

Jam Master Jay

Written by Westside ID136
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Run-DMC's Jam Master Jay gunned down in N.Y. recording studio

By Melanie Lefkowitz and Curtis Taylor
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NEW YORK -- Jam Master Jay - the rap icon and DJ who was one-third of the fast-rhyming, groundbreaking trio Run-DMC - was shot dead last night in a Queens recording studio, police sources said.

Two men were buzzed into the second-floor studio shortly before shots were fired inside its lounge at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, police said. As of this morning, police had made no arrests.

The 37-year-old disc jockey, whose real name was Jason Mizell, was shot once in the head in the studio's lounge and died at the scene, said Detective Robert Price, a police spokesman.

Urieco Rincon, 25, who was not a member of Run DMC, was shot in the leg, police said. About five other people in the studio at the time were not hurt...

Doctor Dre, a New York radio station DJ who had been friends with Mizell since the mid-1980s, said, "This is not a person who went out looking for trouble. ... He's known as a person that builds, that creates and is trying to make the right things happen."

Publicist Tracy Miller said Mizell and McDaniels had planned to perform in Washington, D.C., on Thursday at a Washington Wizards basketball game. Mizell had performed on Tuesday in Alabama, she said.

Mizell was married and had three children, she said...

Jam Master Jay, 37, who was also a producer, grew up in Hollis, where he and two childhood friends, Run (Joseph Simmons) and DMC (Darryl McDaniels), came together to form the seminal 1980s band.

Simmons, the younger brother of Def Jam records founder Russell Simmons, first approached McDaniels about forming a rap group. The two then added Jam Master Jay as their DJ in 1982.

The trio popularized the rap genre as well as their signature look: unlaced Adidas sneakers and heavy gold jewelry.

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In his book, "It's Like That: A Spiritual Memoir," Simmons attributed the group's look to Mizell.

It was 1984 and Mizell was walking down the street in Jamaica after purchasing some leather pants, a leather jacket, Adidas sneakers, a large gold rope chain, a black hat and some Gazelle glasses.

All eyes were upon Mizell, Simmons said.

"It was like everybody wanted to snatch something from him because he had it going on. I mean nobody had everything: the glasses, the leather, the shoes, and the gold rope," Simmons said. "We were doing well and Jay just was helping to create a nationwide trend and didn't know it."