



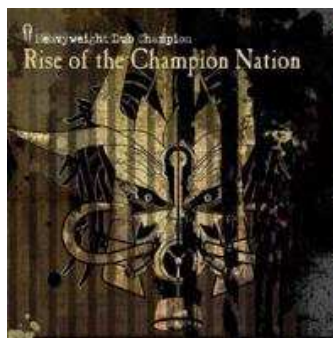
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## Heavyweight Dub Champion

### Rise of the Champion Nation

Review by Gary Hill

Those who think that hip hop has no creativity need to check out this disc. By the same token, those who feel there is no positive message in rap need to get on board. This is a concept album about a restructuring of the human species for the good of all. Musically it combines reggae, techno and space rock with the hip hop that is the central factor. It's unlikely you've ever heard hip hop quite like this. That said, those with children should be warned that, like a lot of the genre, this has some language that might not be suitable. If there is such a thing as the progressive rock version of hip hop, this is it.



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## Track by Track Review

### Renegade

This is a rap with a modern world, almost science fiction majesty to it. Loops and such add much to this piece.

### Arrival (feat. KRS ONE)

A lot more stripped down there's a definite reggae texture to this rap. I like this a lot, even if it isn't as powerful as the opener. They do take us into something like science fiction oriented space rock for the closing movement.

### Destroy the Industry

Take some space rock and add in techno and then give us a killer rap and you've got this song. The keyboard dominated mellower movement feels like it could fit on a Hawkwind disc at times. I really like the atmospheric and dramatic closing section.

### Trouble

This is sort of a gospel cut brought into a more ambient spacey motif. It's very percussive during the vocal section, but there are some powerfully mysterious things going on as they continue here.

### Babylon Beast (feat. Killah Priest)

Here we get a more pure rap song. There are some electronic elements in the midst, but overall this is pretty straightforward.

### Warrior Divination One

Mostly just drums make up the instrumentation on this and the track really feels like a hip hop version of beat poetry – but really isn't that what much of the origin of rap is, really?

### We Will Conquer

Techno and electronica meet rap on this. I'd consider this track more along the lines of pure house music than anything else.

### Dawn (feat. Dr. Israel)

I really like the rap on this a lot and interestingly enough in some ways I can hear Parliament on this, but I can also hear bits of Hawkwind. This is a very rhythmically oriented number, but there are some intriguing science fiction styled space textures, too.

### Rise (feat. KRS ONE)

There are some extremely tasty keyboard sounds on this and a very anthemic rap. There's quite a bit of rap on this and some spacier textures emerge late in the track.



### Warrior Divination Two

A short cut, this is very mystical and empowering in its lyrical themes. It's very much about the rising of the human race from chains of centuries binding us to old ways of doing things that serve to keep those who have gained entitlement from them in control.

### Exorcism

The keyboards that start this remind me of *Moving Pictures* era Rush, but as the music is built out it really has a progressive rock meets techno texture to it. The first half of this is essentially instrumental and then a processed voice says, "I exorcise these demons." The voice isn't too high in the mix and it brings us out into a more rhythmic movement that's quite cool. As this carries on we get hints of reggae in the mix. It drops down to just percussion to end.

### Villain's Impasse

While I wouldn't consider this my favorite cut on show here, it's one of the most unique. There are some serious prog rock stylings on this, but yet it's still got a lot of techno and electronica. It's a cool piece of music, it's just that so much here is so strong. That's what keeps this from making it closer to the top of the heap.

### King of the Mountain (feat. KRS ONE)

The music on the first half isn't all that different than a lot of the other stuff here, but yet this is still a unique number. It's also strong enough to stand up despite the similarities. It shifts out to a theme that seems to challenge all the music artists out there to put up or shut up. It talks about how we talk about injustice until we get our own slice of the financial pie – and then it doesn't matter. This is a call to put your music where your mouth is. Musically it's entertaining and pretty with a strong rhythmic structures and nice melodies. It moves out to more space oriented sounds before it finally closes.

### Warrior Divination Three

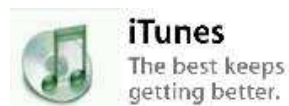
Combining reggae and jazz, this is a triumphant side of the story. The extended outro here really feels like Hawkwind space at first. Then after a while like that it gives way to a serious reggae based jam that finally takes us to the last rap of the disc. There's actually a lot of Zen in the lyrical commandments here. There's some killer saxophone work on the track, too. After about three and a half minutes this moves out into Hawkwind-like space. Around the five minute mark we are taken to a reggae meets techno movement.

### Promised Land

This is a very rhythmically oriented cut and also a space oriented in terms of the lyrical themes. It's a great way to end things in style and has a lot in common with techno music.



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