

# RAOUL juneja

Raoul is one of the most well-known faces in the Canadian music industry. His involvement in bringing to light some of the best Canadian South Asian talent is unprecedented. He has produced and has his name attached to some huge projects through "Lyrical Knockout Entertainment" including a chart-topping Canadian rap album, an anti-gang documentary featuring Oscar winner Jamie Foxx, and a Tupac tribute CD. He is also the founder of "Hip Hop Literacy", a high school and college campaign for which he has received the support of huge Hollywood actors. Today, he continues on his path-breaking success, to produce and showcase all that he can in music and talent in the industry. Here's what Raoul has to say!

**You've been involved in the South Asian music scene for quite a long period of time. What has been your role in the immense growth and acceptance of South Asians doing mainstream and/or cultural music?**

My experience and expertise is primarily within the US hip-hop industry. However I was always interested in supporting Canadian hip-hop artists, which then also opened the door to my working with many 'contemporary' South Asian Canadian artists, since they were consistently including North American urban influences in their music. I feel very honoured to have been able to work with many brands helping expose this South Asian Canadian music industry to the mainstream over the past ten years, ranging from desiFEST to of course V-MIX on OMNI.

**Have you found it easy for artists to break through in Canadian society despite having two different identities so to speak - one Canadian, one South Asian. Do you think it works to one's advantage?**

Part of the reason why there was a need for V-MIX is the fact that 'contemporary' South Asian Canadian artists, especially those from the hip-hop and R&B genres, were having a very hard time getting their music videos played on Canadian TV. It's easy to go to Bollywood if you sing in Hindi, or it's easy to go to the mainstream if you try to avoid being identified as South Asian, but it's hard to succeed doing English music while also being noticeably South Asian and including those influences in your music. Hopefully we're going in the direction where we'll see our fusion artists embraced more in the mainstream, similar to the "Latin music explosion" of the 1990's.

**Do you see any differences in what the music industry was like when you first started off to where it is today? How important have those changes been for you in your role?**

It's hard to believe how much of a change the music industry has seen in a short ten years - when I started out in the late 1990's, artists didn't have iTunes, YouTube or Facebook and CD burners were considered the biggest threat to record sales! Concerts were one of the only ways for independent artists to get out there, so a lot of my work was related to event production. Seeing artists progress much faster with social media has also justified the need for TV shows to exist to cover their successes, and to help give new artists a platform to get out there in a big way.

**Tell us about some current projects.**

V-MIX is keeping me quite busy these days, but I still enjoy curating music video segments for various South Asian film festivals around the world, as well as continuing to produce albums, films, and events. You can stay posted to [www.lyricalknockout.com](http://www.lyricalknockout.com) to see some of my past work, and what's on the horizon!