

OUTLOOK



J

SECTION EDITOR CYNDI METZGER, 954-356-4591, Cmetzger@sun-sentinel.com

EDITORIALS 6 | LETTERS 6 | COLUMNISTS 7



HIP-HOP VOICES

ARTISTS

Counterclockwise from top are: Shorty Real, INF7, Crook, Supa Soul-ja and Danger. For their stories and photos, see pages 2-5J

ONLINE

For an interactive look at the hip-hop artists featured in this week's Outlook, including their music and photos, go to Sun-Sentinel.com/theedge

Photography by **John L. White**, Staff Photographer
Stories by **Akilah Johnson**, Staff Writer

Every American region has a hip-hop story to tell. South Florida's tale is dominated by bullets, bloodshed and jewels that glisten like ice.

But scratch the surface of South Florida's tale and you'll find the transplanted roots of a nearly 30-year-old movement that started in the South Bronx and gave voice to a generation of people ignored by mainstream society.

Be it a battle-rapper's improvised rhymes about racism, poverty and immigration inequality or an emcee's recited lines about ghetto realities, rap activism in South Florida is a multi-cultural landscape. It is infused with Spanglish rhymes, reggae *rid-dims* and island patois.

Still, for rappers like these in South Florida, it's an uphill battle. Few people, they say, want to listen to such messages — and there are fewer places to perform.

Five local artists, some new to the game, others who have been at it for years, share their struggles.

They include INF7, a Jamaican-Canadian emcee who lives in Lauderdale Lakes; Shorty Real, a pro-black female rapper; Crook, born in the Bahamas to Haitian parents; Danger, who grew up in Broward County but was born in Haiti; and Supa Soul-ja, a Haitian-American rapper raised in Lake Worth.

These artists aren't "representing the MIA" on MTV or flashing platinum-plated smiles on South Beach while holding a pimp cup. Simply put, they are not commercial. They have self-produced, recorded and released their rhymes — beats pumped through club speakers, cyberspace airwaves and coffeehouse microphones.