

Throwback-Drake: Started From The Bottom



Drake's "Started From The Bottom" is the first single from his 2013 album, *Nothing Was The Same*. He co-wrote the single with Noah Shebib and Michael Coleman about his early life. Coleman also produced "Started From The Bottom" under his production name, Mike Zombie. Drake was on his third album and had already become a worldwide rap star but he wanted to get into the mindset of his younger self before he became successful. He cited Marvin Gaye's *Here, My Dear* as an influence because he never intended to make a straight rap album, wanting instead to "make songs for the people." Rapper Future was in the studio with Drake and kept telling the engineer to start the song from the bottom and Drake used it as the song's title.

“Started From The Bottom”‘s shuffling snare drum and melodramatic piano grabbed ears and, with Drake’s words, became one of the biggest aspirational rap hits since Jay-Z’s “Hard Knock Life (Ghetto Anthem).” Director X was at the helm of the video that had appearances from Drake’s mother, Noah Shebib, and Boi-1da. The song was one of seven singles that made *Nothing Was The Same* the seventh best-selling album of 2013 in the United States.

Wiz Khalifa, Lil Wayne, Papoose, Wyclef Jean, Chris Brown, Meek Mill, Ice Cube, Warren G, Chino XL, and Soulja Boy have recorded remixes of the single. Drake released his eighth studio album, *For All The Dogs*, in 2023. Drake had a rap battle with Kendrick Lamar in 2024 that started when Lamar dissed Drake and J. Cole on the song “Like That.” Drake released the singles “Push Ups,” “Taylor Made Freestyle,” “Family Matters,” and “The Heart Part 6.” Lamar fired back with “Euphoria,” “Meet the Grahams,” and “Not Like Us.” Rap fans agreed that Lamar won the battle and “Not Like Us” became the biggest pop song of 2024. Drake celebrated his 38th birthday (Oct. 24) by giving away free chicken slider sandwiches from Dave’s Hot Chicken.

R.I.P. DJ Clark Kent



DJ Clark Kent has died at age 58 after battling colon cancer. The Brooklyn native was an important figure in New York hip-hop's Golden Era. He started his career in the late '80s as a DJ for Dana Dane. In 1989, he got off to an auspicious beginning as a producer after remixing Troop's hit "Spread My Wings." Born Rodolfo Antonio Franklin II, his professional name came from Superman's daytime persona because they both wore spectacles. He asserted his creativity by crafting more iconic remixes, including Mariah Carey's "Loverboy" and the J.U.N.I.O.R. Mafia's "Players Anthem." Jay-Z, Rakim, Slick Rick, 50 Cent, and Estelle were among the artists who also benefitted from his production skills. Kent was responsible for introducing Damon Dash and The Notorious B.I.G. to Jay-Z. Those introductions led to the formation of Roc-A-Fella Records and the B.I.G. and Jay-Z single "Brooklyn's Finest," which had production by Kent. Foxy Brown is Kent's cousin and that is how she met Jay-Z and collaborated with him on his breakthrough single, "Ain't No Nigga." Kent also discovered the rapper Shyne and introduced him to Sean Combs, who signed him to Bad Boy Records.

His ability to discover and nurture talent was not limited to hip-hop and he surprised the industry when he got the boy band 98 Degrees a deal with Motown. The successful and career-changing introductions he fostered were balanced out with

impressive failures when record companies didn't take his advice and give deals to Nas, Missy Elliott, Foxy Brown, Mobb Deep, Jay-Z, and Mase. His contributions to hip-hop did not stop at DJing, producing, and making important connections between people because he was also a big sneaker fan. Nike commissioned him in 2010 to design the Nike Five Boroughs AF1 Low. He was known for owning thousands of pairs of sneakers and never wore the same pair twice. New York hip-hop radio legend Angie Martinez directed a documentary about Kent that will be released next year.

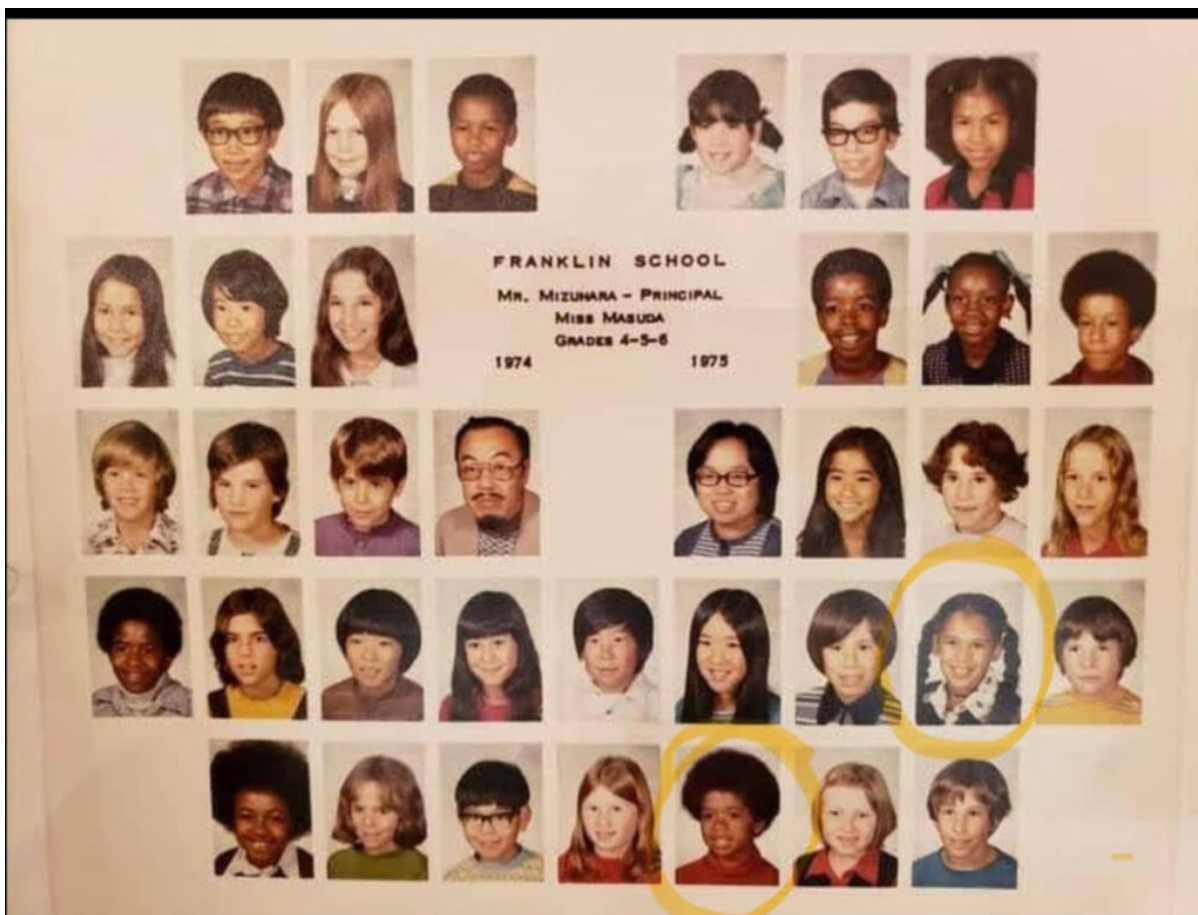
Digital Underground Co-Founder Chopmaster J Drops Tribute Album to His Former 5th Grade Classmate, VP Kamala Harris and Partners with Intercept Music for Worldwide Distribution Deal

CHOPMASTER J PRESENTS THE KAMALA ALBUM



San Francisco, CA – While the country is engaged in an intense presidential campaign, musical mastermind and Digital Underground cofounder Jimi “Chopmaster J” Dright, aka “Big Brutha Soul,” is determined to infuse the landscape with love and joy for a brighter future. Having just survived a triple threat health scare, Chopmaster J is claiming what he calls his ‘bonus round’ of life. The hip-hop legend has partnered with Intercept Music for worldwide distribution of his vast music catalog and is releasing a tribute album, *The Kamala Album*, in celebration of his fifth-grade classmate, VP Kamala Harris, on the heels of what he hopes is her historical win as the first woman president of the United States. *The Kamala Album* is a powerfully potent selection of ten songs from Chopmaster J’s musical library, with the first release, “Alright,” serving as an uplifting sign of the times.

"*The Kamala Album* marks an unbelievable turning point for me personally, as well as for the nation at large. VP Kamala Harris and I attended Franklin Elementary School and were classmates in the fifth grade. I grew up and made an impact on the culture with music, while she impacted politics and is now running for the highest office in the land. Couple that with the fact that, after having survived an almost deadly fall, triple bypass surgery, and a near death experience, I am now reuniting with a longtime industry friend, Ralph Tashjian, and partnering with his company, Intercept Music. The added detail that VP Harris, Tashjian, and I all share Bay Area roots is sweetly serendipitous to me. I am honestly embracing a new lease on life, as I feel our nation is, with the opportunity to vote the first Black woman president into office!" notes Chopmaster J. "Accompanying *The Kamala Album* is a roll-out of ["A Girl Named Kamala"](#) merchandise celebrating my phenomenal classmate."



“Chopmaster J and I go back to pre-Digital Underground days. I have watched him evolve into an incredible artist. His music archives include collaborations with artists like George Clinton, Dave Hollister, 2Pac’s first recordings, as well as new music projects from his son S.O.T.U. and his band, D.U.Nx.G (Digital Underground Next Generation). I’m very excited about the *The Kamala Album* project and believe it is a major contribution to the culture!” offers Ralph Tashjian, chairman of Intercept Music.

“Intercept Music takes pride in offering independent artists an unheralded digital platform with software and services that are unmatched in the industry. The music industry is a rapidly changing landscape and often, beyond the creative endeavor of making the music, artists are overwhelmed by the many additional duties it takes to get their art to their fans. At Intercept Music, we consider ourselves their supportive home base. We welcome Chopmaster J and look forward to unleashing all the magic that he brings to our table,” notes Tod Turner, CEO of Intercept Music.

The Kamala Album is a vibrant, Bay Area nuanced embodiment of promise, unity, hope, healing, and yes, effervescent joy. Song titles include “What’s It Gonna Be?” “Over & Over,” “Berkeley Sunday,” “Moon Dotted Colored Rainbows,” “Alright.” “EWTBL,” “Spirit,” “Reprise,” “Pick & Choose,” “And The People Say.” Each track segues with snippets from VP Harris’ speeches. Also, the previously unreleased version of the gospel-tinged “Spirit,” originally featured on the *Boyz In The Hood* soundtrack, boasts the Bay Area’s own Tramaine Hawkins and The Interfaith Gospel Choir alongside guest artist Dave Hollister.

[Check out the *A Girl Named Kamala* merchandise.](#)

Tune in to Chopmaster J’s weekly podcast, “The Chop Shop,” on [Pantheon Podcasts](#).

J. Dilla & Amp Fiddler To Receive Street Dedications



Detroit artists J.Dilla and Amp Fiddler will have streets named after them to honor their contributions as Detroiters and their influence on the world. The Detroit City Council voted to honor them with secondary street signs, which can be done for five years. Fiddler and Dilla's lives were connected in a cosmic way because the keyboardist, songwriter, producer, and singer was Dilla's mentor. Fiddler is recognized globally for his work with Parliament Funkadelic and his contributions as a supporting musician with countless others like Maxwell and Prince. He also was a solo artist with a collection of critically acclaimed albums that showcased his style, which encompassed funk, house, and R&B. His home was a hub for artists in the city to have their talent nurtured by him. It was there that J. Dilla learned how to use the MPC sampler and sequencer machine and Fiddler later introduced him to Q-Tip, which was a turning point in his career. J.Dilla's work as a producer of hip-hop was genius and changed the way people think about rhythm. Unfortunately, Dilla passed in 2006 and Fiddler died in 2023. The street signs are appropriate for both of them, as they represented the best of Detroit and still do worldwide. Both men were residents of the Conant Gardens neighborhood and the signs will be at Nevada and Charest near Dilla's former home and Fiddler's sign will be placed at 7 Mile Road and Revere Street.

