



DIG MAGAZINE: ENTERTAINMENT

HIP-HOP RICHES

EL-P AND KILLER MIKE PLAYING SPANISH MOON AS PART OF THEIR RUN THE JEWELS TOUR

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Killer Mike and EL-P will perform at the Spanish Moon on Aug. 6 as part of their Run the Jewels tour. Photo courtesy of Biz 3 Publicity.

It's winter 1975, and somewhere in Brooklyn a baby boy with hip-hop in his eyes is born; the following month in Atlanta, another future emcee enters the world. The two grow up strangers, living similarly in different metropolitan areas.

The Brooklynite grows up around graffiti, riding the subway and bobbing his head to hip-hop blaring out of shoulder-hoisted boom boxes, while the Atlanta child rides the MARTA bus with headphones blasting east and west coast rap music.

It would be about thirty years before the two, EL-P (the Brooklynite) and Killer Mike (of Atlanta), would meet and form the camaraderie that produced the 2013 critically acclaimed project, *Run The Jewels*.

On tour for two months, *Run The Jewels* has been well-received by audiences across North America. The show heads to Spanish Moon on Aug. 6.

This will be EL-P's first show in Baton Rouge, but a friendly return for Killer Mike, whose family regularly visited here during his sister's time in college.

Attending the show should be a treat for all Baton Rouge hip-hoppers, whether already fans of the duo or not, as they can look forward to what Killer Mike refers to as a "punk rock experience" - or as EL-P puts it, "one of the best live shows in hip-hop." The show promises not only songs from the album, but solo hits from each of the emcees, along with the amity that can only be found onstage between two artists who have lots of respect for each other.

"Working on a project with EL-P was as easy as if I was born to rap over one of his beats," Killer Mike said. "I feel like the Utah Jazz in the '90s, like Stockton and Malone, like we're the only ones doing what we're doing, like we created a very 'every-man-can' project. And the relationship is magic."

Killer Mike and EL-P began working together a few years back when EL-P was hired to do production on one of Mike's albums. He later featured Killer Mike on one of his own projects, and the idea for the partnership was conceived somewhere between the two occurrences.

"All these records were created back-to-back, kind of at the same time, so when it came time for *Run The Jewels*, we had already spent a lot of time in the studio and touring together, it was just natural," EL-P said.

Once known as El-Producto, EL-P is best remembered as the producer who founded Definitive Jux, an artist-friendly record label. That label came out of his years as a successful emcee; a career that began in the early 90s as a member of the hip-hop trio Company Flow. EL-P shut the label down in 2010 so that he could continue to work on his own projects without having to juggle his art and his business.

Now, he has eight solo albums spanning a ten-year period, with three being chart topping award winners. One of those is *Cancer 4 Cure* featuring current partner Killer Mike, who's most widely known for his verse on Outkast's "The Whole World." Much like EL-P, Killer Mike is viewed as an "underground" rapper, also with a successful career that began in the '90s.

Despite having worked with well-known musicians, like T.I. and Jay-Z, both EL-P and Killer Mike are said to have never altered their music to reflect commercial success. And they've stirred up the industry more than a bit with the way they're marketing *Run The Jewels*. You can download the entire album for free.

"I don't wanna craft my music for success, I know I put my heart and soul into it and if it becomes successful, it only becomes successful on my terms," EL-P said. "If you're a rapper, your job is to just be the best rapper you can, the art of being an emcee is to always be the nastiest dude on the track."

The two say that the general feel of the *Run The Jewels* project is - simply-put - *hip-hop*, with the target audience being, well ... everybody.

“The target audience is whoever likes aggressive hip-hop; it’s for black males, urban males, women, rap fans, everybody,” Killer Mike said.

Run The Jewels, which has garnered much of its success from the college-aged market, can be downloaded at <http://foolsgoldrecs.com/runthejewels/> for free or you can purchase a vinyl edition of the album on the site or at the show for \$30.

EL-P and Killer Mike

W/ Kool A.D

Spanish Moon

Aug. 6

8 p.m.

\$18 via ticketweb.com

foolsgoldrecs.com/runthejewels

thespanishmoon.com

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Love the article....Love the writer!