

When We Come Together The Tribute Album



Abiodun Oyewole - The Last Poets,
co-executive producer

Umar bin Hassan - The Last Poets,
co-executive producer

"The Last Poets did what spoken word was
supposed to do."

- Russell Simmons
Bravo, 2002

"I was first drawn to the notion of hip hop in the
70s with The Last Poets."

- Quincy Jones
VIBE, 2003

"I do my shit like The Last Poets."

- Tupac Shakur

"They're the original hip hop artists, man."

- Doug E. Fresh

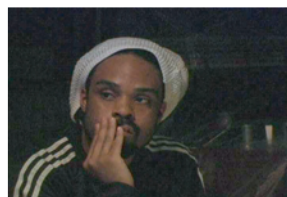
"One of the fundamental building blocks of rap."

- David Bowie
Vanity Fair, 2003



Abiodun Oyewole,
Charlie Gambetta,
co-executive producer

Umar bin Hassan



Bilal



Common



Erykah Badu



Obadele Davis
supervising producer
Abiodun Oyewole
Chuck D
Public Enemy

PRESS RELEASE

Hailed as the godfathers of rap, **The Last Poets** have joined forces with some of today's most prolific artists to present their latest opus, "When We Come Together, The Tribute Album." The Last Poets continue to create legendary music, while still innovating hip hop. Special guests on the album include: Kanye West, Erykah Badu, Common, Dead Prez, Bilal, Chuck D, Doug E. Fresh, Buckshot and many others. The Last Poets have inspired this incredible and dynamic cast of talented young artists to pay homage to this legendary group in "When We Come Together, The Tribute Album."

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Umar bin Hassan and Keith Murray



Abiodun Oyewole and Killah Priest



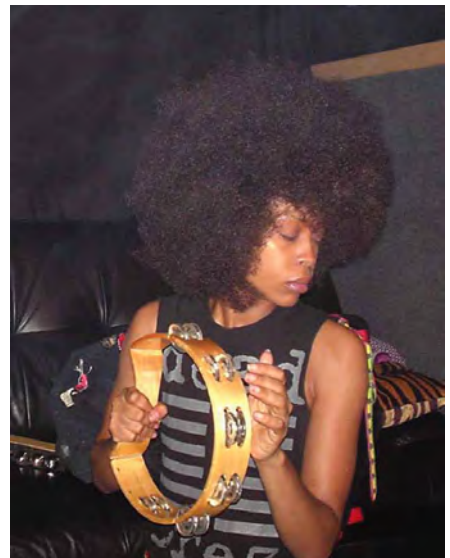
M-1 of Dead Prez and Umar bin Hassan



Doug E. Fresh and Abiodun Oyewole



Jessica Care Moore and Abiodun Oyewole



Erykah Badu

Biography

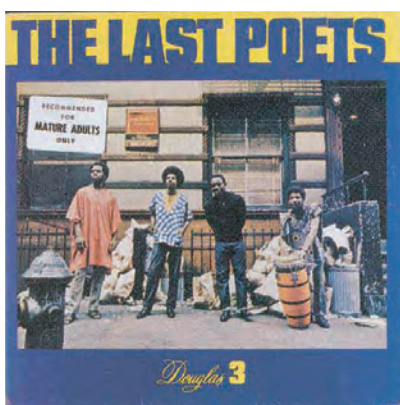


Umar bin Hassan (Left), Abiodun Oyewole (Center)
Babatunde - Drummer (Right)

THE LAST POETS

*"When the moment hatches in time's womb
there will be no art talk . . . The only poem you will
hear will be the spear-point pivoted in the punctured
marrow of the villain . . . Therefore we are the last
Poets of the world."*

- Little Willie Kghostile



The Last Poets (First Album,
Douglas, 1970)

Before RAP knew its name, there was a group of ambitious young men who reflected the harsh spirit of their times and whose work remains prophetic and inspirational today. The Last Poets started out in the late sixties, speaking out as few other musical groups had, or have since, about racism, poverty and other African American and societal concerns. RAPPERS of the civil rights era, The Last Poets' charge has been taken up by many contemporary artists who have felt the legendary group's influence.

Abiodun Oyewole, David Nelson and Gylan Kain were born as The Last Poets on May 19, 1968 (the anniversary of Malcolm X's birthday) in Mount Morris Park in Harlem, New York. They evolved from three poets and a drummer to seven

young black and Hispanic artists: **Umar bin Hassan**, **Abiodun Oyewole**, David Nelson, Gylan Kain, Felipe Luciano, Jalal Nurridin and Suliaman El Hadi. The Last Poets' name derives from the work of South African Poet Little Willie Kghostile, who declared his era to be the last age of poets before the complete takeover of guns.

The group was signed by jazz producer Alan Douglas, who helmed their eye-opening debut LP in 1970. Their classic poems "Niggers are Scared of Revolution," "This is Madness," "When the Revolution Comes," and "Gashman" were released on their two albums, The Last Poets (1970) and This Is Madness (1971). The Last Poets' spoken word albums preceded politically laced R&B projects, such as Marvin Gaye What's Going On, and foreshadowed the work of hard-hitting rap groups like Public Enemy and Dead Prez.

Over the course of The Last Poets' more than thirty-year history, the members of the group have collaborated in various combinations to produce more than a dozen albums and several books. They performed in the inaugural season of HBO's "Def Poetry Jam", were cast in the movie "Poetic Justice" (1993), toured with Lollapalooza (1994) and performed in venues around the world.

Umar bin Hassan and **Abiodun Oyewole** continue to carry The Last Poets' Torch.

"We're no more 'godfathers of spoken word' than the man in the moon; it comes in a package from the motherland. But we accept there is work out there that we can do. People need to see a focal point, a beacon, and we don't have no problem with shining."

- Abiodun Oyewole

Select Discography 1970 - Present



The Last Poets, Douglas 1970

This is Madness, Douglas 1971

Chastisement, Douglas 1972

Hustlers Convention, w /Jalal Nuriddin rec. as "Lightnin Rod"
(Douglas 1973)

At Last, Blue Thumb 1974

Delights of the Garden, Celluloid 1975

Jazzoetry, Celluloid 1975

Oh! My People, Celluloid 1985

Freedom Express, Celluloid 1991

Be Bop or Be Dead, Umar bin Hassan w/Abiodun Oyewole,
(Axiom/Island 1993)

25 Years, Abiodun Oyewole w/ Umar bin Hassan, Rykodisc 1994

Holy Terror, Rykodisc 1995

Time Has Come, Mouth Almighty/Mercury 1997

When We Come Together, The Tribute Album, Jambetta Music 2004

The Block Is Still Hot

VIBE's founding father muses on the genius of African-American music and the cultural explosion that created hip hop—and this magazine—a decade ago.

I was first drawn to the notion of hip hop back in the '70s with the Last Poets and Watts Prophets, who were seminal figures in our culture, just as Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie were in the bebop revolution of the 1940s. Though my musical roots are in jazz, I've always believed you need to open your mind and not be closed off to new expressions—let yourself be attracted to something that turns you on, and trust your instincts. As Duke Ellington said, "If it sounds good, it is good."

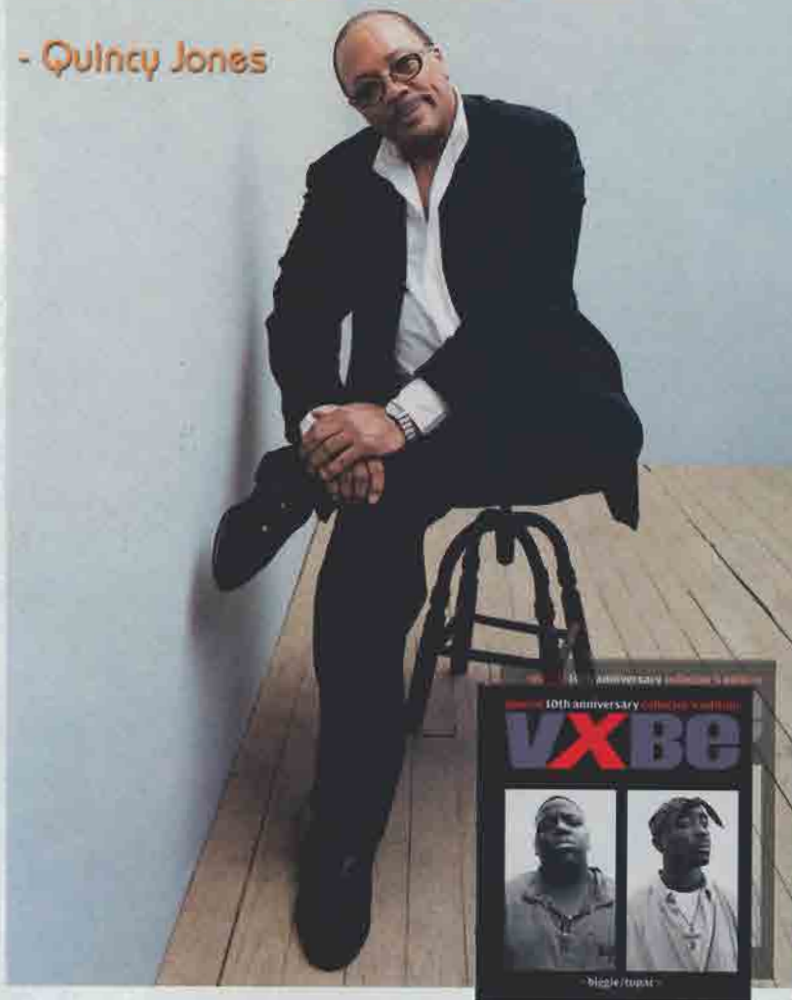
So early on, I was feeling that new convergence of urban music, thought, fashion, and style. It had been percolating and gaining strength for years. I remember going with my son QD3 on his 17th birthday in 1986 to the little *Sanford and Son*-looking office of Def Jam to visit Russell Simmons, and everybody was there—the Fat Boys, Beastie Boys, everyone. Russell played Run-DMC's "My Adidas," and you could just feel that that shit was *on*. Black music always comes from the soul, and it never misses. It wasn't just a sound, but a walk, a look, a slang. After I put together an album called *Back on the Block* in 1989, the wheels started turning that culminated in VIBE's launch in '93, thanks to the talents of a lot of good people. Others tried to discourage us; they even said rap was over. But we believed that this movement was still growing and that this magazine would find its audience.

Just as I preached cultural openness back then, I find myself urging hip hop heads nowadays not to be too set in their likes and dislikes, not to act like theirs is the only thing out there that ever mattered. If you go back, in one form or another, there has always been some kind of rap in black music. It's there in the blues, in the church, in our poetry. But people mustn't be allowed to forget the genius of an artist like Louis Armstrong. He invented a whole musical language, and there's barely a major American singer who hasn't been marked by him, from Billie Holiday to Nelly. All the great ones, like Sinatra—who sang like a jazz horn player—give Louis props for starting all that. And with someone like Nat "King" Cole, the quality is so high you can't ignore it. Do you know a singer today that can mess Nat up?

"I was first drawn to the notion of hip hop back in the 70s with The Last Poets."

- Quincy Jones

"The past is really the foundation for the future."



You want it funky? How about Ray Charles? It's time we set about rediscovering the richness of our own culture.

African-American music is like a great river. Powerful currents have always driven it forward, but we also need to respect its deep wellsprings and the certainty that it's not stopping here. The past is really the foundation for the future. And when it all connects—as it did for me with Louis and Dizzy and Aretha and Stevie and Michael and the best hip hop—you know it right away. And you trust it.

QUINCY JONES
Founder

CONFESSIONS OF A VINYL JUNKIE

From his collection of 2,500 vinyl LPs, the rock star has selected his greatest discoveries, and some record-buying memories as well. One way or another, he writes, he had to get these on CD

BY DAVID BOWIE



"The Last Poets are one of the fundamental building blocks of rap"

- David Bowie



FOR THE RECORDS
David Bowie combed through his record collection before embarking on a world tour. Photographed in New York City on April 27, 2002.

There is really no way to do a list of my favorite albums with any rationality. I do only have about 2,500 vinyls. There is a possibility there. I'll look through the albums and pull together a list of those I have re-bought or am in the process of re-buying on CD. I have little time, and there are just too many to sort through. So, I'll keep pulling stuff out blindly, and if it's too obvious (*Sgt. Pepper*, Nirvana) I'll put it back again till I find something more interesting. A lot of the rock stuff I have is the same as everyone else's, and I have so many blues and R&B albums that it would topple over into transpotter world if I went that route.

O.K., no rules then. I'll just make 'em up as I go along. I'd say half of this list below is now on my CD racks, but many are finding impossible to trace. The John Lee Hooker album, for instance,

or *The Red Flower of Tachai Blossoms Everywhere*. I have done the only thing possible and burned them to CD myself, reduced the cover art down to size, and made reasonable simulacrum of the originals.

If you can possibly get your hands on any of these, I guarantee you evenings of listening pleasure, and you will encourage a new high-minded circle of friends, although one or two choices will lead some of your old pals to think you completely barmy. So, without chronology, genre, or reason, herewith, in no particular order, 25 albums that could change your reputation.

THE LAST POETS, THE LAST POETS (1970, Douglas)
One of the fundamental building blocks of rap. All the essential "griot" narrative skills, splintered with anger here, produce one of the most political vinyls to ever crack the Billboard chart. While talking rap (what?), I can piggyback this great treat with the 1974 compilation *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised* (Flying Dutchman), which pulls together the best of the formidable Gil Scott-Heron works.

