

# Music Review: Common-Finding Forever



Common's seventh surrender to the search for a lasting funk comes in the form of *Finding Forever*. His Chicago-originated semi-drawl subtly went from a classy underground thing to a cool mainstream breakthrough with the help of his provincial brethren Kanye West on 2005's *Be*. Jazzier and slower, the music's safe study of Black classical (jazz) music in cahoots with hip-hop's aesthetic made the album a good choice but boring. He was suffering from a similar problem that Redman had years ago when he released *Whut The Album* in all its Jersey griminess full of weed and urban references of the day.

But when he returned with the Funkadelic-inspired *Dare Iz A Darkside* touting a cosmic-slop meets the hood type of vibe, fans said the music did not make sense and he "fell off." Redman responded with *Muddy Waters*, a world of chickenheads, hoes, blunts and Erick Sermon's trunk-humming beats. Common betrayed rap music's supposed dedication to the streets with *Electric Circus*'s brave adventures in mild Black psychedelia and soul attracted essentialized and misogynistic criticisms of his muses. "Why doesn't he do another *Resurrection*; hanging with Erykau has made him wack." Whenever Black artists travel outside rote territory they become suspect of betraying their fans and true Blackness. No one can accuse *Finding Forever* of being ethnically shy even when "Drivin Me Wild" has Lily Allen's waifish singing on it she bends her voice to fit the style of hip-hop and not the other way around. The grainy P.A. system entrance of "Start The Show" flashes Wu-Tangish sounding tympanis, dramatic strings and Common's voice coming through the rain of static rhyming as a gladiator forever committed to defending the southside of Chicago. Those populist sentiments also surface on the Kanye West collaborations "The People" and "Southside." West produces the helium-heavy ode to the common man that oversimplifies the differences in people with lyrics like:

Why white folks focus on dogs and yoga  
While people on the low end tryin to ball and get over

But the presence of Dwele's gentle falsetto and those melodies of Stevie Wonderized computer horns that flutter over the repetitive "survival" worded sample resolve any sonic conflict. Their work together on the sweaty testosterone-thick "Southside" is accentuated by some generic comfortable guitar constantly advancing on their words. Common's versatility as emcee who can cover more than material for the boys comes up nice in the sensually-slanted "I Want You." Will.I.Am takes those favored drums from Minnie Riperton and nuances them with soft touches that effects a silky magnetism around Common's love rap. Dilla makes an appearance on the hackneyed D'Angelo cut "So Far To Go" that can not stand on its own despite Dilla's genius with the machines. Ambition is better served on the reworking of Syreeta and Stevie's "Black Maybe" that was born as a hymn of coy intensity rising from Syreeta's emotive voice and a mostly acoustic order of strings with a hint of spacey keys. In Kanye's hands the song gets a chorus, sped-up vocals, bass and more body to give it the weight of a Gil Scott Heron and Bilal is a guest. Common sought to make an album that would become a rhyme inheritance for the culture of hip-hop, Finding Forever will be one of those albums because of his commitment to the roots of hip-hop no filler and no pop.

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## **Soul and Funk Artists G&D Announce Nation-wide Album Release Events**



(September 20, 2007 Brooklyn, NY) San Francisco-based record label, Look Records will celebrate the release of pioneering musicians G&D's upcoming album, The Message Uni Versa, by throwing listening parties across the country. Beginning in Chicago on Tuesday September 25th and ending in San Diego October 13th, these 10 listening parties span the entire contiguous United States. DJ's from across the nation will be hosting the parties with G&D making a special appearance at the San Diego party with an official "meet n' greet" at Dream House.

G&D is music made by Georgia Anne Muldrow and Dudley "Declaime" Perkins, inspired by soul, funk, and hip-hop. Their album The Message Uni Versa, out on September 25th on Look Records, is a spiritual message of hope, light, and love, loaded with bounce and funk.

### Listening Party Dates:

CHICAGO Tue Sept 25

10 dollar holla featuring The Twilite Tone @ D'Vine

\$10 | Doors @ 9 | open bar til midnight

SAN FRANCISCO Thu Sept 27

PST w/ DJ Sake + guests DJ Eleven, Trackademics & Tap 10 @ Levende

\$5 I Doors @ 10

LOS ANGELES Fri Sept 28

Pause w/ J-Logic a.k.a. J-Wonder + Special guests @ Tantra

No Cover | Doors @ 9

PHILADELPHIA Sat Sept 29

Tasty Treats w/ Mike Nyce & ?uestlove @ Fluid

Ladies free before 11pm, \$7 after | Doors @ 10

DALLAS Mon Oct 1

Neo Soul Caf  Mondays @ Spike Global Grill

\$5 | Ladies free b4 10pm | Doors @ 9

NYC Wed Oct 3

Little Ricky's Rib Shack With resident DJ Rich Medina @ APT

\$5 | doors @ 10

ATLANTA Thu Oct 4

Beat & Eats @ Harlem Bar

No Cover | Doors @ 9

DETROIT Thu Oct 4

BrokeFunk & One Nation Under a Buzz Jam @ The Buzz Bar

FREE before 11pm, \$5 after | Doors @ 10

DC Thu Oct 4

The Glass House @ Asylum Bar & Lounge

\$5 l Doors @ 8

SAN DIEGO Sat Oct 13

Get Lifted â€” G&D Meet and Greet & listening party @ Dream Street, Ocean Beach

\$5 cover b4 10:30pm l Doors @ 7

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## Hood Estate: The Manual

NEW YORK â€”American entrepreneurs have made millions in the real estate market. Unfortunately it is an industry that is too often closed to underprivileged people, though they have

their own enterprising dreams. Despite the current real estate slump, real estate mogul SPAR-aka-Leonard Person JR., CEO and Founder of Hood Estate, says it is still possible to make it big in the industry. It's all laid out in his "manual," Hood Estate, a self-published book that will hit stores September 30, 2007 . Though it is a business tool, SPAR hopes the book will help lift the oppressive economic yoke that has held so many down in the "hood."

Hood Estate offers easy simple steps to teach readers how to establish and repair their credit. This book, written by SPAR, will show you how to acquire property, how to do short sales, how to choose the right mortgage program, dealing with real estate attorneys, appraisers, title companies, buying tax certificates, flipping properties and so much more. SPAR, who has been buying and flipping houses for the past several years, has skewed this book to reach the minority market who is trying to find a legitimate way out of the "hood" and/or how to achieve wealth and success. One of the goals of Hood Estate is to help young urban consumers to develop great credit and to become homeowners.

SPAR recognizes that good credit is essential to success, and therefore uses the book to set forth the tenets of credit repair through disputing derogatory accounts on your credit profile and adding Trade Lines. Trade Lines are secure credit cards that allow the user to build their non-existent or rebuild their existing damaged credit (FICO) score. The higher the credit line on the Trade Line, the higher the FICO score will become. SPAR saw this as an opportunity to help the young urban consumer, many of whom have credit problems that thus impacts one's ability to own real estate.

This book is a blueprint for success, for aspiring individuals, even for those who don't have the academic credentials. According to SPAR, readers can change their lives within one year—if they are willing to follow the book's

guidelines. “The steps are simple, and doable,” says SPAR. “We give you a no-fail outline to follow.”

The book, which retails for \$39.99, can be purchased by going to [www.hoodestate.com](http://www.hoodestate.com) and clicking on the icon that says “Purchase Book.”

Hood Estate, a company dedicated to credit restoration and home ownership for the underprivileged, has a goal of educating young consumers in urban areas to engage the real estate market in promoting their wealth. Hood Estate LLC, is part of the Heaven Homes, LLC Investment Company. Hood Estate: A manual for a new success-filled life.

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## Kanye Goes Platinum Outsells 50



Kanye West’s “Graduation” (Def Jam) easily leads the star-studded class of Sept. 11 releases, posting The Billboard 200’s largest sales total in more than two years. Nielsen SoundScan will show West’s album moved 957,000 during its first six days when the tracking service refreshes its charts tomorrow morning (Sept. 19).

Also pumping album volume are 50 Cent’s “Curtis” (G-Unit/Interscope), which will lock down the No. 2 slot with 691,000 sold. Kenny Chesney’s “Just Who I Am: Poets & Pirates” (BNA/Sony BMG Nashville) will bow at No. 3 with 387,000 copies.

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