

The Detroit Pistons Collaborate With J.Dilla's Estate & Royce Da 5' 9" On New Merchandise



Rapper Royce Da 5' 9" has collaborated with the Detroit Pistons on a retail capsule collection inspired by the life of J.Dilla. The announcement was made on Wednesday (February 7th) on what would have been Dilla's 50th birthday. In the 18 years since his passing, from lupus and a blood disorder, his legend has grown as his genius has become more recognized. The Pistons' decision to honor him on his 50th birthday coincides with the 50th anniversary of hip-hop. Bilal Saeed, VP of Brand & Marketing Strategy for The Pistons explained the motivation behind the capsule,

"Those familiar with Dilla's musical genius understand his impact on hip-hop but there are still so many who aren't familiar with his legacy. The Pistons wanted to tell his

story in a creative way while also continuing to shed light on the city's impact on music around the world."

The team connected with Dilla's friend Frank Nitt, who also recorded with Dilla as one half of Frank N Dank, and he introduced to Dilla's mother Maureen "Ma Dukes" Yancey, his brother John "Illa J" Yancey, and his daughters, Ja'Mya Yancey and Ty'Monae Whitlow.

"It has honestly been a long time coming," Ja'Mya Yancey said. "I am just so glad that we were finally able to do something so major through the appropriate channels and highlight my dad in a way that was fun and exciting while respecting his estate at the same time."

"It means a lot to see the estate and the Pistons collaboration in celebrating and continuing my father's legacy," Ty'Monae Whitlow said. "Seeing the love Detroit has for him and for us as a family is heartwarming. I can't wait to be a part of and to see what the collaboration entails." Royce, who also worked with Dilla, served as the art director on the project. *"Dilla's enduring legacy is a treasure that must be safeguarded at any expense," said Royce. "It is a great honor to be responsible for curating his likeness in this exclusive merchandise drop entrusted to me by his estate and the Pistons. This campaign holds major significance not just for myself but also for the city of Detroit and the hip-hop community as a whole."*

The capsule will be available March 13th at the [Pistons's online shop](#).