



# Mason's Honors Project

## Hip Hop's Great Producers

Thanks to Nick Wight for being there  
along the way

## **Terms you need to know before reading:**

**Beat:** The instrumental track, includes (but is not limited to): Melody (piano, guitar, etc), Drums, and baseline.

**Producer:** The Person who makes the beat for the rapper/singer.

**Sampling:** Using a melody from another song and changing it to use it in your own way.

**Flipping or Chopping a Sample:** Changing a sample by either reversing it, cutting it up/rearranging it, or both.

**Influence:** When I write influence I mean the affect any artist in the Rap community has on the artists who come after them.

**Super Producer:** A producer that is known for being incredibly talented for their generation, hence the use of "Super"

# Background

For my honors project, the goal was to highlight the great producers of Hip Hop, as they are often left out. Hip Hop was started by producers, and many of the most influential figures were producers. For my project, I chose three producers from three time periods to highlight. They were J Dilla, Larry Smith, and Dj Skrew. These three people had very unique styles and very important influences. For this project, I did a ton of research on each of these producers and decided to use **ONE** common trait from each of them. (I.e. I will take a certain sampling technique, and put it on a beat that I would usually make.)

# J Dilla

J Dilla was a very influential producer, having an influence larger than hip hop. J Dilla is known to change the way people think about producing and mainly sampling. J Dilla was exposed to classical and jazz music at a young age, This is reflected in the samples he uses, often using Jazz, R&B, or soul. That is what I did. For this beat, I took a jazz sample and chopped it up to rearrange it, here it is:



# Larry Smith



Larry Smith is known to have one of the largest influences on Hip Hop, as he was one of the first Super producers of Hip Hop's History. Hip Hop was invented around 1973, and Larry Smith made his appearance 1979. He is known for being one of the first incredibly Talented producers. He shaped the sounds of artists like Run DMC. Unfortunately, Smith is greatly underappreciated and unknown, because of this, I was unable to gather much research on him. So, rather than doing tons of researched, I listened to tons of music. I was surprised to know that Larry Smith was one of the pioneers for the sound of Rap in the 1980s. For my beat, I am using a high pitched bell, a horn, a hard hitting kick, and a loud clap to embody some traits of Smith's music. I know it's not the greatest, but I did my best



# Dj Skrew

## Dj Skrew

Dj Skrew's influence is immense, he practically invented the chopping and screwing method. His unprecedented ability to change a sample to his liking has changed the way sampling has been done for the rest of the time. His influence doesn't go unnoticed, either. With many artists writing songs in his name. For my beat, I decided to use the very method he invented, to take a normal-sounding sample, and make it unique. I decided to use a sample by composer Pierre Dutor, and then change it using the Skrew Method. For this one I Slowed it down, pitched it up, and took out the lower notes.

Here is the original Sample by Pierre Dutor:



And here is the final beat I made(Flipping the other sample):

