

Igmar Thomas' Revive Big Band Releases *Like A Tree It Grows*



Igmar Thomas' Revive Big Band has dropped *Like A Tree It Grows*. The band's first album comes after 14 years of the collective playing together and finding a contemporary way to meld jazz and hip-hop. The late Meghan Stabile launched the Revive Da Live concert series back in 2010 with this goal, and Igmar Thomas collaborated with her to make it happen, and the Revive Big Band was born. Wayne Shorter, Thelonius Monk, Dizzy Gillespie, and Gangstarr are honored on the album, which has a mix of original songs and classics. There are guest appearances from Bilal, Talib Kweli, Nicholas Payton, Myron Walden, Terrace Martin, Jean Baylor, Marcus Strictland, and more. Shorter's "Speak No Evil" is retooled as a brisk but snazzy jubilee that keeps the integrity of the original. The band's cover of Gang Starr's "Words I Manifest" features emcee Raydar Ellis providing the late Guru's rap as they glide through Dizzy Gillespie's "Night in Tunisia." The jazz-to-hip-hop cultural flow is seamless, and the presence of music from Gang Starr comes three decades after Guru completed the same mission with his *Jazzmatazz* series. Thomas's band plays everything with an exuberance that lets you know that their music is their ministry. *Like A Tree It Grows* is unique for its big band lens of hip-hop, and the energy of the music is the latest proof that the conversation between jazz and rap is not over.



**Igmar Thomas' Revive Big Band
Pays Tribute To J.Dilla &
Thelonius Monk With The Talib
Kweli-Assisted Thelonius**



Igmar Thomas' Revive Big Band honors rap and jazz innovators J.Dilla and Thelonius Monk with "Thelonius," featuring Talib Kweli. The two-part suite is a reimaging of Dilla's instrumental "Thelonius" from Common's *Like Water For Chocolate* and Monk's bebop standard "Thelonius." Summerstage commissioned Thomas in 2016 for A Journey Through The Legacy Of Black Culture, and he debuted "Thelonius" at Rumsey Field in Central Park. Thomas, who is the music director of Lauryn Hill's touring band, guides the Revive Big Band and Talib Kweli through a lazy swinging beat and a commanding brass section on the second single from the band's forthcoming album. Thomas explained "Thelonius" in a press release:

"'Thelonius' demonstrates exactly how closely related jazz and hip-hop are and how they can once again easily evolve into one another. It brings together the best of two musical worlds... To take the energy even further, I composed an original final section of the song that explodes into a

high-octane hip-hop Big Band shout chorus."

"Thelonius" will appear on Igmar Thomas' Revive Big Band's *Like A Tree It Grows* album, due to drop on October 25th. The album is a tribute to Megan Stabile, the founder of the Revive Music Group, whose vision of connecting younger rap fans and traditional jazz snobs helped create the Revive Big Band.