

Gat Turner:

Using his lyrics to bring the dead to life

Fresh off his performance at Saviours' Day 2009's Hip Hop Detoxx, along with the release of his new CD, "The Dead MC Scrolls" Brother Shawn Muhammad (aka Gat Turner) a registered member of the Fruit of Islam representing Muhammad Mosque No. 3 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin talked with the Final Call's Assistant Editor Ashahed M. Muhammad about his mission, to use his lyrics to bring the spiritually dead to life.

The Final Call (FC): As an artist, what do you try to convey to the listener in your lyrics? Social commentary? Spiritual guidance? Education?

Gat Turner (GT): Honestly, Brother, it depends. Certain beats bring certain things out of me. A certain lecture from the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan may bring something out of me. What I am going through personally at that particular time, I might write about as a form of therapy for myself. Sometimes I just rhyme to be clever and display a little word play. Each song is different. The only thing that I would say is consistent in every song is "Truth" and my association with the mission of the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad.

FC: With what you know, is there ever pressure placed on you to compromise yourself and

your beliefs in order to achieve a certain level of perceived success, whether in the area of sales or exposure?

GT: At one point in my career, I would have answered this question yes. But with what I now know of self and God, I'll have to answer it, no. I used to have "so called" friends and people around that would tell me not to be so "God Conscious" in my rhymes. They would say that I should do more "real talk." Well, the Holy Qur'an teaches us that Allah is the *only* reality, and I understand that is the type of talk I should engage in. I just try to be about my Father's business using what He gave me to help. Other rappers who may appear to be the most successful in the game are only a part of an illusion anyway. It is just like you said, it is perceived success.

FC: Sometimes, people have trouble handling the truth, or real talk as you put it, whether about what they think they know, or about themselves. You tell a lot of truth in your songs. What has been your experience? Positive feedback, negative, a little of both?

GT: You know when I first started coming out to hear Min. Farrakhan, it seemed as if he would be talking directly to me. Those lectures would follow me home because once Truth



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gets in you, it condemns whatever is not right about you. Well, sometimes the same thing happens when I make a song. I recently caught a lot of criticism about one of my songs ... The ReZurrector. The Re-



CD Cover for "The Dead MC Scrolls"

Zurrector deals with a condition that sometimes exists in God's houses of worship. The condition that I am speaking of is spiritual death, a lack of inspiration, stimulation or motivation. Well, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. I would have to say that I get both, Brother. There is always going to be a ying and a yang, a positive and a negative, a believer and a disbeliever. Where you stand determines what your response to the Truth will be. I try to be like Min. Farrakhan. He is like *Al Furquan*, the Discrimination. After he speaks you get both detractors and followers. If I rap what he teaches, it is only natural that I will get a similar response, on a smaller scale of course!

FC: Who are some of the hip hop artists you respect and honor and why?

GT: Man, Brother, there are so many. Rakim, KRS-One, Ice Cube, Public Enemy, NWA, Latifah, Lyte, Big Daddy Kane, Run DMC, X-Clan, Poor Righteous Teachers, RT, Scarface, Goodie Mob, Outkast, Wu, I could go on ... I have to say those first though, because they planted the seeds that gave birth to me. Then I would say KAM, Nas, Erykah Badu, Jill Scott, Dead Prez ... I have to give it up to them for not compromising their craft when it is so easy to sell out today. Lastly I would have to say Immortal Technique, NYOIL and Jay Electronica for blazing a trail and paving a way with a new formula as independent artists, showing emcees like me that I don't have to attach myself to a plantation and compromise my art

in order to be heard and be successful.

FC: What can the people look forward to next from Gat Turner?

GT: Well, I am currently working with my Big Brother and mentor, H2, (Hashim Hakim) on a compilation project that involves some of the NOI's brightest emcees. On the project is H2, KAM, DA Smart, Problem 13, YB, Jasiri X and myself. All of us, I would say are enlightened or conscious artists, that can hold it down lyrically anywhere we go on the planet. I am also working on my group Stolen Property's project. SP is a group that consists of Steve Bosston, my partner in rhyme, Stolen Art, my DJ and producer and me. I've been putting it down with those two brothers for years. Other than that, I am actively promoting and pushing my new CD, The Dead MC Scrolls. I just want to add that the love that I have already received from my city (Milwaukee) and my Nation is overwhelming and very humbling. What you can expect from Gat Turner is more of the same, only at a higher level and with a stronger spirit. Thank you for this opportunity and may Allah continue to bless you, sir.

FC: Thank you.

(Visit Gat Turner on the web at www.gatturner.com where you can digitally download songs, purchase CDs and leave comments on his blog.)