

Dead Prez It's Bigger Than Hip-Hop

Written by Robert ID2555

Monday, 24 April 2006 04:28 -

Hip-Hop and rap stars dead prez (M-1 and stic.man) will get their first televised concert special as Starz InBlack takes a bold step in spreading the group's fiery cultural perspective to the masses.

In this day and age where the music industry actively promotes artists who happily celebrate narcotics, gun violence and misogyny as lyrical content to fuel billion dollar sales, there is one Hip Hop / Rap group willing to go in another direction for the community of people they represent.

The revolution will be televised at 10 p.m., et/pt on Friday, June 9, 2006, with the airing of "Dead Prez: It's Bigger Than Hip-Hop," a Starz InBlack Original production. At last, their voice will be heard by millions.

"Dead Prez: It's Bigger Than Hip-Hop" is more than just a concert documentary; it brings attention to the inadequacies of the public education system, minority entrepreneurship, and social revolution. Taped in San Francisco, Calif., "Dead Prez: It's Bigger Than Hip-Hop" is a one-hour analysis on the state of Black America. The documentary is infused with dialog and interviews not only from dead prez but also from Kamel Bell, owner of Ankh Marketing and son of incarcerated Black Panther Herman Bell, Fred Hampton, Jr., son of Black Panther Chairman Fred Hampton, Bay-area rapper Ise Lyfe, Hip-Hop activist/radio personality Davey D and performances of some of dead prez' most potent songs from their highly charged catalog like "Know Your Enemy," "They Schools," "Hell Yeah," and "Bigger Than Hip-Hop."

"Our aim is to provide a programming experience that viewers will not get anywhere else," said David Charmatz, senior vice president, channel management, talking about the programming philosophy at Starz InBlack. "We like to push the limits and go where other networks fear to tread. We recognized in dead prez a message that deserves to be heard. Not everyone will agree with them, but that's OK. We aim to enlighten and entertain, and "Dead Prez: It's Bigger than Hip-Hop" does both."

"We've never had the opportunity to express ourselves on this level of magnitude," states M-1. "Starz InBlack taking a chance on us lets us know that the work we are doing is not in vain. That our message is penetrating, it's getting through."

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Just as bold as other hip hop groups such as NWA and Public Enemy, dead prez continues to forge a voice for community building music. "We are community people and we are about the betterment of the community," states M-1.

As a part of their mission to the culture of Hip Hop and society as a whole, dead prez challenges images and programming that glorify young Black men killing one another, or young Black women portrayed as ho's. They feel the media engages in age-old mind control and manipulation, be it visual or audible.

"When it comes to people of color, the corporations that own these outlets understand the manipulation and they don't want to sell us no revolution, because that would be selling us freedom," says stic.man. "We are still in a state of apartheid, even in America."

"It's necessary and imperative for our community to have a group like dead prez in a position to comment and say what they want to say," activist Kamel Bell says in "Dead Prez: It's Bigger Than Hip-Hop." "To tell the truth about what's happening in our community and the world. If we are in a place where Hip Hop culture can't support that, then we are in a dire place."

Starz InBlack is the source for the biggest, coolest movies and urban entertainment. Starz InBlack has produced several original film projects, most recently, "UNSTOPPABLE: A Conversation with Melvin Van Peebles, Gordon Parks and Ossie Davis," "The Last of the Mississippi Jukes," and the Peabody Award-winning and NAACP Image Award-nominated "A Huey P. Newton Story" starring Roger Guenveur Smith and directed by Spike Lee. Other productions include the critically acclaimed "Funny Valentines" (in association with Studio USA Pictures and STARZ! Pictures), starring Alfre Woodard, Loretta Devine and CCH Pounder, plus original documentaries "Scandalize My Name: Stories from the Blacklist," hosted by actor Morgan Freeman and the highly regarded "Classified X" by the godfather of contemporary African American cinema, Melvin Van Peebles.

Visit their web site for more information at - www.starz.com .