
DELON OFFERS 'BLUEPRINT TO A REVOLUTION'

Tuesday, 07 April 2009

Last Updated Tuesday, 07 April 2009

Sri Lankan bred rapper defends his use of the N-word and puts world issues on world stage By Kenya M. Yarbrough Sri Lankan/Cali rapper DeLon is prepping a new disc and reppin' a new era in hip hop. The international artist, whose real name is Dilan Jayasingha, has already scored three #1 hits and nabbed the Best Rapper honor at the Sri Lankan MTV Awards equivalent.

While DeLon's style isn't particularly extraordinary, it's his cool presentation of socio-political knowledge and a few progressive tracks that make him stand out. Add to that the uniqueness of being a rapper of Sri Lankan heritage and there just might be the makings of pop idol. However, DeLon seems to shake off the novelty of being culturally labeled, particularly because he's well educated about his own lack of racial pedigree — as well as that of the world. As a matter of fact, DeLon is carefree about the use of the "N" word in one of his rhymes, "The Revolution." While some might take one look at him and call foul, DeLon breaks down his connection to and adoption of the word, which he told EUR's Lee Bailey, is who he is, too. "I come from Sri Lanka and what a lot of people don't realize is that its original people were African — East African, Aborigines. That part of the history is not spoken about in Sri Lanka anymore." DeLon continued that the Aborigines, which we call Veddahs, were the original inhabitants of the island of Sri Lanka and that later an exiled prince and his followers came to the island from India. "In that exiling, that prince and the aborigines mixed, and created the Singhalese race, which is what I am. Taking from that heritage, you've got a whole slew of things that have happened to those people, but essentially, they were all one people. Then after all this mixing, the Dutch, the Portuguese, and the British came in. They got slaves from India and slaves from Africa. So, this was another round of mixing the pot," he said, defining himself as, indirectly, of African descent. "Our nation is inherently one of the most mixed countries on earth. It's an island, that's the fate of an islander. We are everybody. That's why when people see me, they can't make me out," he said. However, true to his cerebral rhymes, it gets deeper. DeLon's additional connection to African Americans was due to his experience growing up in Los Angeles. "My father was a bum in Pershing Square (Downtown Los Angeles) when he came here in the 60s and he told me that white people would make paths for him to walk because they didn't want to walk on the same side of the street as a colored man. That shocked him," DeLon said. "So me, being the darkest and the most African (looking) in my family, he told me to watch what happens to you and don't be surprised." Nonetheless, a "surprise" came to DeLon when he was in the 6th grade a school mate called him a nigger. "I knew what it pertained to, but I had no idea that people saw me as that in this country," he said. "To them, I'm black. I'm a N-I-G-G-E-R. I am not supposed to be in their space. When I figured that out in that moment, things changed." He continued, "I know who I am. I know who I represent. And I know where I came from. That's who I am. That's what I am. And that's how I feel. At times I do or at times people treat me as that." What DeLon really is about is what he calls "feel-good" music. He described his new project as just that, but the rapper still stays true to his political stances, too. Most recently, DeLon has responded to fellow Sri Lankan rapstress M.I.A. The daughter of a Tamil revolutionary, M.I.A. has been taking the world by storm with her top of the beat rhymes, such as her current hits "Paper Planes" and "Swagger Like Us." DeLon threw rhymes atop her "Paper Planes" track revealing her Tamil ties and what he calls the wrong messages of her music. "We definitely had a difference of opinion," he said, "but it's like siblings. You're gonna fight it out. You're gonna have a little bit of controversy, but at the end of the day, he's still your brother or she's still your sister. MIA, she's a sister to me. Even though I don't agree with her imagery and how she feels about what's going on in Sri Lanka. I don't feel she has the right facts. I'm the type of artist that has to speak their mind when I feel something's incorrect. That's all that was about." Following his mission and causes is pretty much what makes DeLon passionate about his music. His new album is called "Blueprint To A Revolution," and while its title clearly has an insurgent undertone, the first single from the disc is much more light-hearted. "Sometimes I'm on that soldier stuff sometimes I'm on some crazy stuff and sometimes I'm just going to make you feel good. We're really trying to get people out of their situation and be uplifting," he described. "The new song is "Git Wit U". It's a feel-good song. It's about taking people out of their space, giving them a new space, and letting them feel good — transcending what's going on in the world right now. We gotta transcend culture, we gotta transcend racism, we gotta transcend this financial problems and that's what it's really about." For more on what DeLon is really about, check his website at www.delonmusic.com or his MySpace page at www.myspace.com/delonrap. Look for "Blueprint To A Revolution" this summer. Courtesy: eurweb.com