

ICE CUBE: THE PREDATOR

In all the controversy (that word again?) that's surrounded his career since he wrote a tune called "Boyz N' The Hood" five years ago, there's one thing that journalists sometimes forget to mention about Ice Cube: he's one of the most mesmerizing MCs in hip-hop. Well, that's an issue quickly put to rest on "Wicked," the first single off his new album, *The Predator*, which debuted at #1 on *Billboard's* "The Billboard 200" and "Top R&B Albums" charts. The simultaneous debut in both charts is a history making event; no other artist has ever debuted at the top spot on both charts.

This achievement is also a milestone for Priority Records; Ice Cube's *Death Certificate* album debuted last year at #2 on "The Billboard 200" and quickly claimed the #1 spot on the "Top R&B Albums" chart.

A bouncy, noisy jam, "Wicked" typifies Ice Cube's approach to music making. "I don't stick to one producer. That's why my records sound so different," he explains. "Otherwise it'll sound stale." Cube hooked up with Torcha Chamber, who laid the tracks for "Wicked," in an unconventional way. "I've known this guy named Train, who used to DJ for JJ Fad. One day, I ran into his brother and he told me that he was doing tracks. I was like, 'Yeah, yeah.' But then he played the beats

and it was, like, the new s—t."

In addition to longtime Lench Mob crew members Pooh and Jinx, Cube was joined in the studio by Mixmaster Muggs of Cypress Hill who injected his production skills in three tracks: "Now I Gotta Wet 'Cha," an ominous warning to cowards and punks, "We Had To Tear This M.F. Up," a look back at the Rodney King uprising which is full of horns and a furious acoustic bass, and "Check Yo Self," featuring back-up by Das EFX on its chorus. "Muggs is the kind of guy who'll work all night if he has to. He'll erase a loop that he worked ten hours on and replace it with a better one (if he has to.) Most people can't criticize themselves enough to do that, to create a whole song and turn around and say it's wack."

Their ego is too big to start over." Between the enthusiasm of newcomers like Torcha Chamber and the professionalism of vets like Muggs, Jinx and Pooh, *The Predator's* sound is anything but boring.

The Predator differs from *Death Certificate* in that last year's flavor was more of a concept album, with its "Death" side and "Life" side. "I don't want to go with a format on this record. I just wanted to do the tracks that I wanted to do." "Gangsta's Fairytale 2," which continues where the first chapter ended on *AmeriKKKa's Most*

Wanted. "Part one left where Little Boy Blue went to jail because Cinderella called the police. Now, he's outta jail and the pigs are still lookin' to do him' cause of the s—t that happened in the first one."

Little Red Riding Hood, who's a side character in the first part, still wants to do Little Boy Blue over gang colors, so they take care of her. Now the pigs and Little Boy Blue are about to go at it.

The pigs dress like sheep and Cinderella dresses like Little Bo Peep. They sneak up behind the Little Boy Blue crew, which includes the wolf and Mr. Rogers and do'em. What happens is that Cinderella is a snitch for the police, so she goes and calls the police and the pigs get done by the police so it's drama."

Like Part One, "Gangster's Fairytale 2" is an obvious metaphor for life in South Central Los Angeles, which has changed dramatically since the events which kicked off on April 29. "The riots or uprising in L.A. proved my point on certain issues that people were giving me heat on like the Korean issue. They're saying that there was no tension between Blacks and Koreans and I'm creating the tension. Well, a lot of the people who rioted have never heard my record. So it showed that the tension was already there. I'm trying to uplift my people, not put

anybody else down."

While on songs like "Dirty Mack" and "Now I gotta Wet 'Cha," Cube focuses more on what "I'm known for, which is talkin s—t." He continues to confront social issues.

"The uprising put a 'period' on the stuff I was saying for a long time. And now people are asking me what's going to happen next. I think it's gonna happen again in a hurry. I did a song called 'We Had To Tear The M.F. Up' because that's the only way the Black people can get respect. We had to burn L.A. and put them out of business for three days and now they wanna talk and rebuild and look back on what happened. But, you know, I loved that s—t. Every bit of it."

LESLIE HARRIS

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was time to see a film from an African American woman's perspective.

With its 'cinema verite' style providing a rare glimpse into Black teenage life, "JUST ANOTHER GIRL ON THE I.R.T.," is filled with the look and feel of images and sounds that characterize contemporary African American culture.

The film's main character, 17-year-old Chantel Mitchell (played by newcomer Ariyan Johnson), speaks candidly about her hopes and dreams and, in doing so, allows the audience to reconsider some of the stereotypes associated with growing up in



ICE CUBE

Those who've followed Ice Cube's career might be a little (pleasantly) surprised by "It Was A Good Day."

"I have people scared to

come up and say 'what's up' to me 'cause they think that I'm the meanest 'M.F.'er ever. I'm not mad 24 hours a day, but I'm thinking 24 hours a day."

low income neighborhoods in America.

"We wanted to do a contemporary film about African American women that was realistic," explains Ms. Harris. Principal photography for "JUST ANOTHER GIRL ON THE I.R.T.," was completed over a grueling 17-day schedule with grants and help from friends and family. As a result, Leslie Harris has been able to make a film that Hollywood dared not do.

In fact, it was the lack of African American women in front of and behind the camera that gave Leslie Harris the impetus to create a film depicting the lifestyle of a young, Black urban

woman. It was after a brief career in the advertising industry that Harris decided to pursue her first interest, film making.

"Film was the one way that I saw I could express the creative side of myself. By writing about the thoughts and feelings of the African American people I see everyday, I'm doing what I like best," notes Harris. "In this way, I get to entertain and inform at the same time."

Ms. Harris and co-producer Erwin Wilson independently financed the low-budget "JUST ANOTHER GIRL ON THE I.R.T.," with Grants from the American Film Institute, The National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, and the Jerome Foundation.

In addition, well known African American luminaries such as best selling author Terry McMillan ("Waiting To Exhale") and journalist and fellow filmmaker Nelson George ("Strictly Business") believed enough in the project to invest their own money in Harris' production company, Truth 24 F.P.S., so that filming could be completed on time.

Leslie Harris has a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Denison University, and has studied in Aix-en-Provence, France. She was awarded a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship for film in 1991, and is a member of Women Make Movies, Black Filmmakers Foundations and Association of Film and Video Makers.

Miramax Films has scheduled "JUST ANOTHER GIRL ON THE I.R.T." for national release in the first quarter of 1993.

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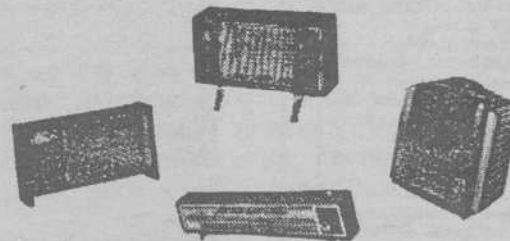
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