A Modern Day Negro Spiritual
By Mama Blossoms

I am Hip-Hop

I was born in the South Bronx
From the ashes of burning buildings
And broken crack pipes
I echoed in the abandoned apartments of crack houses
I dressed in oversized overalls and #42 jerseys in the morning
Stepping out on the block witnessing my people mourning
I picked up the sound waves booming between the speakers of my boom box
The boom box was my pirate's bird
Finessed with the starches of tracks *sing* from my favorite DJs I always heard
I danced on the same blocks with whores Nasty Nae and Ruby Red
Using cardboard boxes for my stage like Homeless Willy does for his home
Popping and locking my bones
My bones as old as the dried up tears on my cheeks
The sun would rise for a new day
But nothing new came with it
I was poor and hungry, almost beaten down
But I made beats on my skin to make a new sound
Nothing new, just jazz and blues giving different tunes
Sooner or later, my feet and hands moved in 1s and 2s
Hold on hold on *cough* Let me clear my throat
I shouted, Hip-Hop Hippy Hop and don't stop, to the sky.
Proclaiming my frustration about mass incarceration, economic desperation and narcotics
Political corruption and hood politics
And the Virus that was making us all sick
I remembered my enslaved ancestors singing for freedom and longing for a joyous day
So I did the same, and made Hip Hop my name
But this is no game, only my reality of what is it like to be black in the hood
Because clearly nothing good comes of it but creativity in dark ways, they say…
Unifying sisters and brothers to mobilize for the war zones we live in
Hip Hop is not violent nor dangerous
Just seemingly hopeless people with violent voices in dangerous places
Once for black ears and lost souls,
The industry took it over to strike on gold.
My plights ain't as important anymore
It's all about what soars on the billboards now
Just another example of exploitation of the black body for profitable gains
It's all but a shame
And they do it so shamelessly
But the message of Hip Hop lives in me
From the music to the dance to the fashion to the slang

   I am the Culture
   A modern day Negro Spiritual
   I am Hip Hop

You know what I'm saying?