tle", UTB added a slick edge to the valediction while stamping themselves as culture developers beyond simply selling clothes before everyone called themselves a lifestyle brand.

emojis originated on japanese mobile phones in the late 1990s, but did not reach global popularity until their adoption by the Unicode standard and inclusion on mobile phone operating systems starting in 2010. Unicode did not adopt the money mouth smiley until 2015, the same year oxford dictionary selected the crying laughing emoji as word of the year.

in this way, UTB does not claim to have invented all smileys or emojis, but proved the future modern use case for emojis with the first smiley to natively represent a novel lexical unit or abstract concept, not simply replace already existing text-based language. they innovated the use of smileys to express complex mindsets, beyond simplified emotions. you can only express emotion facially with your eyebrows, eyes, and mouth; the UTB smiley engages all three. if these claims seem contrived, go read the [UTB blog post archived since 2008](#) breaking down the function of each facial feature of the design in communicating its overall expression. in fact, there's no reason a "greedy" or "rich" emoji would need its tongue sticking out; that clearly comes from their design and implies a deeper or at least more relatable meaning than straight avarice. Michael Jordan inspired UTB to make the smiley's tongue stick out, which sheds light on that deeper meaning: the mindset to push oneself to greatness, have fun, and swag out while one's at it.

## money vision

now that we got that philosophical artsy fartsy theory talk out of the way, let's talk numbers. we can appraise the value of this nft based on the sale price of other offerings that share a comparable space of cultural impact and meaning.

cultural symbol / moment	years of provenance (year of inception)	Impact on language / is a unicode emoji?	associated cryptocurrency?	associated celebs?	primary nft sale price
shiba inu doge	11 (2010)	highly recognizable highly reproduced introduced the “very this, much that” pattern  not specifically an emoji, though some platforms depict the dog emoji as a shiba inu breed.	dogecoin	Elon Musk, Mia Khalifa	1696 Eth
nyancat	10 (2011)	highly recognizable hardly reproduced or consumed / searched anymore  not an emoji	nyancoin (defunct)	n/a	300 Eth
disaster girl	15 (2007)	moderately recognizable not as frequently reproduced these days  not an emoji	no	n/a	180 Eth
Money Mouth Smiley (C)	14 (2007)	<b>highly recognizable is a unicode emoji, high-trending throughout its history</b>	\$bu1dl; UTB token (\$TICK) coming soon	Wiz Khalifa, Snoop Dogg, Diddy, Juicy J, Tyga	~1,000 Eth (appraisal)

we appraise the Money Mouth Smiley© as among the most provenant, culturally relevant modern heritage pieces attributable to a specific author. we revel in presenting this opportunity to collect this universal symbol at the confluence of tech, art, language, money, and mindset, and invest in the future of free culture at its source.

blacknftart post #1:

in partnership with @afuturemodern, @utbworldwide will #auction their copyrighted original #design for the 💰 smiley as an #nft on @knownorigin\_.io 8/5.

to understand the importance of this, remember how nike bought its swoosh #logo from its original designer for just \$35 🤯? turns out swoosh designer Carolyn Davidson eventually received \$1M in nike stock for her efforts ✎, but the original designers of an arguably even more culturally potent image still seek their fair due.

if you're reading this, you recognize the 💰 smiley design, whether from its use in #fashion branding by #culture icons from @Diddy to @WizKhalifa, or from its use across #finance, #tech, and #crypto as an #emoji available on billions of devices worldwide.

you may not recognize its original creators, pioneering #lifestyle #brand Under the Bottom (UTB), who copyrighted the design back in 2007. yep. before 💰 was an emoji, or emojis were on phones, two Black boys from the outskirts of los angeles cultivated a grassroots creator movement across #music and fashion culture

around a symbol embodying the aspirational #mindset anyone trying to come up in the world, especially in the face of long odds.

UTB epitomized #independent creator economics pre crypto, moving their #merch like nfts through

💎 intentionally curated, limited edition drops

🎁 exclusive perks for their biggest supporters

🥚 hidden easter eggs in their content leading to augmented experience

before the tech to facilitate these ideas had even caught up. years later, it's a universally recognized symbol, but the smartphone companies never compensated UTB for their design 😱. through nfts, though, only one can own the original design from its authentic creators. it's time for #underground artists turn the tables on mass media industry, david v goliath style 💡

learn more and follow the drop at <https://www.utbnft.com>. they say nfts are about community and culture. nothing embodies those ethics more than UTB and their smiley. on 8/5, place a bid and put your money where their mouth is! 💰💰💰

twitter thread #1:

hi! we got another nft drop coming up i'm really excited about and hope you'll tell about to anyone you know who might care!

in partnership with @afuturemodern, @utblifestyle will auction their copyrighted original design for the 💰 smiley as an nft on @knownorigin\_io 8/5.

to understand the importance of this, remember how nike bought its swoosh logo from its original designer for just \$35 🤯? turns out swoosh designer Carolyn Davidson eventually received \$1M in nike stock for her efforts ✅, but the original designers of an arguably even more culturally potent image still seek their fair due.

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sneak peak the full campaign at <https://www.utbnft.com>. they say nfts are about community and culture. nothing embodies those ethics more than UTB and their smiley. on 8/5, place a bid and put your money where their mouth is! 💰💰💰

<https://twitter.com/afuturemodern/status/1417591323251539968?s=21>

ig post #1:

curated by @afuturemodern, @utbworldwide will #auction their copyrighted original #design for the 💰 #smiley as an #nft on @knownorigin.io 8/5.

yep. the 💰 smiley, an undeniably universal symbol of mentality, especially in post-@gamestop era, was invented not by @apple or @google, but Under the Bottom (UTB), at the time two Black boys in the industrial armpits of los angeles. UTB copyrighted the 💰 smiley design in 2007 as the #logo for what would become their trailblazing #streetwear label, before the design was an #emoji or emojis were even on phones. they never got paid for the design's eventual use as an emoji on BILLIONS of devices.

we liken it to @nike buying its swoosh logo from its designer for just \$35. swoosh maker Carolyn Davidson eventually collected \$1M in nike stock for her efforts📈, but the original authors of an arguably even more culturally potent image still seek their fair due.

even if you don't recognize UTB, you recognize their work, whether from its use in the #fashion branding of culture icons from @diddy to @wizkhalifa, or in communications across #business, #finance, #tech, and crypto. at this point, it's a letter of the #internet alphabet.

UTB rallied an irl interdisciplinary #creator economy around a symbol embodying the aspirational #mindset of anyone trying to come up in the world, especially in the face of long odds. They embrace NFTs long-term because they epitomized the nft ethos pre crypto, with

💎 heavily curated, limited edition drops

🎁 exclusive perks for their biggest supporters

🥚 hidden easter eggs in their content leading to augmented experience

before tech for these practices had even caught up.

years later, their copyrighted logo is globally commercialized without proper attribution, but through nfts, only one can own the original design from its authentic authors. it's time for #independentartists turn the tables on mass media industry, david v goliath style 💡

learn more and follow the drop at utbnft.com. they say nfts are about community and culture. nothing embodies those ethics more than UTB's smiley. 8/5 on KnownOrigin, bid on the UTB Smiley© nft and put your money where your mouth is! 💰💰💰

#cryptoart #rareart #eth

ig post #2:

wanna thank @socali\_ash and @kas\_vegas for putting together and inviting us the wonderful It's a Deebie shindig last night to celebrate the #deebies #collectible drop and bring the #nft community together irl.

the @utbworldwide boys pulled up and it went from a party to a movie. every time we chop it up i learn more about how they pushed the culture for years and nfts make perfect sense as a next step for them. tidbits from last night include:

👉 building young @wizkhalifa's brand towards getting him signed to a \$10M deal after the same label dropped him from a \$1M deal

👩 waiting for a teenage @lilbisgod to show up to a business meeting while hanging w B's adoptive white mom

🐻 their limited run w\*\*d-themed teddy bear in collab with @thesmokersclub that holds a toy j\*\*\*t you can swap out for a b\*\*\*t (nft people call this "composability")

great to meet @zhovak at It's a Deebie. extremely gifted artist id love to see collaborate with UTB sometime.

speaking of, s/o @gifdead @sketchnate @niftycastle and the whole #deebies crew for dropping a collectible i actually like.

thursday at noon pt catch UTB x future modern in @cryptovoxels at the WIP meetup (twitter: WIPmeetup) to learn more behind the scenes info about UTB's major moves over the years. make sure to head to utbnft.com and save the date we make history by dropping the original 💰 smiley design as an nft. 8/5 on @knownorigin.io

#rareart #cryptoart #blockchain #eth #independentartist #underground #creatoreconomy #design #fashion #streetwear #hiphop #invention #undergroundhiphop #undergroundmusic #emoji #symbol #icon #pictogram #language #netart #internetart #retrofuture #afrofuturism #skate #graphicdesign #logo #lifestyle

igtv post:

full interview with pioneering #lifestylebrand @utbworldwide, the original copyrighters of the 💰 smiley, on its storied history, from its early days as the #logo for their leading #streetwear label breaking some of your favorite #music #artists, to its current permeation throughout society across #tech, #business, #finance, and #culture.

8/5 on @knownorigin.io, you can buy this authentic cultural artifact directly from its original creators using #nft technology. learn more at utbnft.com, and catch us tomorrow 7/29 in @cryptovoxels at the WIP meetup (twitter: WIPmeetup) to learn more behind the scenes info about UTB's major moves over the years.

have a nice life\$tle.

#BetAMil #HaveANiceLifestyle #copyright #attribution #faircompensation #rareart #cryptoart #blockchain #eth  
#independentartist #underground #creatoreconomy #design #fashion #streetwear #hiphop #invention  
#undergroundhiphop #undergroundmusic #emoji #symbol #icon #pictogram #language #netart #internetart  
#digitalart #retrofuture #afrofuturism #skate #graphicdesign #lifestyle

wiz khalifa post #1:

@wizkhalifa's been one of my favorite public figures for over a decade, on my radar since Say Yeah first exposed me to swaggy pop rap over a Dutch #eurodance sample flip in 2008, and cemented with the drop of his classic mixtape Kush and Orange Juice in 2010. Wiz stood out to me not only as someone paving a way for #indierap, but i actually feel like his very public advocacy and consumption of #cannabis contributed to accelerating the #weed #legalization conversation through the overton window here in the US.

as a southern california native, i always wondered what gave Wiz the air of a cali nigga when i knew he's from #Pittsburgh. turns out it wasn't just the weed. more than decade later, my link up with Under the Bottom (UTB, @utbworldwide) for the 8/5 @knownorigin.io historic #nft drop of their original  #smiley they copyrighted in 2007 8 years before the #emoji, revealed that they actually take the credit there. here's Wiz speaking on how UTB inspired not only the #branding for his #TaylorGang label and #merchandise empire, but him rocking #vans and generally taking on a #socal swag as his sense of style developed with his increasing celebrity.

#BetAMill #HaveANiceLifestyle #copyright #attribution #faircompensation #rareart #cryptoart #blockchain #eth  
#streetwear #language #netart #digitalart #retrofuture #graphicdesign #lifestyle

nft copy:

Artwork title:

UTB.NFT.001: The Original Color Money Mouth Smiley© Design Files

Artwork Description:

the first (1st) nft of this 3-piece genesis drop is the original color Money Mouth Smiley© design files, created by pioneering Black-founded lifestyle Under the Bottom (UTB) in july 30th 2007. we made our first shirts with one of the designs, which we released as early as aug 2007.

hitting the reserve price for this nft will trigger bid considerations for the next rarer nft in this genesis series.

the collector of this nft will receive

- all 3 original color Money Mouth Smiley© design files, with metadata proving their date of origin
- eligibility to propose copyright licensing agreements to UTB, at no more than 69% royalty

see the copyright for yourself at

<https://cocatalog.loc.gov/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?v1=2&ti=1,2&Search%5FArg=UTB&Search%5FCode=TALL&CNT=25&PID=lisUoxCEksRnCe2hNSit81WkNa&SEQ=20210702173953&SID=6>

NFT #2

Artwork title:

## UTB.NFT.002: The Original Money Mouth Smiley(c) Vector Files

### Artwork Description:

the second (1st) nft of this 3-piece genesis drop is the Money Mouth Smiley©'s original black and white vector files, created by pioneering Black-founded lifestyle brand Under the Bottom (UTB) on July 28 2007.

hitting the reserve price for this nft will trigger bid considerations for the most rare nft in this genesis series.

the collector of this nft will receive:

- the origin vector design files, with metadata proving their date of origin
- eligibility to propose to UTB copyright licensing agreements at no more than 42.069% royalty
- 1% copyright ownership, if and only if the collector or their executors take actions which directly result in the recovery of substantial damages to UTB from the copyright's most egregious violators.

see the copyright for yourself at

<https://cocatalog.loc.gov/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?v1=2&ti=1,2&Search%5FArg=UTB&Search%5FCode=TALL&CNT=25&PID=lisUoxCEksRnCe2hNSit81WkNa&SEQ=20210702173953&SID=6>