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Jonathan Heatt interview for a Wright State University History Course

Regina Guerriero

Jonathan Heatt

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JONATHAN HEATT

The making of a great hip-hop artist
and Hollywood director

Interview by
Regina Guerriero
February 24, 2003

Summary of Interview with Jonathan Heatt

Jonathan Heatt is twenty-six years old and was born and raised in Sandusky, Ohio. He has lived here in Fairborn, Ohio for approximately two years now and is attending Wright State University as a motion pictures film major. He has aspirations to become a great director and hip-hop artist and is working hard at attaining these goals. He recently has met Russell Simmons at a presentation held at Wright State University and had the pleasure of meeting him face to face, shaking his hand, and speaking to him about his screenplay, *The Devil's Mirror*. He even had the opportunity to present Russell Simmons a package in which he enclosed his screenplay, entertainment resume, and a business proposal. Russell Simmons founded the record label Def Jam, and is a great entrepreneur as well. While living in Virginia, Jonathan also had the great opportunity to meet Stan Winston, and as Jonathan puts it, "he is probably one of the best special effects guys out there in Hollywood." Stan Winston created the creature designs for characters in the movies, *Gargoyles*, *Aliens*, and *Terminator*. These were great experiences for Jonathan and he found both of these gentleman to be very cool and down to earth people.

Jonathan states that he has not always known that he wanted to be in the entertainment industry. He did decide that he wanted to be rich, as he points out, who doesn't want to be rich? He didn't decide until he was about eighteen that he wanted to start making movies. Jonathan was sitting alone in his dorm room at Ohio State University and was looking at the lights reflecting off the Olentangy River and thought to himself, "I've always liked being creative, I want to make movies. I love movies. I can envision the written word on how it should look on screen." And from that moment on, he knew he wanted to make movies. At that point in his life however, his grades were not

that good, so after dropping out of Ohio State, taking classes at the community college, going back to Ohio State only to realize they did not have a film school, he decided to apply to Wright State University. He was not accepted into WSU because of his grades, which seems crazy now because he has been on the dean's list every quarter for two years now and did not have enough money to go to Sinclair at the time. He had no money, no job, and had just moved to Dayton and was pretty much alone. Jonathan then met his girlfriend, Regina, at that time and decided to move to Virginia to be with her. He attended community college there, worked full time, started writing his screenplays and music and his life was getting better as he worked harder at it. He was going to go to Temple University in Philadelphia, but after staying there for a week or so he moved back to Virginia and decided that Wright State would be his best choice financially speaking. He was accepted into WSU and has been attending ever since. He will be graduating in two years and when asked where he sees himself in five years, he says making films as "the hottest young director in Hollywood." He also wants to start his own production company/record label, Heattwave Productions and will be the CEO of it five years from now. As far as having his own family, he can see that happening no sooner than when he is thirty. Jonathan believes that he first needs to concentrate all his efforts on succeeding in the entertainment industry and then can concentrate on getting married and starting a family.

Speaking of family, Jon has great love and respect for the family that he does have, especially his mom and his younger sister. He wants to achieve great success in the entertainment industry not only for himself, but also to make his mom and sister proud of

him. They live in Sandusky, Ohio with his stepfather, along with everyone else on his mother's side.

On a personal note, Jon and I have been together for four years and I interviewed him in our own apartment. He was a great interviewee because he is very articulate, tells great stories, is very honest when he speaks and has extreme talent and a great future ahead of him in the entertainment industry. I was proud to have the opportunity to interview such a great "director in the making."

Interview done February 24, 2003
Interview conducted by Regina Guerriero

Interview with Jonathan Heatt

Regina Guerriero- This is Regina Guerriero and I'm here with Jonathan Heatt discussing his life growing up here in Ohio.

Regina Guerriero- Hello, how are you?

Jonathan Heatt- I'm pretty good, how are you doing?

Regina Guerriero- Ok thanks. Can you please tell me how old you are, and where did you grow up?

Jonathan Heatt- Well, I'm 26 years old and I grew up in Sandusky, Ohio about three hours north of Fairborn and Dayton.

Regina Guerriero- And how would you describe Sandusky as a town in general?

Jonathan Heatt- It's a little town, actually they call it a city, but it is a real small city only about 35-40,000 people. It's an hour in the middle between Toledo and Cleveland. It's a really cool little town I guess. I mean, it's integrated so you have a diverse mixture there in the population, whereas a lot of towns around Sandusky aren't as integrated. I hate to call them country bumpkins but you get the idea. So Sandusky kind of motivated me to get out of Sandusky, let's just put it that way. It's cool in the summertime because you have, you know, Kelly's Island, Put-In-Bay, and Cedar Point. It's really cool in the summertime but in the winter it is kind of dead and it's a blue-collar town. A lot of hard workers live there but there's really not much opportunity for young adults to make a living there unless you want to work at a factory or something of that nature. So, it did motivate me to get me out of there as well as prepare me for the world because like I said, it was integrated unlike your towns like Milan and Bucyrus and that where it is kind of country towns. So, it kind of got me, prepared me for the larger picture, you know, the bigger scheme of things, when I went to Ohio State and whatnot.

Regina Guerriero- And what would you tell people to visit if they wanted to go to Sandusky?

Jonathan Heatt- Well first I just wanted to say I am popping my "p's" on this mic, but anyways, if you're going to visit Sandusky go in the summertime, you don't want to go in the winter unless you like watching snow fall. In the summertime you have Kelly's Island. You can take the Booze Cruise over, that's always a cool little thing, you can dance and drink on the boat going over and get over there and there's about five or six bars that you can have fun at. Drink and eat and dance, have a good time. Just don't miss your boat going home because you'll be staying the night there and it is hard to get rooms. And there's also Put-In-Bay and it's a really, really fun place to go. It's just a really big party atmosphere you can get golf carts if you have kids and check out the island but, personally, myself I like going there and drinking and having a great time so Put-In-Bay is really cool. It's also got Perry's Monument there that was a monument to

Perry. I forget his title but he was doing good in some kind of war. I'm not too good with that history, I should probably read up on that. And also Cedar Point, the best amusement park in the world. If you like roller coasters and having a great time go to Cedar Point, but I would go when they have the Hallo-weekends in October because any other time it's going to be packed. And personally I don't like sitting in lines and waiting all day while you're getting sunburned so you know, if you are going to go to Cedar Point, check it out in October. But definitely go to the islands sometime. Put-In-Bay is awesome, I mean it's like Mardi Gras everyday, it's off the hook, and it's awesome.

Regina Guerriero- Ok, and let's talk about when you were growing up, how many people lived in your household when you were growing up and where did you live when you grew up?

Jonathan Heatt- Well, growing up, my first house that I can really remember was on a little street called Pipe St. It was a one-story home, my mom and her boyfriend at the time, Jack, they rented that out and it was a cool little place. I had a really good time there, I mean I had my buddies come over, we're kind of bad, we used to, there used to be a plum tree and we used to pick plums off and throw them at cars when they went by and I was a little bad ass when I was younger. But it was a cool little place. The one thing I hated about that house was they had ants and I was scared of bugs, you know. My mom worked at the post office and she really busted her ass working hard and finally she got her own house and that was on this little street called West Bolt St., a one-way street. Bunch of the kids lived there [on that street], my age, and we played basketball, football, and baseball all the time, kick the can, stayed out in the tent, shot off fireworks, I mean it was awesome. I mean that was like some "Stand By Me" years right there. And then when I was in high school, about 16, my mom you know, she's working her ass off, kept on progressing, she got a better house out in the suburbs of Sandusky, if that's what you want to call it, called Perkins. And I didn't switch high schools because I was already like a junior or something but we lied about my address. We said I lived with my grandma so I could still go to Sandusky City schools. That's the school I went to. If I ever have kids, they'll always go to public schools because they're integrated, they're diverse and it really prepares you for the world, and it just has a better program. There was another school in Sandusky called St. Mary's and it wasn't integrated at all and I don't, that's a whole other subject right there, but I had a good time in Sandusky. There are always good and bad things in life, and I try to remember the good things. Especially on that West Bolt St., I tell you what, we had a bunch of guys living there and it was just like "Stand By Me", we really got, we really had some good times, really got into some things and it was wonderful.

Regina Guerriero- And what were some of your favorite things to do with your family?

Jonathan Heatt- Favorite things to do with my family, well I tend to think of having good times with my family when I was younger, twelve years old or less. After twelve I really didn't want to hang out with my family, you know the whole adolescence thing plus my home life was starting to deteriorate at that time. So what I remember about my family was holidays, Christmas, and for a minute there my mom and who became her
[wife?]

husband, my stepfather, they had a boat and that used to be a good time. We used to go out, me and my friends with my family, we'd go out on Lake Erie and we'd do a little fishing, but what I really liked doing was going to the sand bar. That's this spot right out in the middle of the lake, well not actually out in the middle of the lake but it's out there. And you just get out and the water just comes up to your waist. It's a really cool place to go and we used to go up there and wrestle around and swim and you know, do things that young kids like to do. But I just liked hanging out with my family when I was younger and I had a great time on the holidays, my grandparents, my aunts, my mom and my step dad before he started to become a dick. But yeah, I had a great time with my family when I was younger so, right now if I think about things I like doing with my family, eating, like going out to eat, having a beer or two, having my little sister and my mom come down and visit me, you know down in Fairborn. We'll go out to eat, maybe go see a movie, come back, just hang out, it's always a great time. I love being around my family members that, the family members that I care for, I got some fake snakes in my family tree. But there are a lot of family members that have always been there for me, I love them, I love hanging out with them. Especially my mom and my little sister, when they come down here to Fairborn/Dayton to visit me, it's just awesome because we have a great time.

Regina Guerriero- Did your grandparents, aunts, uncles and other relatives live nearby when you were growing up?

Jonathan Heatt- Oh yes, they all lived nearby us, it's a pretty close-knit family. Not too many fall, not too many stray from the nest, let's just put it that way. They're all in Sandusky and that's cool I guess, I mean having all your family around you. I think sometimes they tend to drive each other crazy sort of like "Everybody Loves Raymond", I got a pretty eccentric family. I tell you what, I think all families are crazy. You ask anyone, they'll tell you their family is crazy. If they don't tell you their family is crazy then they're liars or they have extremely boring families. But, yeah they all lived in the same town. My mom worked a lot, so I was watched by my grandparents, my aunts, my aunt Vanessa and my aunt Robin. They took care of me when I was younger, so all of my family members lived around me, and it's cool. I don't know that my dad, my real dad, I haven't seen him in a long time and I don't, to be honest with you, I wouldn't recognize anyone on that side of the family so I don't know them. I have no love for them but the people on my mom's side, the family members on my mom's side, they're all really cool people. They're crazy but I love them and they'd do anything for you. They're really hard workers, I'll tell you what, my grandpa he's a really hard worker he busted his ass all his life and he'd do anything for you. I mean them people are very generous. My family's very generous and I love them to death and it's cool. I mean I just had to move out of Sandusky like I said there are no opportunities for young adults to succeed, especially with what I'm trying to do with my life, I couldn't stay in Sandusky. But my family's cool, yeah.

Regina Guerriero- And what did you want to be when you "grew up" back when you were a child?

Jonathan Heatt- What did I want to be when I grew up? I really never gave it much thought, I always thought I'd be rich. I can remember being a little kid and playing with this matchbox car and that car happened to be a Rolls Royce. And I asked one of my family members, I forget who, and I was like, 'How much is this car worth' and they said, "A lot of money" and I said, 'I'm going to have one, one day.' So I don't know, I was always a fun kid, you know really funny, really wild, I'm not going to say crazy, but I've always been wild and I was always fun to hang around with, I think. And I never really knew what I wanted to do, I just knew I wanted to have money. I mean who doesn't want to be happy? Money doesn't buy you happiness but it sure doesn't hurt you know, unless you pick your depression or whatever you want to call it. So I always wanted to be rich. I remember when I was eighteen years old, I finally figured out what I wanted to do with my life. I've always been a really creative person. I've always told stories, I've always loved music, and I always wrote a lot. Writing was a big thing to me, I was a really good writer. And I remember I was in Ohio State in the dorm room and it was a night, I forget what night it was and I was in my dorm room listening to music by myself. I was drinking a beer and I looked out my dorm room. I think I lived on the 20th floor and I was looking out over the Olentangy River and I'd seen the lights reflecting off the river and I was just thinking, 'You know what, I've always liked being creative, I want to make movies.' I love movies, I can envision the written word and how it should look on screen. So right then and there I always wanted to make movies since I was eighteen. And I think I'm going to be a great filmmaker and most people when they say I wanted to be a filmmaker all their life, they're just blowing smoke up your ass and lying. I'm sure some people like Spielberg, or M. Night knew that they wanted to be filmmakers, but a lot of them don't and what normal child does think that they want to be a filmmaker? You know, most normal kids I know want to be athletes or firemen and all that good stuff. Who wants, who really knows they want to be a director? So it took me until I was eighteen and I just really can't wait until I can actually start making films of my own. I'm doing it right now in school, but I'm saying films with a substantial budget and I can finally start realizing my screenplays that would be awesome. About eighteen is when I knew what I wanted to do.

Regina Guerriero- So when you were eighteen and you figured this out, did you have a plan for accomplishing and reaching your goals and dreams?

Jonathan Heatt- Well I was very naïve at eighteen, who's not? I had no definitive plan, I was going to Ohio State, and I was attending Ohio State University as a business major because I was figuring, if I wanted to be rich what better way than to get into business? But I wasn't really happy with the algebra, the x's plus y's equal z's. I'm more of a creative type person. When I took the ACT scores I got 27 but I scored like a 33 in reading and the creative aspects so that's where my strengths lie. And I really didn't have a plan. I figure if I am going to make movies I like writing and so first you have to write a script, you can't have a movie without a blueprint, a skeleton, that's what screenplays are, the blueprints for the movies. So I started forming my ideas, listening to music, music motivates me. I can come up with some really good plots so I started writing scripts, and it just started evolving. The more effort I put forth into my filmmaking endeavors, the more I blossomed and, the more I learned. I started learning

screenplay formats and then I started learning about film schools. Because I was a late bloomer, I really partied too much when I was younger and I got a late jump on life. I wouldn't change a thing though because I learned a lot. But I really didn't have a plan and things really started falling together about four years ago when I started getting my screenplays done and getting back in school and now I'm just ready to go. I can't wait until I get this degree and start making some great movies. I mean this is what I want to do in life. There's no backup plan, a lot of people fail to achieve their dreams being a filmmaker because, a) they don't put forth the necessary effort, and 2) they have backup plans and they quit. And they fall back on it saying that, 'Oh, I got this accounting degree I can fall back on, I got my accounting degree.' Well guess what, you're going to fall back on your accounting degree because you have a backup plan. It's truly what you want to do with your life, if you can see yourself doing nothing else but making films, or in my case films or music, and/or music, and music, then you will succeed. If that's the only thing you see yourself doing and you have talent but you have the perseverance, you will succeed. And that's, and I have seen my life progress in that aspect. Just four years ago, I really didn't have shit to show for myself as far as filmmaking. Now I have screenplays, I have short films, I'm a dean's list student in film school, I made a documentary, music video, all this good stuff, so it is really starting to come together and it's perseverance.

Regina Guerriero- And who would you say are your role models or the people in the entertainment industry that most influence you or that you most look up to?

Jonathan Heatt- Well, there's a lot of people that influence me that I look up to. I mean anyone with talent, [who] achieved their dreams, I look up to that. But I remember I was about fifteen or sixteen years old and life has probably reached the lowest point for me. My home life was in shambles, my self, when you're an adolescent your self-esteem is very shaky to begin with and the constant mental and physical abuse from my stepfather really killed my self-esteem. I had no self-esteem in high school and I really had to mature on my own in that aspect because I really never had a father. But I'm not going to give you some sad, poor, poor, pitiful me story. It was when I was about fifteen or sixteen in high school and I'm walking home and I'm seeing people drive by me in their cars, you know, mommy's or daddy's cars. I got my Walkman on because it's cold out and you know when you're walking you need some music to listen to. And I listen to all types of music; I love all types of music but just one artist really touched me and motivated me to succeed against, overcome any obstacle, and that was Tupac. I mean he's been a really big influence on me and my creative endeavors. I figure you know if his life, his life has been really tough and if he can do that, then I can go through the little shit that I'm going through. That's the way I look at it, and mind you, I was listening to Tupac back in 1992 you know, before he blew up, before everyone jumped on the bandwagon and he's been my favorite artist ever since. I really appreciate his talent and his music, I really look up to him, you know. He's just a great artist and he inspired me. His emotions, his pain, his angst, but not only that, he still has he still keeps his sense of humor about things. He doesn't let the world get him down. He got shot up a couple times and he still made music and did movies, and I figure if this guy can get shot up and go to jail and make movies and music, well hell, I can do anything, you know. So I look

at Tupac and I also like Al Pacino, Robert DeNiro, I like Brian DePalma. I like M. Night Shyamalan and I really like the guys that make quality movies, make movies that are not only entertaining, I love entertaining movies. My guilty pleasures are the Blade films, but like films that are entertaining and inspirational. I believe that a great filmmaker or writer not only amuses the mind, but inspires and elevates it as well, and a lot of films, there's a lot of films out there that do that. And I really appreciate all those filmmakers and they are the people I look up to. And Tupac is always the person I'll say influenced me the most. And, I just, and you know what, Eminem inspires me too because I know he had a rough way to go and you know so many people hate on him because he's white and he raps and, but that dude has a lot of talent. And I tell you what, he lets nothing stop him from achieving his dreams and I admire that. So anyone that's successful and follows their dreams, they don't even have to be in the entertainment industry. If someone wanted to be a doctor and they busted their ass through medical school, that motivates me and I admire that. But as far as the entertainment industry, it's got to be Tupac maybe Eminem, a lot of other artists and filmmakers as well.

Regina Guerriero- Ok, and speaking of films, what would you say your favorite film of all time is then and why?

Jonathan Heatt- Well, that's pretty easy, I have a lot of favorite films, but my favorite film of all time, without a doubt it Scarface by Brian DePalma. I can, man I love this movie on a variety of levels. Some people, there's a lot of critics with this movie, it's a cult classic now but it got panned with it first came out. Everybody thought it was a big flop but that movie, man the filmmaking's awesome. Brian DePalma directed this film, Oliver Stone wrote the screenplay and Al Pacino delivers the performance of a lifetime. And you know, some actors they act on their own personality, like take for instance a Jack Nicholson or Clark Gable. Their Jack Nicholson or Clark Gable, I mean not putting down their acting performances, especially Jack Nicholson because I love him, maybe Clark Gable I am not too fond of. Or Humphrey Bogart, they act on their own personalities but I'll tell you what, Pacino becomes his characters. In Scarface he was Tony Montana, you don't even think that's Al Pacino on the screen, that is Tony Montana. It's not some Humphrey Gart bullshit, you know, 'Here's looking at you kid' or whoever the hell says that, that's Clark Gable, or I don't know who in the hell says that, but that's some bullshit. You watch Scarface and Tony Montana, that's Tony Montana, that's not Al Pacino. The acting is awesome, the writing is awesome, the music and the directing, the directing is phenomenal. You can see some definite influences from Shakespeare, not Shakespeare, Hitchcock among other people from DePalma's directing. When I think of writing, I think of Shakespeare, when you think of directing, you think of Hitchcock, that's how I get those guys [confused]. DePalma does a great job and I can really relate to that character in some aspects. I'm not Cuban and I'm not a drug lord, drug war lord, but I do have a really bad temper and I don't suffer fools and I have no patience for bullshit. If you're dumb I cannot be around you, I'm sorry and I can live my life on what Tony Montana says, 'Only thing I have in this world are my balls and my word and I break them for no one.' And you know, that's how I am, I'll never break my word or my balls for anyone. But you know, he has a little sister, he tries to give her the good life but he's really overprotective of her, he's violent and he

wants to become a success. And he wants to make people around him, his mom, he wants his mom and his sister to be proud of him. And he does that by doing a bad thing, you know, becoming involved in drug dealing and killing people which I would never do. But I can feel, it's a tragedy, it's a gangster movie, and I love gangster movies, awesome film, best film ever made in my eyes.

Regina Guerriero- And this is going back to what you were saying earlier about your family all staying in Sandusky, and not being able to leave the nest and whatever else. Have you lived anywhere besides here in Ohio?

Jonathan Heatt- Yes, I've actually jumped around a lot in my life, like I said, I was born in Sandusky, then I moved down to Columbus, Ohio to attend Ohio State, partied my whole freshman year so I got kicked out, not kicked out but I failed out. So I moved back to Sandusky, went to community college, got my grades up, moved back to Columbus to go to Ohio State, realized I wanted to be a filmmaker, they don't have film school there. Can you believe that? The best university, the biggest university in Ohio and they don't have film school. If they had film school, I'd still be going there. I wouldn't be going to Wright State, I tell you that right now but then after that I moved back to Sandusky for a minute, moved down to Dayton to go to Wright State. My grades weren't good enough and they wouldn't let me in, which is crazy. So, I'd have to go to Sinclair but I didn't have the money to go to Sinclair and that was a really tough time in my life where I had no money. Then I met my girlfriend, the person that's interviewing me, and I moved out to Virginia and got my life turned around. Started writing my scripts and my music, you failed to ask me anything about my music so far, but that's cool. I went to community college out in Virginia, I lived in Manassas Virginia about ½ hour outside of D.C. Awesome area, I love Washington, D.C. Anyways, worked out there full time, went to school a couple of classes, then I moved to Philadelphia. I was actually going to go to Temple University to go to their film school and I actually lived in Philadelphia for a couple of weeks. I had an apartment out there, I went to a weeklong orientation and I lived in this apartment for a little bit. And the apartment was just a piece of crap, I'll tell you what, Philadelphia can be kind of rough in some parts, you got to have your mind right if you're going to go there. I was in a blue-collar neighborhood, I liked Philadelphia but I didn't like my apartment. My apartment was terrible and the cost of parking was really high there. I figured I'd probably get more bang for my buck here at Wright State University, so I moved back to Virginia and then I transferred out here to Fairborn and Wright State University. You basically learn the same things, the level of teaching may be a little better at Temple. I know definitely it would be great to go to NYU, Columbia, UCLA, USC, but I figure the cost of living is really cheap out here so I moved here, go to school and yeah that's how I bounced around. I got to see this country a little bit, I got to see a lot of people and I don't, how do you know that you're happy where you're at if you've never seen any place else? How do you know that where you're at is the best place for you if you've never done any traveling or experienced this world? So, I mean, I'm not a world adventurer, I've never been overseas or anything. Me going to Virginia doesn't qualify me as Christopher Columbus but I'm just saying at least I got the hell out of my little town and seen this world and known that there are more things out there than just a goddamn factory where you get \$8 an hour, you know?

Regina Guerriero- Ok, well I wanted to apologize for not bringing up your music career. So what kind of music do you do and you know, tell us anything you would like about that?

Jonathan Heatt- Well, I'm a hip-hop artist. I've been writing raps since I was twelve years old and now I'm twenty-six so I've been doing it for quite some time. I didn't just you know, I didn't pick up an Eminem cd and say, 'Hmm, he's white, so let's see if I can rap.' No, I've been rapping since I was twelve years old. I've been writing raps since I was twelve years old. I got really, really, really serious about it in 1995, that's when I realized that, you know what, because I was always kind of not scared, but hesitant about telling people that I can rap and actually trying out for it. Because being white and being a rapper is really, really tough, especially after Vanilla Ice, I mean Vanilla Ice almost ruined it for everyone, for every white dude. He almost fucked it up for everyone. But Eminem came along you know, I got nothing but respect for that man. He, his life is a little bit, not a little bit, but a lot like mine, like a lot of stuff he raps about I can really feel because that's how I feel, not everything, you know, I'm not going to put his words in my mouth, you know not everything but there's a lot. You know in the movie 8 Mile, for example, where he's fighting with his mom's boyfriend and he's whooping that dude's ass and the little girl is crying, his sister, that was me. That was me whooping my step dad's ass and had my little sister see that and crying. I mean that stuff is really hard and it's really, really hard. I experienced a lot of things in my life, a lot of hardship and I get it out through my music, sort of like what Eminem does and I love hip-hop music. I live and die for it, hip-hop music's my wife, you know I am married to it for life, no divorcing here. So, that's my music, I love it and I'm pretty good at it. You know, actually in 1995, a couple of my friends, I was telling them I really should start trying to get out there and rap but I was nervous about it because I'm white and they were like, "You know what, you'd be a dumb ass not to rap because you'd be wasting a god given ability." And that gave me all the encouragement I needed, so, and you know what, I hadn't really gotten too many haters on me yet. Everyone's been really cool about my raps, everybody loves my raps, actually the only people that really hate on my abilities and skills are better than theirs and they can't handle that. So, I love it, I mean even if I never get a record deal, even if I never get on, make a dollar, I will always do it because I couldn't be me if I didn't, I couldn't be me if I didn't. It's just a great artistic outlet and I love it, so yeah, that's my music right there, it's just me, I love it, it's a great thing.

Regina Guerriero- Would you like to flow a couple bars for us right now?

Jonathan Heatt- Well, I will but this microphone's pretty bad, and I'll probably "pop my p's." When I get in the studio I like having that little guard in front of the microphone and my voice sounds kind of bad on this mic. I'm going to sound like probably a big nerd because I don't like the way my voice is sounding over this microphone. But hey, if you want to check out the demo tape, Regina can get you a copy.

Regina Guerriero- Ok, and...

Jonathan Heatt- Plus a lot of my language, I don't know if it would be suitable for a classroom environment, you know. But yeah, plus I'm kind of tired right now, if I was a little bit more awake I would.

Regina Guerriero- Ok...

Jonathan Heatt- Do you want me to, is it cool? All right hold up for a second, hit pause for a second please.

<Paused to get his rap and some water>

Jonathan Heatt- Yeah, we're back, we just took a little water break and Regina, and she's going to call me out. I didn't know I was going to have to spit a couple bars over this but you know, I guess it's just in me that I can't, I cannot turn down an opportunity to. So, there's this one part where I go, 'Whoop, Whoop' like it's a police siren, it's not very good but when I make this song, I'm going to use a special effect. So I might sound like a geek when I say that but just imagine a special effect like you know how the police cruisers turn on their little sirens and go "Whoop, Whoop", I can't say it good, that's why my girl is laughing, but it's tight. This is a song called "I'm Alive" and there's a poet in my time, this is going to sound sad but a lot of people can relate to this and there's a lot of people out there like this you know. I know people get a lot of close-minded being in a campus environment for a long time but there's a big world out there and there's a lot of people that feel this. Like when I was younger I had no direction, all I would do is just get drunk and go to the club and that was the only time I felt alive, that's what somewhat of this song is about, but not the beginning. But, here it goes:

'Haters clown me, now they wanna hang around me,
Whoop, Whoop that's the sound when me and my crews' prowling,
Growling like DMX, howling, shouting, we run this motherfucker now,
Ya'll throw the towel in.'

Yeah, man don't get me in the studio. Don't, don't get me in the studio.

Regina Guerriero- That was very nice, very good. Ok, so you lived in Virginia last, so what brought you back to Fairborn to attend Wright State?

Jonathan Heatt- Yes, I believe I already got into that, I transferred to Wright State University to go to the film school and like Forrest Gump said, "That's all I have to say about that."

Regina Guerriero- Ok, and what is your idea of the good life now?

Jonathan Heatt- Well, when I was younger and immature, the idea of the good life for me was, you know what you see on TV, the ice, you know. You got the ice on your wrist and your ear and all that, got a lot of money, and nice cars and that. You know, I still want that. <laughs> don't get me wrong, I still want the nice cars and the money but happiness you know. I just want to be doing, I want to make a living doing what I love, making movies and music. And, I want to be rich, I mean you'd be lying if you said you

didn't want to be rich. I mean who the hell doesn't want to be rich? I mean I want to be able to give my family nice things and just basically everyone that always doubted me and people that I know thought that I wouldn't amount to jack shit, me getting money is the best way I could ever say 'F you', you know? And I just want to become successful, I want to be happy though, ultimately I just want to be happy, have a nice home, nice career, and kids. I want to have a couple kids you know, so they can carry on the legacy. You know, start my own name because my dad, my step dad were never shit, so I'm going to be the best dad ever and I'm going to start a name and then you know, start my own family name, I think that's going to be cool. So yeah, I'm going to measure success by happiness, that's the only way you really can. But I do want the money and I do want the iced out wrist, don't get me wrong.

Regina Guerriero- And has anything exciting happened to you in regards to your filmmaking or your music, have you met anybody famous or anything cool happen?

Jonathan Heatt- Well, it's hard to meet people that are famous, I recently, recently Russell Simmons, a very great entrepreneur, he's made a great career for himself. He came to Wright State University just recently, I think a couple of weeks ago and I met him, I shook his hand and talked to him about my screenplay, *The Devil's Mirror*. And it's about a young man who makes a deal with the devil to become a hip-hop star and it's inspired by DMX, his album. He's on Def Jam and that's the record label that Russell Simmons founded and he was excited when I told him about the screenplay, he said he's been wanting to make that movie for years now. And it was a great feeling because you don't always get that reception when you talk to people in the filmmaking industry. You get a lot of snooty people; you get a lot of cool people. I guess it's no matter where you go, there's going to be cool people and there's going to be assholes and Russell Simmons was definitely a cool person. And he took, I gave him my screenplay, I also gave him my business proposal and actually when I was in Virginia I met Stan Winston, shook his hand and gave him my screenplay. Stan Winston is probably the best, one of the best special effects guys out there in Hollywood. He did the creature design for *Aliens* and he did it for *Terminator* so he was a really cool guy, *Gargoyles*, he was a nice guy and I shook his hand and I talked to him for a second. It's hard talking to these guys at these conferences and their speaking lectures because everyone wants their attention so I think it is really cool. I think Russell Simmons is really cool but it's just a great industry to be in but you got to be guarded. These guys guard themselves because there are so many flakes and crazy people out there and so many people that want to get in the industry but have no talent whatsoever; they're just blinded by the prospects of making money. Well you know what, guess what, the entertainment industry isn't a mystery, if you want to succeed you just got to work your ass off just like in any other industry. So, you know, it's cool.

Regina Guerriero- And where can you see yourself five years from now?

Jonathan Heatt- Where can I see myself five years from now? Well, that's a very good question. I'm going to be graduating in two years and I see myself making films. Five years from now I see myself being the hottest young director in Hollywood. And I'll be

forming my own production company/record label. It'll be a two-tiered company called Heattwave Productions. I would be the CEO of that five years from now and I'd be making films, directing films, writing films, producing films, acting in films, editing films, and making music. I'm just going to stay busy, because you know what, it's not even work to me really. I mean it's what I love doing, it's like playtime. That's what Russell Simmons says, it's like playtime, if you're doing something that you like it's not even work. I mean I'm just going to be happy. Five years from now I'm just going to be happy.

Regina Guerriero- And family-wise?

Jonathan Heatt- This is going to sound real fucked up, especially to my girlfriend that's interviewing me, but family comes second to me at this part in my life. I think that if you want to succeed in the entertainment industry your focus has to be on succeeding in that industry. Plus I'm not mature enough to raise a kid right now, I'm not mature enough to be married, but maybe about five years from now when I'm thirty years old. I can see myself doing that and you know it's going to sound messed up but my career comes ahead of me, ahead of any family life right now even though ultimately my goal is to have a great family. That's what I aim for in life but in order to achieve that goal I have to achieve that goal of achieving in the entertainment industry first. But if I ever do have a family, I'd want it to be with you Regina.

Regina Guerriero- Yeah, thanks for the honesty. And finally, is there anything else you want people to know about Jonathan Heatt?

Jonathan Heatt- Just don't hate on me without knowing who I am. If you're going to be an artist whether you're a filmmaker, writer, musician, it's really hard for musicians, actors too, because when you do something that's creative you're actually baring your soul for all of people to see. And we live in a cynical world right now, it's a very cynical time and it's easy to just put down people for their dreams and without even knowing that person, you know sometimes people hate on me because, and it's usually white people, they hate on me because they think I'm trying to act black. I don't try to act like I'm black, because I want to rap. It's the music that I love, it's the music that I can express myself the best way in. So, when you see me just know that I'm real. I'm not fake in anything and I don't want to be nothing that I'm not. Jonathan Heatt, I don't like talking in that third person because that's kind of, that's Bo Jackson type shit but the question is how do you want people to think of Jonathan Heatt. Just think that he's real, I'm a really nice guy to people that I care for, that I know, my family, my friends, I'd do anything for, I'd die for them. But you know, just don't hate on me because, just don't hate on people period. I mean if people are trying to succeed in life don't hate on them just because you have some preconceived notions of how things should be. You know most people that have them kind of preconceived notions are ignorant, they really haven't been anywhere in life. They've probably stayed in the same backward country bumpkin town their whole life you know. I mean I'm not putting down country bumpkin towns don't get me wrong. I got love for country bumpkin towns but I'm just saying there's more to life than ignorance and just don't judge me with ignorance. And if you're going to put my shit

down, then that's fine but have a valid reason for it. So, you know, don't hate me, love me. That's what I want people to think of Jonathan Heatt. Love Jonathan Heatt, I don't need the love but I'd rather have it than hate.

Regina Guerriero- Ok, well thank you very much for your time. I know you're a busy man and I appreciate your time. Thank you.

Jonathan Heatt- Thank you, and yes, I'm about to go hit the hay now, I'm about to go get some rest so I'll see you later.

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Interview conducted by Regina Guerriero