

Heavyweight Dub Champion

➔ DESPITE SLEEP DEPRIVATION, a rigid touring schedule and days spent driving from venue to venue, Heavy Weight Dub Champion's Resurrector shows no sign of exhaustion. His band is on a mission. Rather than striving for fame and fortune, the Dub Champion seeks to motivate individuals from all walks of life to find the strength to think for themselves. "Everything we do is concept oriented. A lot is based on intention," Resurrector explains.

The band views their latest album, *Rise of the Champion Nation*, as a counter offensive to the brainwashing exploits of the media and government. This retaliation is expressed in a fierce mix of hip-hop, reggae and electronica. "[*Rise of the Champion Nation*] definitely started to come to being after 9/11. We were pretty subversively minded from a political viewpoint," Resurrector says. "The response that went on after [9/11], was to be a very compliant populace; a society increasingly



WORDS BY J-B HYPOLITE
PHOTO BY DJ DRAGONFLY

built on lies and deception, and a media that was anything but free."

The Dub Champion's cause is shared by the likes of legendary emcee KRS-One, who is featured on three songs, including "Arrival" and "Rise." In an industry flooded

by conformity, Heavyweight Dub Champion aims to draw out individuality in their fans and potential listeners. Resurrector hopes people take something meaningful away from the new album. "It's something to be reflected on...it's ultimately a piece to inspire."



WORDS BY BOYUAN GAO
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KEELAY & ZAIRE

➔ THE INTERNET IS TO BLAME for cultivating the partnership between Keelay (Kyle Pierce) and Zaire (Timothy Lewis) because the dynamic rookie production team met on an online message board to ultimately create the lush funk/soul and hip-hop album, *Ridin High*, featuring everyone from Phonte to Planet Asia, Fortlive and Blu. Zaire learned from watching his dad DJ while Keelay used hip-hop as a countercultural escape from his Salt Lake City upbringing. Zaire's love for R&B and soul merged with Keelay's underground sensibility to create a new brand of production, utilizing sexy, melodic keyboard samples along with Keelay's straight away "big drums and big snares" sound.

Keelay's bank gig and Zaire's government job are hopefully only temporary aids to help sustain their craft until the craft can sustain itself. The integrity and pride they express when speaking about their music would have you believe that they're eating like kings off of record sales. However, their love for hip-hop ultimately supersedes the monetary gain. But according to Zaire, that's actually okay. "I have full confidence that we are on the verge of a music revolution because there's not a lot of money in it. A lot of folks will give up. The true cats are gonna persevere and we're gonna see a lot of good music because of that."