

Spoken Word Artist Talks About Identity in I Am Second Short Film

Spoken word artist and emcee Propaganda, also known as Jason Petty, sheds light on the issue of identity, which affects so many youth today, through a new short film in partnership with the movement I am Second.

Propaganda has gained respect in the hip-hop world as a master of the performance art of spoken word, pairing lyrics and rhythm to create a powerful combination. His album, *Excellent*, released from Humble Beast Records last fall, moved 27,000 units in week one, hit No. 4 on the iTunes Hip-Hop Chart and landed on the Billboard Top 200. He recently completed the nationwide “Unashamed” tour with award-winning rappers Lecrae and Trip Lee.

But the inspiration behind the raw lyrics of his artistry began in his childhood. Growing up the one black child in a violent, Mexican neighborhood, Propaganda was often teased for the color of his skin. This “fish-out-of-water” feeling continued after his family moved to the suburbs, where he became known as the kid from the poor black family who moved among the Caucasian families.

“I was slow-cooked, in that, it started in sixth grade and culminated my junior year—examining my experience in life and always feeling like I don’t belong,” Propaganda describes in his I am Second film. “Whether I was born the wrong color, in the wrong neighborhood, in the wrong decade, to the wrong parents. I am not an Alpha male. I was an artist. I would draw and write poetry.”

Understanding that every individual, regardless of race, age or background has a story to share, Propaganda recently partnered with I am Second to host the Spoken Word Challenge,

allowing individuals to define their identity and present it in an artistic way via an online video contest.

The challenge, which received nearly 150 submissions, created a positive platform for young artists to share with the world what makes them who they are beyond what culture tells them. Propaganda will choose the winner of the challenge, which will be announced June 21, among the five video entries with the most views on YouTube. For more information, visit .

Athletes, actors, models, musicians, pastors, politicians and many more have stepped forward, looked in the camera and proclaimed, "I am Second." But most in the movement are ordinary people with stories of personal struggle and transformation.