

Moka Only Biography



With a catalogue that is unmatched by many, Moka Only is often considered to be a pioneer and driving force behind Canadian West Coast hip hop, as well as an important component in popularizing the art of freestyling in Victoria and Vancouver. In the 13+ years since his debut, Moka Only has released more than 40 albums, both solo and collaborative. He records under a variety of aliases, with the most popular being Ron Contour, Flow Torch and The Durable Mammal. He has been a contributing member of numerous groups and collectives, including Perfect Strangers, Code Name: Scorpion, Cryptic Souls Crew, The Dominant Mammals, City Planners, Nowfolk and Swollen Members, along with many others. Amongst all of that, Moka has worked with underground hip hop heroes like J Dilla, Aceyalone, OH NO, MF Doom, Buck 65, K-Os, Sixtoo and more.

But it all began rather humbly in his hometown of Victoria, BC, where Moka Only discovered hip hop culture at an early age, starting out as a graffiti artist before switching to rhyiming at house parties and freestyling anywhere and everywhere alongside partner K-Prevail (recording together as Splitsphere). In 1994, Moka made the move to San Diego in order to further his rap career, creating a number of connections that he would later use to his advantage. Upon moving back to Canada in 1995 and taking up residence in Vancouver, Moka met Mad Child, and along with K-Prevail, now just Prevail, the three emcees founded Swollen Members one night at a Denny's, with Moka coining their multiple meaning name. However, a group dynamic was not for Moka and he soon moved on to a solo career.

In 1995, Moka Only started flooding the local scene with a myriad of music, quickly earning himself the nickname of "The Most Prolific" by self-releasing cassettes on an almost seasonal basis, which led to a few vinyl releases and finally album deals with a variety of labels. All the while, Moka was building a name for himself as a strong and skillful emcee with down-to-earth subject matter ranging from hip hop to fashion, from food to travel, and from love to sex. Although best known for his rapping, Moka was also building his resume as a quirky producer with a knack for mixing live and sampled instruments. While the majority of Moka's musical output has been self-produced, his beats are also sought after by a wide range of underground artists, including Buck 65, who used one of his beats for his new album, Dirtbike 1/3.

With his solo career as both rapper and producer on the rise, Moka Only participated in a few collaborations with Swollen Members resulting in Moka rejoining the group for Monsters in the Closet, their 2002 collection of b-sides and rarities featuring three new songs. He remained on board for Heavy in 2003 but left again prior to the recording of Black Magic. Once again Moka had found himself confined as part of a group.

His time with Swollen Members, which also saw him signed to the Battle Axe label, resulted in three consecutive Junos, but it also meant a decrease in the amount of solo music from Moka. "The Most Prolific" returned in 2005 beginning with the release of The Desired Effect, his Nettwerk debut that realized a much greater pop potential for Moka. Unhappy with the label interference, Moka released a Japan-only alternate version under the title Dirty Jazz that was more to his liking, marking Moka's return to releasing the nearly seasonal albums of gritty, underground jams he has always been known for through labels like Camobear, Legendary Entertainment and Urbnet, as well as an occasional one-off project for various other indie labels.

In 2008, the flurry of Moka Only albums has continued with the release of Hot Dog under his alias of Ron Contour, along with Airport 2 and a re-release of Airport, all on Legendary Entertainment, as well as the just released Clap Trap on Urbnet, which the label will soon follow up with Carrots and Eggs.

Moka Only, the Durable Mammal indeed.

LINKS :



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