

STOP
Look. Listen.

MILLI MAE

Madame of the South

"The girls out now are just a designer advertisement," says up-and-coming Southern rapper, Milli

Mae. "How many girls in the hood wear Christian Dior bustiers? Designer clothes don't define real artists. Real artists stand on their own." This is quite a large statement from someone who's only just begun to make a name for herself in the music industry — following previous attempts cut short by her own wrong doings. However, it's such wrong doings that somehow make Ms. Milli Mae "real" in her own eyes and in the eyes of her marketing people.

"My mother was a teacher and my father was an engineer draftsman," says the petite, 5'3" 24-year-old Texan. "I was always in honors classes. I was smart; I just didn't care for school." This artist's "not caring for school" attitude is what ruined her first chance at stardom in the music business. After life at home grew turbulent, she moved in with her grandmother and began hanging with her cousins. "My cousins was dope boys, so when they walked up to the club everybody let them in off the top because that's the type of respect and reputations they had," she explains. "My cousins taught me the game."

It was the game that landed her in trouble, earning a small sentence and opting to take a breather from her cousins' line of work and moving out to New York City. In nearly no time she hooked up with Tameka "Tiny" Cottle — member of the R&B group Xscape. Mae was in the studio crafting songs and earning a reputation as a talented writer. This would all be tossed out the window following her decision to get mixed up in her old way of life. The former honor student was locked up a second time, but this time vowed to turn her life around and take music seriously upon her release. Currently back in the industry and recording with the likes of Cool & Dre and maintaining that she's as real it gets, Milli vows to light radio waves on fire with tracks such as her debut single, "My Baby Daddy." "I'm the Madame of the South," she says slyly, "I'm about to do what Heidi Fleiss did to the world!"

— A.Q.C.