

HEAVYWEIGHT DUB CHAMPION

Rise Of The Champion Nation

(Champion Nation)

★★★★



The sticker affixed to the front of this beautifully-produced (screen-printed gatefold packaging, sticker/poster, card-stock inserts, etc.) deluxe-edition CD says it all - "71 minutes of massive dub hop." Formed by producers Resurrector and Patch, this 15-track set includes collaborations with wise wordsmiths like KRS-One, Killah Priest, Dr. Israel, A.P.O.S.T.L.E., Ganga Girl, and tons more.

Lyricaly, these artists touch on spirituality, politics, revolution, prophecy, and our apocalyptic world itself - eloquently and with a far more worldly outlook than their supposed peers. "Destroy The Industry" breaks it down with some tough verbiage, attacking the corporate world and the mainstream hip-hop world with one fell swoop. These guys aren't here to mince words, that's for sure. Musically, "Rise..." features big, hearty beats integrated with live instruments seamlessly (and plenty of variant samples used as texture). The melding of classic hip-hop with deep dub treatments is reminiscent of stuff like the awesome Ice (circa "Bad Blood") or perhaps some of Bill Laswell's stunning dub-hybrids, complete with a deep experimentalist/cinematic sound streak. The message is right-on, the vehicle is a monolith of forward-thinking 21st century poetry set to sound. Immense, yes. Smart? Certainly. Recommended? Definitely.

- TODD ZACHRITZ