

Penthouse Records producer blasts content, lack of creativity in Dancehall

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One of Jamaica's most decorated hit makers is blasting the Dancehall industry for its lack of substance and creativity following a lack of Billboard presence in 2012.

Penthouse Records CEO, Donovan Germain has lashed out against Dancehall, suggesting that the recent infusion of hip-hop styles causes the genre to lack sustenance on a universal scale.

"Unless the Dancehall producers and artistes bring something new to the table and let go of the hip-hop style that they are readily embracing, the music will continue to be in the gutter," Germain told the Jamaica Observer.

Germain, known for working with elite artistes like Buju Banton, Beres Hammond and Busy Signal, believes part of the problem is the lack of leadership. He thinks the industry needs a new signature face or producer to lead the genre back to prominence.

"The biggest part of Dancehall was when Dave Kelly played a major part in it," Germain said. *"Artistes are straying from being melodious, instead they are deejaying about their bottles of Hennessey, money and bad mind."*

Germain's thought-provoking points come on the heels of a poor 2012 regarding sales for Dancehall and Reggae albums in the United States. Despite Busy Signal (Reggae Music Again), Konshens (Mental Maintenance), Sean Paul (Tomahawk Technique) and Romain Virgo (The System) all receiving praise in markets across the globe, none managed to eclipse the 5,000 albums sold mark last year. This was a far cry from albums like Dutty Rock (Sean Paul), Hot Shots (Shaggy) and Welcome to Jamrock (Damian Marley), which earned multi-platinum statuses during the early 2000s.

Additionally, Germain points to the popularity of 90s beats in local clubs and events as a possible motivating factor for nowadays entertainers; intimating they should aspire to make songs that resonate for generations.

As for Reggae, Germain stated that the genre has lost some popularity with the Jamaican market, but the music produced continues to produce quality and attract interest.

"Although Reggae is not being recognized the way it should in Jamaica, the reggae acts are still touring and the music is still firm," he said. *"The same can be done with Dancehall once there is a turn-around of the musical content."*