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# Power to the Plant

Could Redman's political party pave a path to federal legalization?

By Patricia Miller

Redman will be the first to tell you he's no run-of-the-mill rapper. He's an MC, an artist who moves the crowd with his dedication to hip hop. Redman launched his career with *Whut? Thee Album* in 1992 and hasn't dropped the mic since. His new record, *Muddy Waters 2*, is set for release later this year and his radio show of the same name airs monthly on SiriusXM satellite radio. Red's iconic stoner comedy *How High* hit screens in 2001 and remains one of the genre's most beloved movies.



Though his legacy has had an undeniable impact on cannabis culture, it's his recent work with the National Cannabis Party that could have the biggest implications for the cannabis community. Redman and NCP Co-Founder Damon Jackson built the party to give the American people and the plant a voice in politics. In their "Statement of Organization" filed with the Federal Election Commission, they listed Lady Sativa as their candidate of choice. Redman says the movement is 100 million strong and growing. To find out what this could mean for supporters of federal legalization, *Cannabis & Tech Today* spoke with the MC from his home studio in New Jersey.

***Cannabis & Tech Today:* Cannabis has been part of your lyrical stylings for nearly 30 years. When did you realize the plant was going to be an important part of your life?**

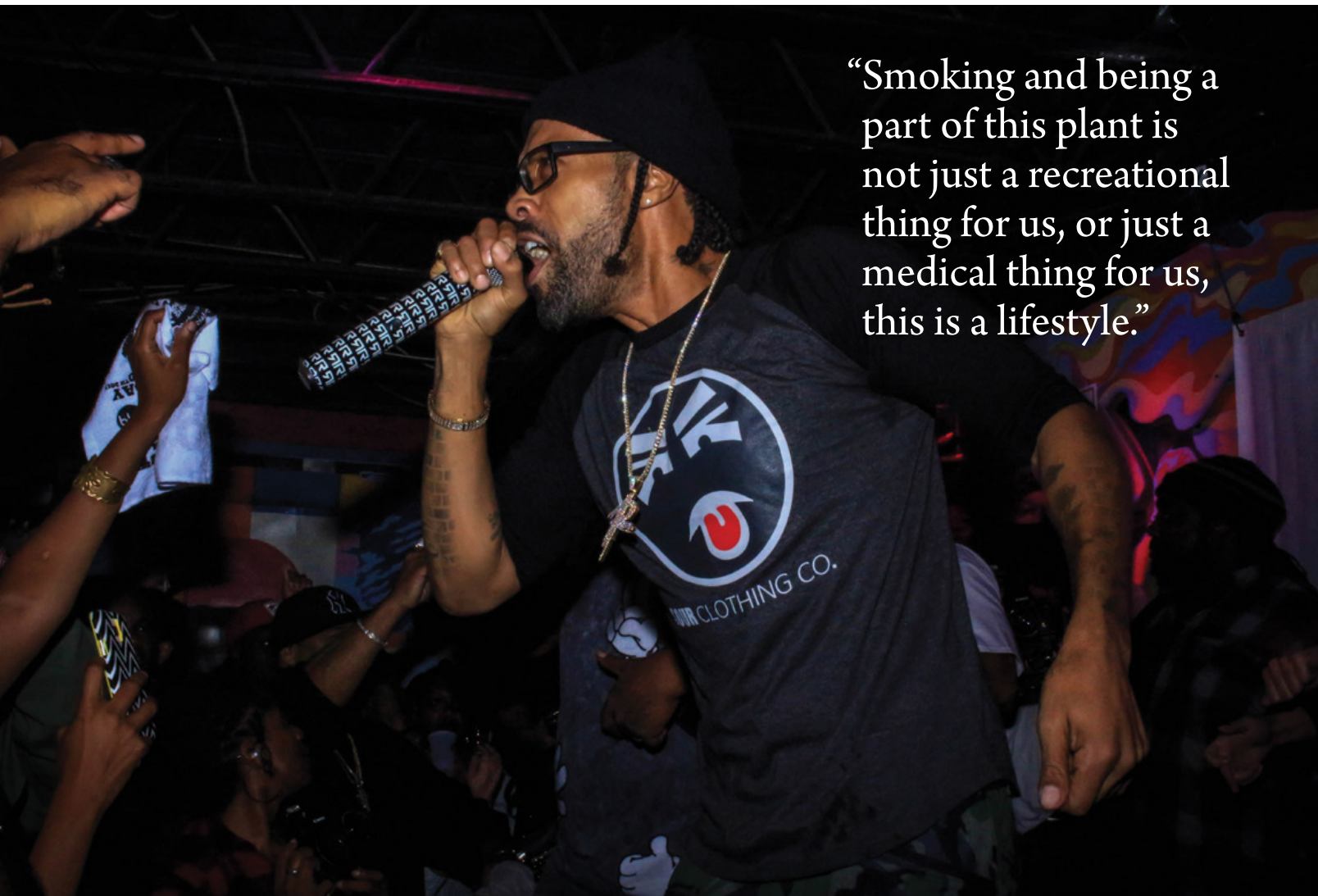
Redman: I knew the plant was going to be a part of my life the first time that I smoked it. Did I know it was going to become a worldwide phenomenon like it is now? No, I didn't. When I first started smoking I knew I liked it, and then when I got into the hip hop game, I knew I wanted to put it at the forefront of my career. I don't know why. I just knew what the plant did for me.

***C&T Today:* How has hip hop helped destigmatize the plant and pave the way for legalization?**

Redman: I can't say the entire hip hop community ... They talked about it, yes, but I'm very strict on the fabric of hip hop and the cannabis plant. What I mean by that is there's only a few who would put it on the line — and that's me, Snoop Dogg, B-Real, Cypress Hill, and Meth in his earlier career.

The reason I say that is because, yes, the hip hop industry supported it, smoked it. A lot of rappers mentioned it. But guys like me, Snoop, and B-Real, we actually put it on a frontline, meaning that we never compromised on our beliefs, on our smoking, on what we thought was the way of the future. That was us. I can honestly say we lost a lot of deals, money, and were unable to work with other brands because of what we believed in. It's not like we're doing this because this is the movement. Yes, this is the movement, but this is what we always believed in, because smoking and being a part of this plant is not just a recreational thing for us, or just a medical thing for us, this is a lifestyle.

***C&T Today:* You're so passionate about it. What is it about the plant that moves you like that?**



“Smoking and being a part of this plant is not just a recreational thing for us, or just a medical thing for us, this is a lifestyle.”

Redman: You know what? It was the first time I hit it and the way it made me feel. Of course, I went through my getting high stages, and recreational use, but then after I started getting more into it ... It was like, this is it for me, right here. I'm glad that I did because it kept me away from all these other dumbass drugs, like cocaine and heroin, and all that bullshit. Nothing in the world makes me feel like this plant right here, knowing that it's natural, knowing that when I smoked it it opened up other doors for me, being creative.

Then, as I started learning more about it, I even took a crash course at Oaksterdam University in Oakland, California, and I'm a licensed patient consultant right now. I wanted to learn about this plant that I've been smoking for years. I wanted to learn how it was helping people now.

Overall, I feel I made a great choice in my life by dealing with this cannabis plant, because cannabis brings people together at the end of the day. And through the music, while everyone was talking about being a gangster, we just stuck to the talk of cannabis, what it brings, the fun-ness it brings.

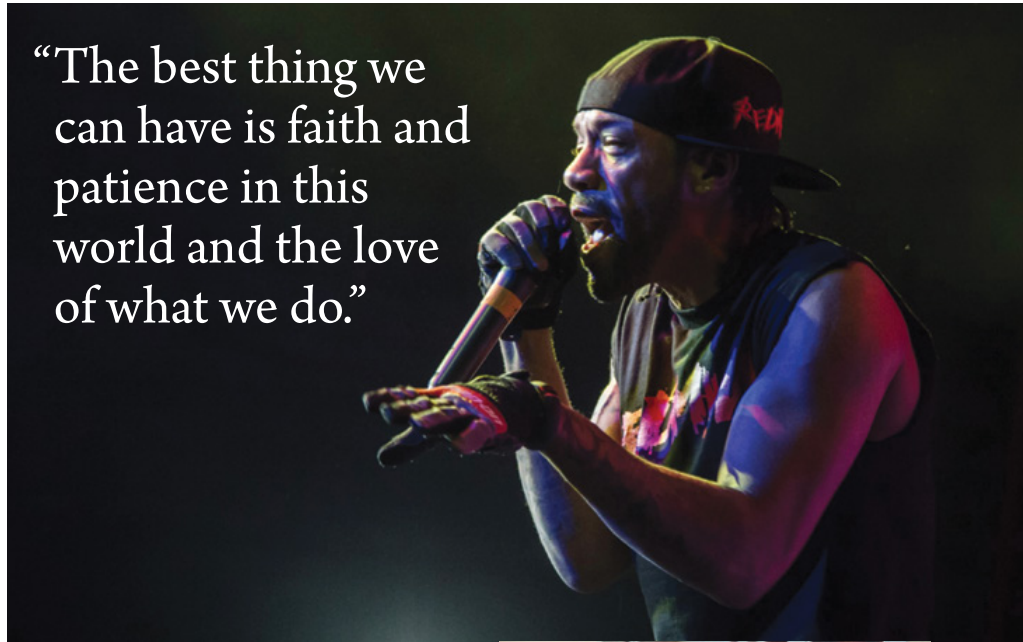
**C&T Today: What role does it play in the creative process for you?**

Redman: Writing, doing music. I work very hard in the studio. I run my own studio. I like being creative. I like maybe hitting a blunt and just writing, getting some lyrics, because it doesn't box me in. Creatively, it's great if you know how to use it. You have to understand, sativa helps bring that creativity. Indica puts your ass asleep. Hybrid is in between. It allows me to open a door in other channels to music and creativity.

**C&T Today: How have you seen smoking technology evolve since you started smoking?**

Redman: Well, the only thing that's really different is just how you smoke. There's a lot of vape pens right now. There's a lot of different pre-rolls, and they've got pre-rolls with kief and oil in it, wax wrapped around it. I don't really indulge in those. I don't like pre-rolls. I don't like a blunt wrapped with wax. It's just not me. I'm old school. I roll me a good blunt and that's it for me.

“The best thing we can have is faith and patience in this world and the love of what we do.”



**C&T Today: You're notorious for your blunts; have you perfected your blunt rolling skills?**

Redman: [Laughs] Everyone knows when you roll in the Backwoods, there's never a perfect Backwoods blunt. You can roll a perfect joint, but when you're dealing with leaves, there's never a perfect blunt. The perfect blunt in that category is how it hits. It can look ugly as fuck, but if it hits, then you got you a good blunt.

**C&T Today: What inspires you when working on new music and your Sirius XM radio show?**

Redman: With my new album Muddy Waters 2, what inspired me is that it's almost done. I've been working on it for a long time, and that's because I've been off and on with it, paying for samples and shit like that. What inspires me is that I have a good project. I know that I have a good project because I listen to my shit and get excited. When I get excited listening to my songs, I'm like, "I got something different. I got something that people, or the industry, are not tapping into." That gets me excited when I'm doing something that I know is different.

As far as working on other business, like the XM show, I always try to bring something new to the table. At the end of the day, I didn't know shit about running a radio show. I was thrown into an uncomfortable predicament and I grew. After my third show, I started getting the hang of



it and every time I worked, I would find easier ways to do things. My girl always tried to tell me, "Challenge yourself, challenge yourself." And I think the radio show was a challenge for me to really figure out things on my own without someone nurturing me. It was just like, you got a radio show. You go do it. And I figured it out. I think that's what I love about doing these other businesses, because it's something I'm not used to. I needed to grow. Now, I feel I have grown more, like there's not a challenge or anything that I cannot do. Just throw me in a fire, and I'm with it, you know?

**C&T Today: Speaking of your other projects, let's talk about the National Cannabis Party. How did you become involved with the movement?**

Redman: Damon [Jackson] saw one of my interviews on TMZ on how passionate I was