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The Peaceful Critic Reviews "Cry of the City Part 1: The Legend of Cornbread"



A real urban legend...



STARRING

Darryl "Cornbread" McCray, Dr. Wilson Goode, Jane Golden, Troy Cresswell

CONCEIVED AND DIRECTED BY

Sean McKnight

MPAA RATING

NR (Graphic Language)

RUNNING TIME

NA

Grade: B+



It would be easy to label "Cry of the City Part 1: The Legend of Cornbread" an urban documentary.

To label "Cry of the City" at all, however, is to do the film a grave injustice. As directed by Sean McKnight, "Cry of the City Part 1: The Legend of Cornbread" is an entertaining, informative and inspiring look at the life of Philly legend Darryl "Cornbread" McCray, the man many credit as the father of modern day graffiti and hip hop.

For those familiar with the roots of the hip hop scene, Cornbread may simply be known as the man who once left his mark on an elephant in the Philadelphia Zoo or as the man who once marked the Jackson 5's jet. If the story stopped here, it would be mildly entertaining but a tad irrelevant.

It doesn't stop, however, with Cornbread's graffiti itself. "Cry of the City" goes deeper inside Cornbread's life from his early days of tagging walls through his drug addiction

and, perhaps most powerfully, to his getting his act together as a social worker and father.

McKnight follows Cornbread's club, Delta Phi Soul, and his powerful impact on the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program.

While the New York graffiti scene has been widely acknowledged, in print and film, Philly's scene was alive and kicking some would say even a bit before graffiti really got planted in the NYC subways.

"Cry of the City Part 1," with a beautiful style, stellar production design and a series of interviews ranging from Cornbread's son to former Philly mayor Dr. Wilson Goode, is a celebration of a culture that is both real and iconic. Cornbread is a refreshingly real, honest and authentic role model capable of acknowledging his failures while also celebrating some of the places he visited along the way.

While "Cry of the City Part 1" has an obvious low-budget feel to it, McKnight creates a spirit, energy and atmosphere that feels much like last year's glossier and more box-office friendly "Hip Hop Project."

"Cry of the City Part 1: The Legend of Cornbread" is an absolute must-see for fans of the early hip hop movement, however, Sean McKnight takes it one step further and makes "Cry of the City Part 1" an inspirational experience for all of us who need reminded that there is always hope.

If you're in the Philly area, I highly recommend catching a screening of this wonderful film. For more information on Philly screenings, screenings nationwide or the DVD visit [Cinema Alliance](#).

© **Written by Richard Propes**
The Peaceful Critic