

Lil Jon gets into winemaking

LOS ANGELES (AP) — It turns out Lil Jon drinks more than crunk juice — the larger-than-life producer and rapper has started his own wine label, offering selections including chardonnay and merlot.

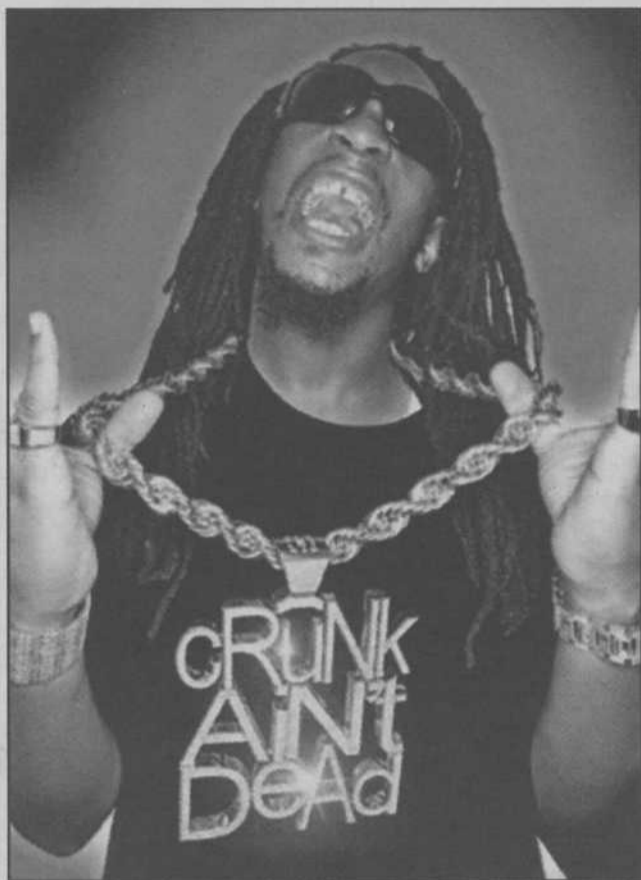
"It kind of came out of nowhere," Lil Jon said of his new venture, Little Jonathan Winery.

"We were just going to do some private label stuff (for parties) and we did it, and people was like, 'Hey, it's pretty nice.'"

Lil Jon acknowledges that he's no wine connoisseur. "I'm not no 'drink wine every day' kind of dude," he said in a telephone interview. "I'm not like an expert, so don't ask me no questions ... I just like the taste."

And he knows what he likes, including White wines and dessert wines (winemaker Alison Crowe is responsible for the label, made in California).

Little Jonathan Winery is



Multiplatinum producer Lil Jon has his own wine label.

not Lil Jon's first venture into the drink market: He launched Crunk!!! Energy Drink a few years back: The concoction took its name from the rap style he made

famous. But he is treating his venture into winemaking with a more serious approach, which is why he decided against using his stage name for the label.

"My full name is Jonathan," the Atlanta-based artist said. "The wine is more nature: I wanted to not just have a direct connection, but make it just a little bit more upscale than regular 'Lil Jon.' ... This is not no ghetto Boone's Farm; this is some real wine."

Lil Jon has more time on his hands these days for winemaking and other ventures. While he continues to produce hits, he hasn't released an album since 2004's best-selling "Crunk Juice" with the Eastside Boyz. It may be a little while longer before fans hear new music, since his label, TVT Records, recently went bankrupt.

Lil Jon said he has an album ready to go — he's just waiting for the TVT situation to resolve itself.

"I want to get it out asap, but TVT has to figure out their business, and that's about all I can say," he said with a laugh.

50 Cent sued for gangsta images

Special to Sentinel-Voice

NEW YORK - Hip hop mogul 50 Cent, Universal Music Group and several of its record labels were sued on Wednesday for promoting a "gangsta lifestyle" by a 14-year-old boy who says friends of the rapper assaulted him.

The lawsuit filed by James Rosemond and his mother, Cynthia Reed, says Universal Music Group — owned by Vivendi SA — and its labels Interscope Records, G-Unit Records and Shady Records, bear responsibility for the assault because they encourage artists to pursue violent, criminal lifestyles.

The lawsuit also names 50 Cent — whose real name is Curtis Jackson — Violator Management, Violator CEO Chris Lighty, Tony Yayo, a rapper and a member of 50 Cent's G-Unit hip hop group, and Lowell Fletcher, an employee of Yayo.

All defendants declined to comment.

Rosemond says he was assaulted on a Manhattan sidewalk in March 2007 by four men including Yayo and Fletcher.

The lawsuit claims Rosemond was targeted because he was wearing a T-shirt by Czar Entertainment, a management company that represents The Game. The Game is a former G-Unit rapper who fell out with the group and had become a rival rapper.

In February, Yayo, whose real name is Marvin Bernard, pleaded guilty to harassment and was sentenced to 10 days of community service. Fletcher pleaded guilty to endangering the welfare of a child and was sentenced to nine months in jail. "The members of G-Unit, including defendants Yayo and 50 Cent, encouraged, sanctioned, approved and condoned its members threatening violence, and or engaging in violent acts in furtherance of its business," the lawsuit said.

Britain targets Snoop ruling

LONDON (AP) — Britain is appealing a court's decision to allow Snoop Dogg into the country, the Border Agency said Friday. He was barred from Britain after he was arrested on charges of violent disorder at London's Heathrow Airport in 2006. But the hip-hop heavyweight successfully appealed the ban and received entry clearance from an asylum and immigration tribunal in January.

The Border Agency said Friday it would challenge the ruling at a hearing next week.

In March 2007, Snoop Dogg, whose real name is Cordozar Calvin Broadus Jr., was forced to cancel a tour of Britain with fellow rap icon Sean "Diddy" Combs after authorities denied him a visa.

That followed an incident in which Snoop Dogg and five others were arrested on charges of violent disorder and starting a brawl at Heathrow in which seven officers were injured. Trouble flared when some in his party were denied entry to British Airways' first-class lounge at the airport.

In April 2007, Snoop Dogg was refused entry into Australia, with then-Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews saying the rapper "doesn't seem the sort of bloke we want in this country."

A former associate of the Los Angeles gang the Crips, Snoop Dogg built his early career on recordings offering gritty details of gang life.

Fisk appeals art collection rule

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) - Fisk University said recently it will appeal a judge's order to display an art collection donated to it by painter Georgia O'Keeffe.

The school said in a news release that the order threatens the safekeeping of the collection.

In March, Nashville Chancellor Ellen Hobbs Lyle permanently banned any sale of the 101-piece collection and set an October deadline for Fisk to retrieve the artwork from storage and put it on display.

The Georgia O'Keeffe Museum in New Mexico had sued to gain the rights over the collection because of the school's attempts to sell paintings and because they weren't currently on display. The Santa Fe museum is the legal representative of the late artist's estate.

The March ruling said Fisk broke the terms of the donation but shouldn't lose the art collection to the museum.

In February, the judge rejected a \$30 million arrangement to share the collection with

the Crystal Bridges Museum in Bentonville, Ark. The museum was founded by Wal-Mart heiress Alice Walton.

O'Keeffe donated the art to the historically Black university in 1949, a time when segregation prevented Southern Blacks from visiting many museums.


The collection of art belonged to O'Keeffe's husband, photographer and art promoter Alfred Stieglitz, and experts estimate its worth at \$100 million. It includes pieces by O'Keeffe, Picasso, Renoir, Cezanne, Marsden Hartley, Alfred Maurer and Charles Demuth.

Fisk put the art into storage in 2005 because the gallery where it was exhibited was falling apart, and there were fears the works would be damaged.

Fisk's statement said, "In short, the court's order (in March) results in the inevitable deterioration of the collection. Prudence requires that we appeal the court's order to maintain the art in a manner consistent with contemporary conservation methods."

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