

Freddie Gibbs & The Alchemist Share 1995 From Upcoming Alfredo 2

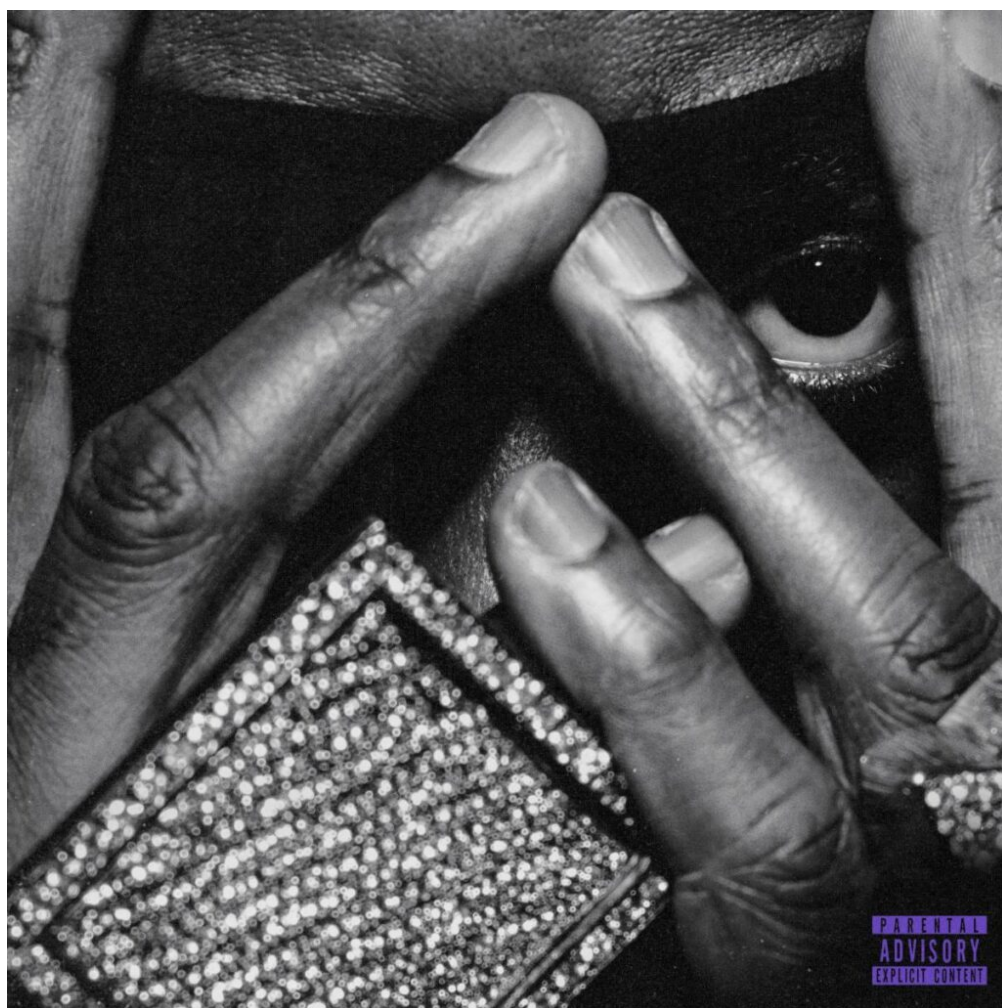


Credit: Nick Walker

Freddie Gibbs and The Alchemist are following up their *Alfredo* album with *Alfredo 2*. Today they share "1995" from the project and *Alfredo: The Movie*. A select group of fans attended a screening of the film yesterday at Brain Dead Studios in Los Angeles. Nick Walker directed the movie, which takes place in Japan and sees the rapper and producer playing the roles of noodle masters and underworld bad guys. Gibbs has been comfortable in front of the camera since his critically acclaimed performance in *Down With The King*. *Alfredo 2* will be released this Friday, five years after they debuted *Alfredo*. One hundred fans were able to procure signed vinyl copies of the album last weekend during an event at HVW8 Gallery in Los Angeles that was sponsored by Rotation, a Black music brand with Amazon. Gibbs raps about his steady come-up that moved

him from being a grinding underground rapper to a presence on Netflix in “1995.” The Alchemist has been busy working on an album with Erykah Badu, which shows three decades of relevance as a producer. *Alfredo II* promises to be as rugged as the Grammy-nominated initial release and “1995” delivers on Gibbs’ brand of no-nonsense, but at times humorous, street-inspired rhymes.

Slick Rick Claims Victory



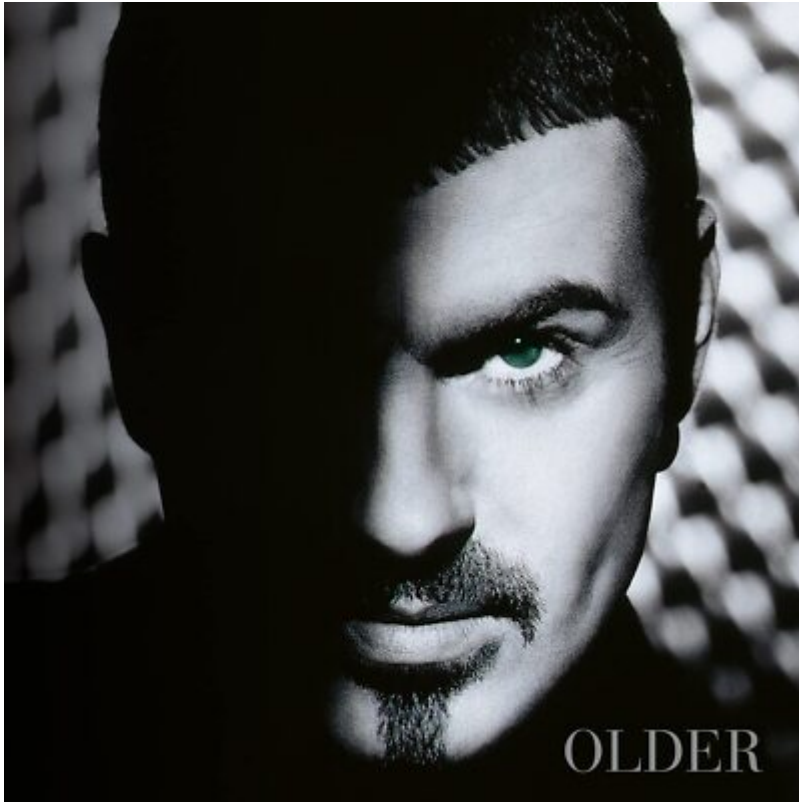
Slick Rick the Ruler has reemerged with his *Victory* album after an almost three-decade hiatus. Clocking in at 27

minutes, Rick gives a condensed version of the storytelling that made him a legend in the '80s. The guest list includes British rapper Giggs, who makes an appearance on the smooth but frantic "Stress." Nas fulfills a personal dream and joins Rick on the album standout, "Documents." Rick's "Landlord" lists some of the headaches of being a New York City property owner with humor, frustration, and resilience. Q-Tip, who had an amazing 2024 producing LL Cool J's F.O.R.C.E., creates another Gen X moment as the producer of "Another Great Adventure," which taps the nostalgia of Rick's 1988 classic debut album.

Idris Elba is an executive producer and his 7Wallace label with Mass Appeal partnered to release *Victory*. The visual component is a continuous play of vignettes for each song. *Victory* feels brief and at times thin but legends are always given grace, especially when they are a foundational artist in the genre. The album is another sign along with MC Lyte, LL Cool J, Ice Cube, Kwamé, Public Enemy, The Roots, Snoop Dogg, and Dr. Dre, Generation X is not done expressing themselves with hip-hop. In the case of Slick Rick, he triumphs by staying true to his muse instead of pandering to a new generation. He managed to release an album in his sixth decade that still sounds like home.

Throwback: George Michael:

Fastlove



George Michael's "Fastlove" was the second single released from his 1996 album, *Older*. It came out almost six years after the release of his sophomore album, *Listen Without Prejudice Vol. 1*. *Older* moved away from the previous reliance on synthesizers and joyous pop to be replaced with live instrumentation and a moodier sound. Michael was inspired by Brazilian musician Antônio Carlos Jobim, jazz, and his usual palette of Black music. He co-wrote "Fastlove" with the album's producer, Jon Douglas, who he had worked with in the past. "Fastlove" pleaded for a casual relationship with a groove infused with Patrice Rushen's "Forget Me Nots." The music had a melancholy to it, which was a reflection of Michael having lost his lover, Feleppa Anselmo, to AIDS, and he subsequently dedicated the album to him.

Michael also used *Older* as a way to passively come out to his fans by donning what he called a "gay look," which consisted of short black hair, a mustache, a goatee, and leather. "Fastlove" was a hit and the video earned an MTV Europe

International Viewer's Choice Award. *Older* became Michael's most commercially successful album and was re-released in 1997 as a two-gold-CD box set called *Older and Upper*. A remastered and expanded edition was released in 2022.

Living Colour Lit Up Tiny Desk

Living Colour played Tiny Desk as part of their Black Music Month lineup. The band performed a five-song set and proved to have the same musical octane they had almost four decades ago. They came in at full throttle with "Cult of Personality" and celebrated 35 years of *Time's Up* with "Pride," "Love Rears Its Ugly Head," "Time's Up," and "Solace of You."