

Império do Papagaio 2026

Hip-hop - Rhyme Dancing in the Beat

Hip-hop was born in 1970's New York City out of urban chaos, the need of society's marginalized to express themselves and to leave their mark in the world. Now, approximately 50 years later, hip-hop has risen to global fame and become a business worth billions - and passed through all classic phases of a cultural genre from underground to mainstream, from humble beginnings to world domination - and even to self-destruction? Is hip-hop still necessary, or has it transformed into a generational nostalgia for middle-aged people? And if hip-hop is still alive, how does it adapt to an ever-changing world?

Despite all setbacks, critiques and censorship hip-hop is still standing as the most popular and widespread youth culture. Hip-hop has become a universal way of being, without strict ties to any particular language or physical place. Kids everywhere are rapping, painting, breaking and making beats for the same reason - the need to express themselves, to make their voices heard and win respect in this complicated world that gives so little opportunities to so few. Hip-hop is alive, because it is necessary.

Urban ghettos are not a thing of history, but contemporary reality everywhere - our world has become "Planet Ghetto". There are almost 8 billion of us and most of humanity lives in marginal conditions where there is a true need to raise one's voice and make everyone listen. A need to decline slavery, censorship and oppression. Hip-hop gives voice to the forsaken, possibilities for social mobility and chances to assume one's own freedom. Hip-hop opens ways to the future.

Hip-hop is a way of life, world vision, language system, style and culture. The four classic elements of hip-hop are DJ (the skill of making beats, the mastery of vinyl), MC (the skill of rhythmic rhyming speech, "flow"), Breaking (a free-form, improvised dance typical of hip-hop) and graffiti painting (urban visual artform). The fifth element, Knowledge, is the study and awareness of roots, history, social thought - elemental to the rebellious and inherently political vision of hip-hop.

The concept of respect in hip-hop culture is that it is won by being the best. No matter how popular you are, one's worth can only be really proven under the pressure of a battle. In early battle culture, defending the honour of the crew was a priority, and defeat meant humiliation for the whole crew. In 1970's Bronx, the neighbourhoods and boroughs were divided between street gangs. Battle culture is a direct descendant of street fighting - but this time without violence, armed with words or dance.

Papagaio's carnival parade will tell the story of hip-hop from the standpoint of its political and social consciousness. Culture is a lens through which we view the world. Cultural phenomena are signals of the times. Hip-hop is a culture that knows how to reconnect with its roots to seek future directions. It is impossible to know where you want to go, if you don't know where you are coming from. Hip-hop wants to write its own history, choose its own heroes and speak with its own voice. This Carnival, our voice is the voice of hip-hop. Say my name, you know who I am!

Parade order

### Comissão de Frente: Battle

From conflict to unity, from gang wars to battle culture, from gang colours to the colours of hip-hop. From the ranks of street gangs, peacemakers and community leaders emerged, uniting forces to defend the crew. From conflict to confrontation on the dance floor. The communities regained the streets and hoods, the world was ready for the age of hip-hop.

### Porta-Bandeira & Mestre-Sala: Wildstyle

I write my name on the concrete: Graffiti takes on public spaces, claims them with the owner's signature. These streets belong to us!

### Guardians: Writers

The graffiti crew makes public spaces its art gallery, subway trains take pieces and tags everywhere in the city. One person's freedom of expression is another person's vandalism - but the power of street art cannot be dominated. Choosing and writing one's name is a political act. The more public the place, the more visible the invisible becomes.

### Abre-alas: Old School

According to legend, hip-hop was born in The Bronx, a multiethnic urban ghetto in New York City. Hip-hop was born out of everything that was available, everything that was funky: The history of Black music, vinyl records, beats, dance and block parties. These parties were commanded by the DJ, whose massive sound system spreads the music of liberation all over the city. Breakdance challenges to a duel of the ownership of the dance floor.

### Baianas: Zulu Nation

Community, awareness and Black Power are building blocks of hip-hop. Zulu Nation was the first cultural collective organized around hip-hop that gave young people an alternative to gang life. The spirit of Shaka Zulu and afrocentric philosophy challenged the kids to reflect on their own roots and Black history.

### Destaque: MC

Masters of ceremonies (MC's) first appeared on the hip-hop scene as sidekicks to the DJ's.. An MC raps, improvises and makes the rhyme dance in the beat. The mastery of rhythmic, rhyming speech and storytelling are ancient skills that take on a new, contemporary form in hip-hop.

### Ala 1: Rap

In the 1980s, MC became rappers. Rappers quickly transformed into the most popular artists of hip-hop and some became huge international stars. Rap music is a successful product, wielding the power of the word liberates - as well as creates fashion and generates money. A rapper is an idol, who gets his message heard.

### Passistas: Bling Bling

The massive jewelry worn by rappers symbolize the ultimate fantasy of power, wealth and freedom. Diamonds are not something available for someone who grew up in the ghetto, so they are worn with extreme swagger and defiance. The white glitter of luxury declares: I am no longer a slave of yours!

### Bateria: Fight the Power

The concept of Black power and social awareness re-emerged in the late 1980's in the form of "Conscious rap". A new generation connected with the heritage of the Civil Rights Movement and Black radical symbolism. Hip-hop today raises the same Black fist for all repressed and silenced minorities.

### Destaque: Fuck tha Police

The structural violence of a society that makes a young Black man "Public enemy no 1". Racism, brutality and "racial profiling" by the police generated the most powerful protest anthem of hip-hop that still resonates today. (We give voice to the authors of the lyrics, and use their exact words)

### Ala 2: Censorship vs. Freedom of speech

Hip-hop is simultaneously a "warrior of the Message" and a prisoner of censorship. Rap music provokes and tests the limits of free expression, but the forces of conservatism fill record covers with warning labels. Listen at your own discretion, may contain ideas!

### Ala Mirim (children): The Hip-hop Generation

MTV brought rap, breakdance and graffiti to the masses. The colour of hip-hop's main consumers changed radically: Black music was mostly bought and listened to by white middle-class youth. Hip-hop provided street-credible rebellion to the kids, parents were shocked by these new idols, loud boomboxes, gold chains and baggy pants. The Hip-hop generation - the middle-aged people of today - learned from their music (among other things) an attitude of new openness and anti-racism.

### Destaque: The Mogul

In the 1990s, the rise of hip-hop-specific, independent record companies which secured ownership of copyrights, created immense wealth very quickly. Producers and artists escalated from the street to VIP-lists and the red carpets of award shows. Social ascension is the essence of the classic American Dream, but it comes with risks. Someone brought up in the hood can fall back down just as fast.

### Ala 3: Hip-hop Lifestyle - Street cred for sale

The success story of hip-hop as the source of cool and street cred brought in the forces of commercialism. Rappers modeling for fashion labels, starting their own brands and companies, the craze for designer logos and luxury products was far from the reality of the ghetto. Hip-hop branding makes any product look good, but is there any room for authenticity and message in this superficially glittering world?

Destaque: Ladies First

“Who ya callin’ a bitch?” The power of women is the big story of 2000’s hip-hop. As the culture writes its own history, it gives credit to the pioneers, who have fought the biggest fight of all to make their voices heard. Women in hip-hop are active subjects, not decorative objects as the negative stereotype would present them. Women are DJs, MCs, writers, B-girls, producers, moguls, whatever they choose to be. Women are the marginal of a marginal culture - their battle is twice as tough in a male-dominated world. But that’s why they are so damn tough!

Alegoria: Planet Ghetto

Hip-hop is no longer confined to one neighbourhood, no longer dominated by the English language only, not even completely Black - it is everything it has always been and much more. Now there are other voices from all over the world rising in every language. Hip-hop lives and breathes in the same social marginals as always, in every new hip-hop generation. Our world in the 2020’s is Planet Ghetto, where the party is on, commanded by Hip-Hop Culture, the four elements of the art, awareness of community, power of the word and the creative power we all possess. “We do not celebrate because life is easy - we celebrate because it is not”