

Rap Notables Drop 718 Stapleton to Somalia

Written by Robert ID1847

Tuesday, 30 August 2005 05:36 -

There are two things that you need to know growing up on Staten Island, New York: hip-hop and how to handle yourself on the streets. Rap artist Trife Da God learned both at an early age. A product of Shaolin's rough and rugged Stapleton Projects, Trife got into hip-hop at an early age. He saw how MCs were putting themselves and their hometowns on the map, and he knew he wanted to do the same.

"I used to come home from school and watch Video Music Box on the floor model in the living room," says Trife. "The first video I really liked was the MC Shan's 'The Girl Left Me Lonely.' I saw how he was getting down, looking all fly and shit. That's when I knew I wanted to be a rapper. Ever since then I always knew I had it in me."

Fortunately for Trife, running in the same streets as the infamous rap group Wu-Tang Clan had its privileges. The 25-year-old hooked up with master rap artist Ghostface Killah while he was on the block and they formed an instant bond.

"My nigga Ghost is from the same hood and I remember one time I spit a rhyme for him in the park," Trife says. "He saw some potential in me but I was little too young at the time. So, he was like, 'Yo, when I get right and shit starts popping off, I am going to come back and scoop you up.' And he stayed true to his word. That's why I love him for that."

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Trife's connection with Ghost goes deeper than being the next cat to get on. In addition to being a member of Ghostface's Theodore Unit, the young MC says he's learned from watching the rise of the MC also known as Iron-Man.

"I've seen how the game works from his experiences," says Trife. "I'm a nigga that sits back and observes shit. A lot of these rappers think it's just about rhyming, but they don't see all the other bullshit like going to the studio, doing interviews, going on promo tours—you've got to have patience. That's a lot of wear and tear on the body, and some of these cats don't see that. Most MCs think this is fun and games, but this is a real job for niggas."

All these experiences added up to Trife's solo debut, 718: Stapleton to Somalia.

"Stapleton to Somalia that's like representing the struggle," says Trife. "Cause there's a lot of poverty out here in Stapleton, and Somalia—you already know what it is like out there. So, I just combined the two and called it Stapleton to Somalia."

Trife flexes his lyrical skills on a number of joints including the red-hot "Playing With Fire"

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“That was the first one I really took hold to,” Trife says of the Jim Bond-produced beat. “As soon as I heard the shit I was like damn that’s me right there because I’m fire. I just put it together like I was fire and what I do to niggas on the mic. I’m hot so niggas better step back. My nigga Ghost hopped on it and that’s what it is.”

Having put in as much time on the block as he has in the studio, Trife spins tales of the drug game with the grimy “Cocaine Trafficking” and “Them Drugs Ain’t Mine.”

“I had that beat for two or three years but I never touched it,” Trife says of the track for “Cocaine Trafficking.” “When, I heard that skit from Belly at the beginning again, I just decided to take it from the drug aspect. It just came out like some real on the block shit because that’s what niggas see everyday. The game don’t stop. The police think they could shut niggas down, but the way these little niggas is evolving. If the cops shut them down one way they, these little niggas evolve and find a new way to sell they shit.”

Trife even recounts an experience from his own street grind on the hood narrative “Them Drugs Ain’t Mine.”

“When I first started hustling, the police would always fuck with me,” he says. “I don’t know what it was. Maybe, it was a sign that I shouldn’t have been out there slinging drugs. They would accuse me of shit I wouldn’t do. I got locked up and probation for shit I didn’t do while I was in high school. I was a young, stupid ass little nigga, but that’s a real story right there. It means a

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lot to me because people need to know how police get down. They be trying to give black dudes time to get them off the street. These little niggas don't understand that. That's why I wrote that song."

718: Stapleton to Somalia features a host of other thorough tracks include the autobiographical "Put It On The Line" and the old-school-inspired "85 Hip-Hop." The album also features appearances from Ghostface on six tracks as well as Kool G. Rap. "This album is like a buffet—you can eat all day on it," says Trife of the project.

As a newcomer, Trife Da God has big plans for hip-hop, himself and his hometown.

"The current state of hip-hop ain't the shit, but it is what it is," says Trife. "We all come in the game to get paper. I don't know how other cats are coming into the game, but I want to be a legend in this shit.

"I'm bringing streets back," he adds. "I'm just bring my flavor to the game. A lot of niggas be fronting on Staten Island. Everybody is trying to bring New York back right now. I want to bring New York back too, but at the same time we gotta bring Staten Island back too. So, it's a double standard. I gotta bring New York and Staten Island back."

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Track listing subject to change:

1. Put It On The Line featuring Trife Da God (Produced by Look Out Ent.)
2. Gangster Shit featuring Trife Da God & Tommy Whispers (Produced by Jeff Duval)
3. Man Up featuring Trife Da God & Ghostface Killah (Produced by Anthony Acid)
4. Event featuring Trife Da God (Produced by Emile)
5. Fire featuring Trife Da God & Ghostface Killah (Produced by Jim Bond)
6. Drung Aint Mine featuring Trife Da God (Produced by Dirty Dean)
7. Cocaine Trafficing featuring Ghostface Killah & Trife Da God
8. War featuring Trife Da God (Produced by Phenom)
9. 85 Hip-Hop featuring Trife Da God, Tommy Whispers, Fly Guy, Kryme Life

(Produced by Mike Payne)
10. Life featuring Trife Da God (Produced by Jim Bond)

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11. Its Theodore feat. Trife Da God

12. Struggle feat. Ghostface Killah (Produced by Nottz)

13. Niggas Wanna Get Me feat. Trife Da God & Kryme Life (Produced by MoSS)

14. Theodore's Theme feat. Trife Da God, Tommy Whispers & Kryme Life

(Produced by Animal House)

15. Ghost & Giancana feat. Ghostface Killah & Kool G Rap

16. Game Time featuring Trife Da God & Tommy Whispers (Produced by Now & Laterz)

17. On The Come Up featuring Trife The God (Produced by Animal House)

18. Misdemeanor featuring Ghostface Killah & Wiggs