

# Rev Run Walks His Own Way with Run-D.M.C. in Mind

"BEFORE **RUN-D.M.C.**, there was nothing." So says the seminal rap group's fan, collaborator and musical heir, **Kid Rock**. A bold statement, to be sure, but a quick rundown of the hip-hop trio's groundbreaking accomplishments easily backs it up as much more than just trash talk.

The list of stats is staggering for the trio of Run, D.M.C. and their DJ, the late **Jam Master Jay**. They were the first rap act to earn each of the following milestones: a Top 10 album on the pop charts; gold, platinum and multi-platinum album status; a Grammy nomination; appearances on the cover of *Rolling Stone* as well as *Saturday Night Live* and *American Bandstand*; and a video on MTV. As if that isn't enough, their massive 1986 cover of **Aerosmith's** "Walk This Way" remains a defining moment of bringing rap into mainstream consciousness. All of which has served to entrench them firmly as not only hip-hop innovators, but members of rock 'n' roll's elite pantheon of greats.

While the group called it quits in 2002 after the tragic death of Jam Master Jay, its legacy is certainly alive in 2005, as September sees the simultaneous release of member Run's highly anticipated debut solo effort, alongside Profile/Arista/Legacy's expanded reissues of Run-

D.M.C.'s genre-defining first four albums.

Now a family man (and man of the cloth), the newly monikered **Rev Run** (aka Joseph Simmons) is set to show the world that he can do it alone with the September 13 release of *Distortion* on his brother's Russell Simmons Music Group (RSMG), a freshly minted imprint of Island Def Jam.

As Rev Run tells **ICE**, he's not trying to top his former group's impressive résumé but to continue with a sound that harkens back to the booming drums and crunchy guitars of its classic records, to "really just take that vibe and time period of my mind and make a record that sounds like [1986's] *Raising Hell* and [1988's] *Tougher Than Leather*. Just real Run stuff without a thought of what's going on on current radio."

The indelible MC says the album's fun and carefree creative process was "like going into your backyard, shootin' hoops with nobody watching. You're

shootin' the ball, you're layin' it up, the prize is in playing the basketball. The prize was in working with this new producer named Whiteboy and basically shootin' hoops."

The previously unknown producer in question may seem a strange choice as the album's sole collaborator, considering the lengthy Rolodex of potential star power the Rev could have enlisted. But after coming highly recommended to him by former Island Def Jam CEO Lyor Cohen, Run ran with the new talent, and the two proved to be quick and able sparring partners on the record's nine tracks.

Those brisk tunes, recorded at a rate of one or two per day and averaging out between two to three minutes each in length, are as follows: "Mind on the Road," "Home Sweet Home," "I Used to Think I Was Run," "High and Mighty Joe," "Got a Way," "Distortion," "Boom Ditty," "Beats to the Rhyme" and "Take a Tour."

"There's nobody else on it," Run adds. "It's just me, Whiteboy and God. It was very simple." Making no mistake about the album's intentions, he says, "When you hear it, the only thing you're gonna do is get paralyzed behind the fact that it sounds exactly like the great Run-D.M.C. stuff."

And fans will be able to take that exact taste test next month, as September 6 sees the expanded editions of 1984's *Run-D.M.C.* and 1985's *King of Rock*, plus the aforementioned *Raising Hell* and *Tougher Than Leather*. All four are chock full of previously unreleased demos (like the original version of "Slow and Low," later recorded by the **Beastie Boys**) and live cuts ("King of Rock" at 1985's Live Aid, the only rap performance at that concert), as well as b-sides, rarities and more.

Although Rev Run explains "D.M.C. and myself have retired as a group," he notes that their recorded output offers plenty to soak up. And with a burgeoning solo career that includes his upcoming MTV reality show, *Run's House*, fans will see there's still plenty of hell to be raised.

"Maybe we'll do 'Walk This Way' at some Rock and Roll Hall of Fame thing or whatever," he says of any reunion possibilities, "but it's not likely that I'm chasing that dream anymore. Life is taking a trip. I got a new career."

—Greg Camphire



run-d.m.c.



rev run

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Fate knocks three times for **Tony Orlando & Dawn** this fall. On September 13, R2 Entertainment drops bonus-spike reissues of six catalog items (*Candida*, *He Don't Love You*, *New Ragtime Follies*, *Prime Time*, *To Be with You* and *Tuneweaving*) plus a nine-hour, three-disc DVD, *The Ultimate Collection*. The latter grabs music performances and comedy skits from TO&D's CBS TV series (1974-77), whose featured guests included **Alice Cooper**, **Sly & the Family Stone** and others. October 11 brings a new TO&D LP, *A Christmas Reunion* ■ The **Shirelles** (and the **Beatles**) may have famously sung about "Boys," but it's distaff stuff that rules October 4 when Rhino declares *One Kiss Can Lead to Another: Girl Group Sounds - Lost & Found*. The four-CD box offers 120 cuts by 107 female artists, mostly from the early and mid-'60s. It's rather *Nuggets*-like in that it generally eschews overly familiar hits for gems like **Donna Lynn's** **Jagger-Richards** "I'd Much Rather Be with the Girls," **Brenda Lee's** "Is It True" (**Jimmy Page** on guitar) and **Dolly Parton's** admonition "Don't Drop Out" ■ Producer **David Axelrod**, now prized by hip-hoppers for his '60s jazz-funk jams *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*, is celebrated in *The Edge: David Axelrod at Capitol Records 1966-1970* (Blue Note). The comp, set for September 13, features work from his solo LPs as well as selections from Axelrod productions of **Lou Rawls**, **Cannonball Adderley** and *Man from U.N.C.L.E.* star **David McCallum** ■ In addition to earning a slot on the forthcoming *Children of Nuggets* comp (**ICE** #220), neo-classic garage-rockers the **Chesterfield Kings** star in *Where Is the Chesterfield King?*, a low-budget/high-concept film arriving as a DVD September 13 from Music Video Distributors ■ For years, guitarist **Rusty Anderson** has been playing in bands and recording with such artists as **Elton John**, **Santana** and, most

recently and notably, **Paul McCartney**. Anderson's finally recorded his own album, *Undressing Underwater*, currently scheduled for September 27 from Surf-dog. The disc features a wide variety of styles and includes one track, "Hurt Myself," featuring the entire McCartney band – including Macca himself on – what else – bass, along with backing vocals and even some guitar. "It was surreal," Anderson tells **ICE** of the experience. "He played his Hofner, and he was sitting down, grooving along and playing, concentrating, like any bass player would. It was funny to see him doing the things that we all do, getting frustrated over a missed note or something. But Paul's so intuitive and such a fast learner with everything he does." Former **Police** drummer **Stewart Copeland** also guests on the album. A number of tracks on *Undressing Underwater* bring back a sense of the *Revolver* days at EMI Abbey Road, where the guitarist recorded with McCartney last year. Anderson's home studio contains a great many pieces of vintage gear from that same era, he notes. The guitarist also acted as producer/co-producer for the disc, with the exception of "Hurt Myself," which was produced by David Kahne. Anderson had previously released the album through his website, [www.rustyanderson.com](http://www.rustyanderson.com). It was also made available as a download in November 2004 through Universal's UMe Digital (reported by Matt Hurwitz) ■ Singer-writer **Shawn Amos**, whose ambitious song cycle dedicated to his late mother, *Thank You, Shirl-ee May*, was previously available only online (**ICE** #216), drops the DualDisc version September 13 (Shout! Factory). The DVD contains photo montages for all of the album's songs and a making-of documentary. The release date, Amos tells **ICE**, "is my birthday, so the record coming out then is the best gift I could ask for" ■ African guitarist **Ali Farka Touré** teams with West African kora (harp) player **Toumani Diabaté** September 13 for *In the Heart of the Moon*. The World Circuit/Nonesuch set features contributions from **Ry Cooder** and his son, drummer **Joachim**.