

Planet Asia Returns With Black Belt Theatre



Planet Asia helped jump-start the West Coast independent hip-hop movement, releasing a slew of popular 12-inch singles on upstarts like Stones Throw and ABB Records in the late 90s that established him as one of the leaders of a crop of talent that included the likes of Dilated Peoples, Madlib, Murs, and Jurassic 5. Now a 15-year veteran, the Cali-based MC (born in Fresno, he's spent most of his career living in Los Angeles and San Francisco) shows no signs of slowing down. The first decade of the new millennium saw Asia briefly sign with major label Interscope, go independent again for his debut album *The Grand Opening*, release full-length collaborative projects with both Evidence of Dilated Peoples (*The Medicine*) and DJ Muggs of Cypress Hill (*Pain Language*), form his own label (Gold Chain Music), and work with everyone from Linkin Park to Bun B to Ghostface Killah. Now, Planet Asia is back with his first retail album in four years, the star-studded *Black Belt Theatre*, which hits stores everywhere via Daddy Real/Wandering Worx/Greenstreets on February 28th, 2012.

Named after a 1980s Saturday-afternoon TV show and inspired by Planet Asia's favorite films, *Black Belt Theatre* combines the violent precision of classic kung-fu flicks with the calculated cool of classic blaxploitation movies. "I wanted to make the album like a movie, something you would see in a theater," says Asia. "That's why it has so many features. All the guests feel like different characters in the movie." These guests include veterans like Raekwon, Talib Kweli, Paul Wall, Ras Kass, Camp Lo, and Strong Arm Steady, as well as newcomers like Fashawn, Willie The Kid, Torae, and Nio Tha Gift. "They're basically just all people I thought were dope," says

Asia. "Both young cats I'm feeling and veterans I've always admired." Unlike on his albums with Evidence and DJ Muggs, Asia also got to determine the sonic direction on Black Belt Theatre, resulting in a soul-heavy, blaxploitation-influenced sound. "It was fun because I got to reach out to guys like Oh No and Khrysis for beats, find the best tracks and put together a masterpiece," explains Asia. "It's some esoteric gangster shitâ€¦a full plate for the listener."

[Download Planet Asiaâ€™s â€œGolden Stateâ€ \(produced by Dirtydiggs\)](#)

Tracklisting and credits for Planet Asiaâ€™s â€œBlack Belt Theatreâ€:

- 1.) â€œLost And Foundâ€ (produced by Khrysis)
- 2.) â€œGrown Folks Talkinâ€™â€ f/ Talib Kweli (produced by Dirtydiggs)
- 3.) â€œTell The Worldâ€ (produced by Dirtydiggs)
- 4.) â€œAll Mineâ€ f/ Paul Wall (produced by Twiz The Beat Pro)
- 5.) â€œNo Apologiesâ€ f/ Raekwon (produced by Oh No)
- 6.) â€œF*ck Rappersâ€ f/ Fashawn & Willie The Kid (produced by Dirtydiggs)
- 7.) â€œDiamond Lifeâ€ f/ Camp Lo (produced by Dirtydiggs)
- 8.) â€œFurnitureâ€ (produced by Dirtydiggs)
- 9.) â€œMach One (produced by Dirtydiggs)
- 10.) â€œDaggers And Dartsâ€ f/ Rogue Venom & Tristate (produced by Dirtydiggs)
- 11.) â€œBruce Leeâ€ f/ Chace Infinite & Rasco (produced by Soulprofessa)
- 12.) â€œGolden Stateâ€ (produced by Dirtydiggs)
- 13.) â€œCoonsâ€ f/ Killer Ben (produced by Dirtydiggs)
- 14.) â€œThe Line Of Fireâ€ f/ Krondon, Phil Da Agony & Picaso (produced by Brisk Oner)
- 15.) â€œBig Fishâ€ (produced by Twiz The Beat Pro)
- 16.) â€œExternal Motivesâ€ f/ The Jacka & Mitchy Slick (produced by Twiz The Beat Pro)

- 17.) "Classical" f/ Ras Kass, Torae & Jasiri X (produced by Religion)
- 18.) "Stay Ready" f/ Mistah Fab, Dengee & Mo The Gift (produced by Oh No)
- 19.) "Whirlwind Patterns" (produced by Religion)
- 20.) "Dogon Outro" (produced by Dirtydiggs)