



DEAD

FREEDOM AIN'T FOR FREE

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Dead Prez are rippin' the house down, tearin' it up. Performing live at S.O.B.'s, sticman and M1 give the crowd more than there moneys worth. There are no acrobatics, no big explosions, no choreographed dance routines. Comin' w/ just lyrics over beats and some speechifyin' in between songs, their stage show is simple. Looks can be deceiving. You see 'em, hear 'em, but more than anything, you feel them. It's like when you're standing too close to the edge on a subway platform and a train comes roaring out the tunnel, rushing past you.

Standing on the verge of getting it on, Dead Prez are at the top of a movement in Hip Hop focusing on socially conscious lyrics and positive action. This type of scene hasn't been seen since the

mid 80's/early 90's, when performers like P.E., B.D.P., and the Native Tongues posse were doing their thing. Acts such as these, along w/ heads like Brand Nubian, Paris, Lakim Shabazz, Sistas Souljah and even Arrested Development, set the trend and were the norm. These artists planted a spiritual, philosophical, and moral foundation for the hip hop nation, using the teachings of Malcolm X, Farakhan + the Nation of Islam, MLK, the civil rights struggle, Five Percent Nation, Rastafarianism and the esoteric teachings of ancient Kemet (Egypt). Hip-Hop itself was born out of a need for social activism w/in the community. Elders like Afrika Bambaata and others came up w/ this thing of ours to keep cats from killin' each other in the streets, substituting battles as



PREZ

MC's and B-boys for gang warfare. Ironically, over the last few years, it's been the gangsteristic bullshit that's taken precedence over the more humanistic aspects of the culture. In the 21st century, however, it's artists like Black Star, Common, Jeru, the Roots and Outkast that are taking it back. In the midst of this renaissance, we the subject of our article.

Representing the people, Dead Prez stands for truth and justice. To Sticman and M1, equality is mythology in the global economy. The population at the bottom are still in bondage. Check the 13th amendment of the U.S. Constitution...slavery was never really abolished. In this system, it's people of color who are feeding time for the beast of all nations in the New World Order. They

ask, What are YOU gonna do about it? What can you do about it?

Making music and performing are Dead Prez' excuse to spread the gospel. They're trying to get people to think for themselves and not just believe everything the powers that be tell them. Recognizing the social injustices perpetrated against their people, they strive to raise awareness of such issues and get people organized. M1 is the head of the NYC chapter of the National People's Democratic Uhuru Movement (NPDUM) which holds weekly classes in political education and mass rallies. Together with The People's Army, they practice organizational tactics and are a fixture at various protests and rallies around NYC. Much like the Black Panthers of the late 60's and early 70's, the goal for such



action is to work towards protecting the democratic rights of the downtrodden and the dispossessed. Their strong stance has caused many of their detractors to label DP as anti-white. They're not anti-white, they're anti-oppression. NPDUM's weekly meetings are open to any and all who want to fight for freedom and justice, regardless of ethnicity. Capitalism is the enemy. It's about destroying a system where those without money are easily exploited by those who do. Dead Prez choose to promote socialism as one alternative. Not to be confused w/ Marxists/Leninists, they approach socialism from an African perspective, where the focus is not on government control but instead the collective power of people coming together to affect change in their lives. The need for self-defense and self-reliance are an imperative. Like the Black Panthers before them, Dead Prez are simply calling things for what they are and laying down an alternative blueprint for people to follow. Music maybe their love, but revolution is their passion.

Their first album, "Let's Get Free" has finally been released on Loud Records. The buzz is burnin' eardrums as they get ready to start an international tour in support of their project. They've done some independent filmwork both in front and behind the camera. Sticman and M1 were in "White Boys", and M1 has a small role in the upcoming "Brooklyn Babylon", starring Black Thought. They're also producing and directing their own videos, like the 20 minute film/music video for their songs "Happiness" and "These Are The Times" filmed some 3 years ago; and also co-directed the more recent "Hip-Hop." It's been a long time comin', but it's definitely time. Something wicked this way comes...Roosevelt Franklin sayin' stay tuned boys and girls. One Love.

