

IAN BURKE

Ian Burke, son of a musician, first got his feet wet some 20 years ago while doing road work for a local Atlanta band. "That's when I decided I wanted to make it a career in Atlanta," Burke says. In 1984, upon graduating from high-school, Burke relocated from his hometown of Mount Vernon, New York to Atlanta, nicknamed the new "Motown" by many. Since that move, he has been involved with the launch of some of the city's most established acts.

The birth of Burke's career was as the South East Director of A&R for Elektra Records (part of the WEA Corp.) where he focused on music quality over song quantity. Burke's stint at Elektra included signing the teen R&B group Mista, which featured a young Bobby Valentino, and super producer and current chart-topping Akon. While there, he also helped introduce the world to one of Atlanta's signature genres, "Bass music," by picking up the independent single "Bankhead Bounce," by Diamond & D-Rock (half of the crunk Ying-Yang twins). Other accomplishments during his tenure there included, spearheading special events such as the Church Fire Benefit Concert in Atlanta, which aided in the restoration of churches burned throughout the south. The concert featured Mista, Akon, Keith Sweat, Silk, Michael Speaks, Goodie Mob and Kut Kloze and rose over \$50,000.00.

After his tenure at Elektra, Burke accepted the position of Senior Director of Creative Affairs for ASCAP (American Society of Composers Authors and Publishers) in Atlanta, where he set out to introduce new sounds and talent from the south. As Senior Director, Burke concentrated on the areas of Urban-Alternative, R&B, Hip-Hop and Rock.

In addition to re-branding ASCAP as the industry leader for representing some of the hottest talents in the south, Burke launched as an independent manager and A&R consultant, many notable acts such as Arrested Development (Chrysalis/EMI), TLC and Outkast (LaFace/Arista), Kris- Kross (Ruff House/Columbia), Xscape (SoSoDef), Sole` (Dreamworks), Debra Killings (Verity/Jive) and Blaque (Track Masters/Columbia), the 3 McClain Girls, a young group of singers/actors (who recently had their theatrical debut in "The Gospel,") as well as producers Organized Noize and Nitti. "I like to think of myself as the beginning to what hopefully becomes a successful end. I'm the first stop, the one who discovers and molds songwriters and then matches them with the right artists and producers" Burke reveals. He also served as general manager of such Atlanta based production companies as Organized Noize Production, Inc. and Playmaker Music, LLC.

Currently, Burke serves as a consultant on Jermaine Dupri's label, SoSo Def, now an affiliate of Virgin Records. As consultant to SoSo Def, Burke brought new recording artists, Jarvis (SoSo Def/Jive) and 13 year-old singer/songwriter sensation, Maestro Harrell (SoSo Def/Virgin), to the forefront as well as SoSo Def producer, Chadron "Nitti" Moore, who now plays a pivotal role in the SoSo Def/Virgin merger. Burke co-owns a fully loaded, Pro-Tools studio with Nitti, where they have developed up and coming songwriters, Miss B ("Bottle Action") and Young Capone ("I'm Hot"), both signed to Nitti's Production Company, Playmaker Music, LLC.

As an extension of his consultant business, Burke manages songwriters/ producers, Brandon & Brian Casey, better known as the "twins" in the multi-platinum R&B group Jagged Edge. Burke also serves as A&R Director of their current imprint, 581 Music Group.

Entering a new phase in his career, with nearly two decades of experience, Burke left ASCAP to launch his biggest venture yet, Launch Pad Records, LLC, Atlanta's premier independent A&R/Artist Development company. The mission of Launch Pad Records, LLC is to aggressively seek out, develop and record new up and coming recording artist and shop them to major production companies and labels.



Shameka Gumbs entered the entertainment industry over eight years ago and can now be found flexing her “big city” spirit and entrepreneurial skills as the Executive Director of Creative Circle Entertainment. Gumbs is in a unique position where she can capitalize on a wide range of experience and corporate contacts gleaned from her background in both business administration and entertainment. She has successfully coordinated sporting events, concerts, festivals and screenings for companies such as *Blazing 92.3FM*, *Hollywood Black Film Festival*, *American Black Film Festival*, *Atlanta Filmmakers Workshop*, *Shannon Anderson Foundation*, *DreamWorks Films*, *Mandara Pictures* and *the Black Family Channel*. In addition, Gumbs' background includes soliciting sponsors and booking notable entertainers for these events. Gumbs has worked extensively with the media and through her work as a prominent local actress, she has established and maintained relationships with numerous production companies in the Southeast.

Within the HipHop film industry, there are array of films that capture the essence of HipHop, good or bad. In the past, with films like ***Krush Groove***, which chronicled the lifestyle of this emerging music genre, to the present day, groundbreaking critically-acclaimed film, ***Training Day***, that reversed the stereotypical relationship between the police and the inner-city HipHop community, there is a definite turn of the tides. Creating the Atlanta HipHop Film Festival gives Gumbs the

opportunity to marry two of her loves, the hiphop culture and the films that display this way of life. Gumbs is devoted to perpetuating a positive portrayal of hip hop in the film industry. “I’m really praying that HipHop will revolve back to the true essence and that is creating a social expression in the lyrics that will promote change in their communities through dancing, ceasing of illegal drug distribution, speaking to the youth and so on. The true answer is what ever the mentality of the youth, will be the mentality of HipHop,” states Gumbs. As Founder and Festival Director of the Atlanta Hip Hop Film Festival, Gumbs’ vision lends the building blocks for the construction of what will be one of the most unique and enterprising film festivals in the U.S. Following in the footsteps of the savvy business moguls and mentors, Oprah Winfrey and Magic Johnson, Gumbs sees the value in uplifting urban communities by introducing new businesses and encouraging employment of youth within those businesses. Selecting Atlanta as the home of the Atlanta HipHop Film Festival is one way that Gumbs has emulated her mentors. “I want to build an empire that I can leave for my grandchildren. I want to make a difference with the youth that will allow them to think differently about themselves and the world, in a way that will help them achieve their goals,” resolves Gumbs.

Personally, Shameka Gumbs is an advocate for Teen Domestic Violence. Speaking out against this abuse in recent years, Gumbs’ is creating a non-profit organization, providing awareness along with tools and resources to avoid unhealthy relationships while empowering and uplifting teens as individuals. “At the moment, it’s (the music scene) is about partying, beef (disagreements), degrading women, and disrespecting themselves,” admits Gumbs. Acting out the emotional desire to make a change evoked after viewing *Crash* and with the early HipHop anthem, *Self-Destruction*, as her soundtrack, Gumbs is destined to create an undeniable impression on the HipHop community and the film industry. If she had to define her vision with one phrase, it would be, Psalm 19:14, *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight*. A single mother residing in Atlanta, Georgia, Shameka relishes moments spent with her son.