

THE IMPOSSEBULLS

SLAVE EDUCATION: THERE IS TRUTH IN SOUL

SLAMJAMZ RECORDS: THE 21ST CENTURY RECORD LABEL

Until recently, I stood as a person removed from the hip hop community. This wasn't due to any aversion to the style or movement; in fact it was quite the opposite. KRS – 1 taught us that, "Rap is something you do, hip hop is something you live," but the images being pawned all over the industry of what hip hop was, was far from a lifestyle he described and as it lacked integrity and creativity in favor of stereotypes and record sales. As a kid from Long Island, NY, or should I say "Strong Island" since I am discussing a "Chuck D. Situation," I watched the spirit of hip hop bring people together. On every corner, on every bus stop, in every classroom when the teacher gave us a minute to ourselves, there it was, the mighty - Hip Hop. It transcended race, it was real and uncorrupted, and most importantly, like a historian, Emcees dropped first had experiences of what they were going through or have went through in their lives. As time went by, I lost track of real hip hop. I didn't know where to find the "Message," the "Philosophy," or even folks out there "Fighting the Power." On the other hand, I could easily find music disrespecting its women, its people, and the art that brought me so much.

Thanks to some friends who rescued me from my cynicism, I learned that real hip hop was out there but I had to look for it. No one was selling it at Wal Mart or Tower Records, but it was out there. Getting that music to the people again would require a revolution, and thanks to some innovative folks that understand what it is to live hip hop, a revolution is what is happening.

Slam Jamz Records, launched in July of 2001 in a post Napster world, was born of the design to serve the uncompromising expression of Hip Hop based music. Slam Jamz records provides an alternative to the current state of the record industry today. In the label's own words:

Now with a new attitude, new approaches in the offline (retail) and midline (web-mail order) world and a new generation of artists, producers, writers, A & R, photographers, web designers and graphic artists combined with the experience of industry veterans have set...this is an interesting multimedia collaboration of recording artists and filmmakers, testing where the standard of Slamjamz/MVD will be set.

So there it was, right under my nose, a new Hip Hop revolution keeping the spirit of the art I held so dear alive and well as we roll through the second millennium. My particular package from Slam Jamz was 7" vinyl, a DVD, and a CD from the Impossebulls called, "Slave Education." Just by looking at what I had in my hand,

I knew it was special and I actually waited to listen and watch it until I had time to sit down and take it all in.

As I listened to the CD, the Impossebulls took me on a three chapter ride where songs logically flowed from one idea and creation to another. As soon as I closed chapter I, "Science," They dropped "History" on me in chapter II. When that ride was over, the mathematics came to me in my favorite Chapter of Slave Education, "Mathematics."

There it was, the philosophy and old school emceeing that I had be confined to listen to only creations made in the past. I can honestly say that I had been hungry for a long time for something like this and I needed more than the 20 tracks the Impossebulls gave me.

I don't know if it was foresight by C-DOC, or just merely another dimension of what they do, but the included DVD took the experience to the next level. The Hip Hop teachers were back doing it old school in a 21st Century Format. With no record player of my own, I immediately donated the 7" single, "One Man's Dope" to the DJ's that spin at Kill Radio here in Los Angeles.

In addition to the overall flow of the disk, the reader shouldn't allow the concept album format to infer that the individual tracks are lacking. While each song is another piece in the jigsaw puzzle that makes "slave education" such a powerful whole, they also stand by themselves as strong examples of song writing and innovation. Whether they were straight up political explaining the "Red – White – and Blue shades of tyranny" or paying homage to their roots as they cleverly worked in "Fresh for 88" in the Boogie Down tradition, the Impossebulls were versatile to say the least.

In the track that stood out the most to me, "Circle of Lies" I was already jamming and then that familiar voice that has sent goose bumps across my revolutionary soul for years, comes in with "Welcome to the Terrordome" ferocity to compliment the Impossebulls crew. Coming in the last chapter of the CD, this song jumped out long after the Impossebulls already won me over. It's that same spirit and intensity that I play in my headphones every time I take the stage myself. While I certainly can't put those old CD's away when I look for inspiration, I can say that in that pile right along side "By any Means Necessary" and "It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold us Back," you'll also find the Impossebulls and for that alone, I thank Impossebulls crew and SlamJamz for making that a reality.

-Joad

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