

Hip Hop Takes A Turn and Common Leads The Way



Santa Monica, CA Aug 08, 2007 On his 7th album, Finding Forever, Grammy winning rap superstar Common hits the jackpot, scoring his first career #1 on the Billboard Album Chart.

The G.O.O.D. Music/Geffen Records album scanned 155,329 in its first week, 32,187 more than the next best selling title. Common's previous best ranking on the chart was #2 for 2005's BE. Like BE, Finding Forever has fellow Chicagoan Kanye West in the role as executive producer. Guest artists on the album include West, Lily Allen, will.i.am, D'Angelo, and Gang Starr's DJ Premiere. Along with production by West; will.i.am and the late Detroit legend J. Dilla (So Far To Go) produce tracks.

What's extraordinary about the best selling Finding Forever is that it was truly the people who made Common #1. With songs and an album that have received critical acclaim and consumer interest, Common's music has not yet penetrated mainstream commercial radio. Those who bought the album bought it for the artist and his brand, not a particular song. Very few artists make the connection with the public as Common does. As his hometown paper Chicago Tribune wrote, "Common has become the rarest of pop success stories: a mainstream hip-hop artist who projects a mature, compassionate image and thrives on thoughtful, soul-fired albums designed for repeated listening rather than short-lived singles."

Common is an anomaly, who thrives with the multi-impressions he gets outside the traditional hip hop avenues from his Gap television commercial a few months back to him being the face of Converse's (Product) Red campaign to his album being carried at Starbucks as well as him playing and doing a very

successful album signing at a Starbucks in Santa Monica, which according to the Fire Marshal drew over 1,500 people. On-line Common has been everywhere. Finding Forever and Common have been the main featured title at iTunes, and was featured with Verizon, to currently being Artist of the Month at Microsoft Windows Media, to performing for Live Sets on Yahoo! and AOL's "Sixteen Bars" and the album previewed with MTV.com's The Leak.

In the press, which has always been with Common from his 1992 debut Can I Borrow a Dollar? through 2000's acclaimed Like Water for Chocolate and 2005's multi-Grammy-nominated BE, Common is often cited as one of the best observers and masters of wordplay in rap history and critics believe that Finding Forever continues that legacy. In a stellar review XXL wrote: "Common makes timeless hip-hop seem easy." Both People and USA Today bestowed their highest rankings on the album. Rolling Stone wrote, "his ear grabbing command stands up to almost any MC out there." And for the first time in his career Common graces the cover of the Source in their August 2007 issue. In the last few months Billboard, Ebony, and Uptown magazine have put him on their cover.

On top of his music success Common has recently launched a burgeoning acting career with roles in Smokin' Aces with Jeremy Piven as well as the soon-to-be released American Gangster with Russell Crowe and Denzel Washington as well as filming both Wanted with Angelina Jolie and Morgan Freeman and The Night Watchman with Keanu Reeves and Forest Whitaker.

There are very few artists who consistently deliver such thought provoking cutting edge material who are accepted by the mainstream as Common. The chart topping may have signaled a new era in not just hip hop but in credible music overall, and Common and his fans have led the charge to this era.

Hip-Hop Summit Action Network Returns To Toronto With Gabrielle Union, Letoya Lockett, Keisha Chante, Monie Love, Free And Dr Benjamin Chavis On August 18th



TORONTO, ONTARIO – AUGUST 7, 2007- Following the success of the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network's (HSAN) first international "Get Your Money Right" Financial Empowerment Summit in Toronto last year, HSAN is back to help Canadian youth get their money right!

On August 18, actress Gabrielle Union, hip-hop stars Belly and Keisha Chante, R&B/pop star Letoya Lockett, hip-hop radio personality Monie Love and Gino Cozza, incoming President and Chief Executive Officer for Chrysler Financial Canada, will join Summit co-moderators HSAN President/CEO Dr. Benjamin Chavis and hip-hop TV personality Free for the 2007 Toronto "Get Your Money Right" Summit. HSAN's partner and title sponsor is Chrysler Financial.

The Hip-Hop Summit on Financial Empowerment is a grassroots effort to help engage young people in discussions about the importance of personal finance. The Hip-Hop Summit on Financial Empowerment's "Get Your Money Right" International Tour, now in its third successful year, brings together the

powerful combination of hip-hop stars and Chrysler Financial experts to speak to students and community members about the importance of financial literacy.

“Hip-hop is about acquiring power. It is about improvement of the quality of life in communities. Fundamental to all empowerment efforts is building a strong financial foundation,” emphasized Dr. Benjamin Chavis, President/CEO of HSAN. “The Toronto Hip-Hop Summit, once again, will display the best of hip-hop culture with the best of financial literacy expertise. Our theme is ‘Get Your Money Right,’ and across Canada and, in particular in Toronto, there are thousands of young adults whose hopes and aspirations will be lifted as a result of the Summit.”

The Summit will take place at the Hummingbird Centre for the Performing Arts, located at One Front Street East in Toronto, Ontario. Doors open at Noon and the program runs from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Tickets for the Toronto Summit are free and available for download at www.hsan.org.

“There are three areas of community development that are significant with respect to the Hip-Hop Summit,” said Gino Cozza, President and CEO – Chrysler Financial Canada. “They are: empowering youth to strive for a better financial future, increasing the level of financial literacy among our community and bringing truth to the statement that small steps can lead to great accomplishments. This is why Chrysler Financial is proud to be the title sponsor of the Hip-Hop Summit in Toronto.”

The topics to be covered include the basics of banking, home ownership, repairing bad credit and understanding credit scores, entrepreneurship, vehicle financing and more. The 2007 “Get Your Money Right” tour will make four more stops including Greensboro, N.C., September 8; Washington, D.C., September 29; Miami, Fla., October 20; and Atlanta, Ga., November 3.

“The City of Toronto and thousands of Canadians welcomed the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network last year with open arms. It is only right for us to return this year to acknowledge Canadians for their continued commitment to hip-hop culture and the financial empowerment of all people,” declared Valeisha Butterfield, HSAN’s Executive Director. “HSAN will return with even more excitement, vigor and substance on August 18.”

The “Get Your Money Right” workbook, which will be given to all participants, is available in both English and Spanish and is downloadable on the www.hsan.org site.

The media partner for the Toronto Hip-Hop Summit is radio station The FLOW 93.5FM. Community partners include Tropicana Community Services, Urbanology Magazine, Laidlaw Foundation, Universal Urban and Credit Counselling Service of Toronto.

About Chrysler Financial Canada

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About Hip-Hop Summit Action Network

Founded in 2001, the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network (HSAN) is dedicated to harnessing the cultural relevance of hip-hop music to serve as a catalyst for education advocacy and other societal concerns fundamental to the well being of at-risk youth throughout the United States. HSAN is the largest non-profit, national coalition of hip-hop artists, entertainment industry leaders, education advocates, civil rights proponents, and youth leaders united in the belief that Hip-

Hop is an enormously influential agent for positive social change which must be responsibly and proactively utilized to fight the war on poverty and injustice.

9th Wonder To Release Highly-Anticipated Solo-Debut Dream Merchant Vol. 2



In a whirlwind six-years, 9th Wonder has already been a vital-cog in the success of Little Brother, been hailed as one of Hip-hop's most ingenious producers, started a "Hip-hop in context 1973-1997" course at his alma-mater North Carolina Central University (alongside Chris Martin from Kid N Play) from the ground up and participated on a Grammy Award winning LP (Mary J Blige's 2005 The Breakthrough) and worked with two other Grammy Award winners (Jay-Z and Destiny's Child).

In addition to crafting the beats for Little Brother (2003's The Listening & 2005's The Minstrel Show), 9th Wonder has gone on to become one of Hip-hop's most sought after producers, working with a wide-array of artists such as; Jay-Z, Destiny's Child, Mary J. Blige, Lloyd Banks, Mos Def, De La Soul, Memphis Bleek, Jean Grae, Masta Ace, Murs, Buckshot, Masta Ace, Royce 5'9, Ras Kass, Consequence, Saigon, Sean Price and his Justus League cohorts among others. The vast diversity of the artists and genre's 9th Wonder has worked with and in further demonstrates his ability as one of the most talented artists in music today; as his sound is infused

with soul loops and jazz sentiment. 9th's background in classical music and music theory gives his music a sonic breath and maturity that surpasses his years. Like the jazz greats Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk, 9th "feels" his music and because of that intimate connection, he creates a sound that transcends Hip-hop, and becomes one with soul, jazz and R&B.

While 9th Wonder may have previously spent the majority of his time collaborating for other artists or in a group-setting, on 10-09-07 he finally strikes out on his own with his debut LP Dream Merchant Vol. 2. Littered with some of the finest established lyricists (Saigon, Royce 5'9, Mos Def, Memphis Bleek, Jean Grae, Camp Lo , Buckshot, Sean Price) Hip-hop has to offer, alongside some of the most-promising newcomers (Skyzoo, Torae, Joe Scudda and Kidz In The Hall's Naledge) and former group-members (Little Brother) as well, making Dream Merchant Vol. 2 is a sonic and lyrical tour-de-force. When it came time to decide who he would collaborate with on Dream Merchant Vol. 2, as 9th relays the formula was pretty simple "basically it came down to who wanted to work with me. I wanted to work with a group of artists where some you had heard of and some you haven't, but all in all wanted to work with me, without having to go thru 50 different people to get to the artist. The artists that are on the album are cats who genuinely wanted to do music with me. That was more important to me then anything else.

Though Dream Merchant Vol. 2 is 9th's debut, the concept for the LP was masterminded many years ago and like many things in 9th's life, devised by fate "this record means allot to me! The crazy thing is, the actualization of Dream Merchant is an idea that is six-years old. My Uncle Fred has crazy records; he was an avid collector from his days in NYC back in the 70's. Back in 1987, I went to visit him and my Aunt, they lived in the South Bronx (East 169th and Grand Concourse) and it was my first trip to NYC. I was only there for a week

when the newspapers flashed “Scott La Rock killed” (crazy right). In 1991, my Uncle and Aunt moved to Winston Salem (North Carolina) and I was working in a UPS call-center in High Point (North Carolina) and made a crazy decision to quit my job and pursue music full-time. I went to visit my Uncle Fred afterwards, because I remembered all of those records he had when I was a kid. I went downstairs and the first record I pulled out of the crate was Jerry Butler’s “Dream Merchant.” I thought the title was so fly, that I decided to do a compilation album with me doing all the beats and cats I knew that rhymed. I think more than anything; fate sparked my decision to do this all the way—just from that cover and that moment.

While 9th is shouldering a lot of expectations from critics and fans alike for his debut, he has a more subtle goal for the project, as he laments “I put expectations to the side and just focused on giving the people something to listen too that they can enjoy.”

9th Wonder’s Dream Merchant Vol. 2 will be released on October 9th, 2007 on Six Hole/Hall of Justus Records, so save the date for 9th on the 9th!

Tracklisting and credits for 9th Wonders Dream Merchant 2:

- 1.) Mr. Dream Merchant Intro
- 2.) Shots f/Big Dho & Sean Price
- 3.) Merchant Of Dreams f/The EMBASSY, Skyzoo & Torae
- 4.) Brooklyn In My Mind f/ Mos Def, Jean Grae & Memphis Bleek
- 5.) Sunday f/Keisha Shontelle & Chaundon
- 6.) Baking Soda f/Big Treal
- 7.) Reminisce (Take Time) f/Big Remo & The Great Novej of the A.L.L.I.E.S.
- 8.) No Time To Chill f/Little Brother
- 9.) It Aint Over ft. Jozee Mo & Tyler Woods
- 10.) The Last Time f/ Royce the 5’9, Naledge & Vandalyzm of the MIDWEST WRECKIN’ CREW- The D, The Chi & The Lou

- 11.) Saved f/Saigon & Joe Scudda
- 12.) Milky Lowa ft. Camp Lo
- 13.) Backlash f/Sean Boog & Buckshot
- 14.) Thank You f/ D.O.X & O-Dash
- 15.) Let It Bang f/Ness & Skyzoo
- 16.) What Makes A Man f/Rapper Big Pooh & Buddy Klein

(All Tracks Produced By 9th Wonder)

To obtain a press copy of 9th Wonder's Dream Merchant Vol. 2 for feature or review purposes, please contact:

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<http://www.myspace.com/9thwondermusic>

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www.6hole.com

www.hallofjustus.com

www.movementmarketing.net

Video Of The Day