

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN AND ISLAMIC CULTURES

Muslim Women in Rap and Hip-Hop

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EWIC Staff: Datasheet

- ❖ Popular French rapper Diam's (real name Mélanie Georgiades) converted to Islam in 2010. Diam's has won numerous awards for her songs, including an MTV Europe Music Award for Best French Act in 2006.¹
- ❖ Soosan Firooz is regarded as Afghanistan's first female rapper. Taking inspiration from her own life, she raps about the struggles of Afghan refugees in other countries, as well as the unequal treatment of women in Afghanistan. Her powerful lyrics have caused controversy, but she states that she wants to inspire women, as well as educate men about the worth of women.²
- ❖ African-American Muslim rapper Miss Undastood, from New York, has been rapping since she was 11. She has been called the "First Lady of Muslim hip-hop". She has songs about how to be a good Muslim, including songs about proper Muslim dress and practices and songs instructing Muslim men to treat women well. Her song "Around the Way Muslimah" praises independence, intelligence, and confidence in Muslim women.³
- ❖ Reason Rule is a hip-hop duo made up of a husband-and-wife team Seyfullah MC and Shaadiyah. They are located in San Antonio, Texas. Seyfulla MC raps over R&B beats, and Shaadiyah writes her own vocals. Their music deals with political issues and as Muslim topics. For example, Shaadiyah's song "Muslim Girl" encourages a friend to hold onto her Muslim faith.⁴
- ❖ Poetic Pilgrimage is a Muslim hip-hop group made up of best friends Muneera Rashida, born to Caribbean Christian parents, and Sakina Abdul Noor, originally from a Rastafarian family. They are a popular group in the UK underground hip-hop movement. Their rap combines political, social and religious issues. Their songs inspire Muslim girls to stay strong in their faith. A documentary film titled "Hip Hop Hijabis", covering Poetic Pilgrimage's journey in hip-hop, is in production.⁵
- ❖ Sister Haero is a young Southern California Muslim rapper whose parents are from Iraq. Her songs deal with politics, personal relationships, family and more. For example, her song "The Struggle" is about the U.S.-Iraq war, the U.S. education system, and gang violence. She uses her music to break stereotypes about Muslim women. She has been featured in books as well as in a documentary.⁶
- ❖ In 2007, Deeyah – a successful Muslim singer, filmmaker, and music producer from Norway, now based in London⁷– created the Sisterhood Project, a network for young Muslim women artists to express their creativity. The Sisterhood Online Mixtape features 14 aspiring Muslim women rappers and singers from Europe and the U.S. These include Lady Dizzla, MC Suriyah, and Kaylah Lahmar.⁸

¹ <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/10/01/241253.html>

² <http://mag.newsweek.com/2013/01/04/susan-feroz-afghanistan-s-first-female-rapper.html>

³ http://www.muslimhiphop.com/Hip-Hop/Miss_Undastood

⁴ http://www.muslimhiphop.com/Stories/8_Reason_Rule_Interview

⁵ <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2006/808/feature.htm>

⁶ http://www.muslimhiphop.com/Stories/7_Sister_Haero_Interview

⁷ <http://freemuse.org/archives/728>

⁸ <http://sisterhoodnetwork.org/2007mixtape/>

