

Theory Hazit - Lord Fire

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Theory Hazit - Lord Fire
(Indie)
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Before you can truly appreciate this album you have to understand the history behind it. First lets start with the mouthpiece of 'Lord Fire' which is none other than the emcee known as Theory Hazit. Now Theo has been making beats himself for years but most notably he is a refreshing emcee with a gift for writing thought-provoking and highly enjoyable MUSIC.

Its one thing for an artist to simply take a boom-bap format and insert their 16 bar verse followed by an 8 bar chorus and repeat until a desired track length is reached... and then hoist it onto the masses for consumption. However, what this artist makes is justly regarded as "rare" among his peers. Theory although rooted in the fundamentals of hip-hop (dejaing, emceeing, beat producing, etc.) is also a linguist and a mic personality.

Theo's word play is often sprawling with cunning word play along side the occasional singy-song raps injected with puns and jabs. Those elements on one accord are intellectually formatted to make listening to his points both easy and enjoyable. Theo's style is a high contrast from other artists who's dumbed down lyrics fall short of a point (or at least the impact of one). He also contrasts those who's tracks seem to fall into place with the standard formatting of what is expected from a hip-hop song. This is why I believe Theory Hazit is quickly arising among a rare breed of emcee and why he is getting allot of new found attention among hip-hop purists... both Christian and general market alike. A feat that few have been able to obtain. To list a few I would include Braille, Othello, Surreal, The Remnant, 4th Avenue Jones, Mars ill, Tunnel Rats, LMNO, The Breax, Sev Static, Dirt, etc...

Now enters in Vintage. An upcoming Virginia based producer with an ear for the golden era sound where DJ Premier beats where law and crate diggers scoured for breaks in dusty basements of record stores like gold miners looking for treasure. Organic drum laden bass lines that amplified crispy guitar licks and abstract sounds of Mo Town and Jazz... Pumped loud in the car until you feel your chest tighten up and your heart rate race... finding your arms uncontrollably bouncing in the air to the rhythm. Yup that about sums up the production on 'Lord Fire'.

Vintage who's production credits include the single "I Just Wanna Go Home" off Theory Hazit's Hip Hip IS Music release "Extra Credit" handles all the production on 'Lord Fire'. This is proving the single's strength goes beyond a one-track wonder. Vintage actually has several tracks in rotation among some of the latest solid releases... some of which include: Surreal "Permanent Ink" featuring Braille and Sivion... Surreal "The Proof" featuring Absalom... Scribbling Idiots "Almost Famous"... Also off the Theory Hazit "Extra Credit" album Vintage production can be found on "Decisions" featuring Sivion and Holmskillit and "Out With A Bang" featuring Poems. If you are familiar with any of these gems then your high expectations are already underway.

As per Hazit's myspace page and YouTube home shot promotional videos... the project came together as producer Vintage began sending Theory Hazit beats to get his feedback. Soon Theo had a nice collection of beats that he became inspired to put together what he at the time thought would become a free download in mixtape fashion of Vintage beats featuring Theory Hazit vocals. After letting a few of his peers hear the results of the collab's they convinced Theo that this was meant for the World to hear and should definitely be treated like an official and legit release. So as the story went Theory and Vintage continued to invest their time in the project and work together to complete the tracks and put in work to do it right. Later... the result would be 17 songs worthy of a "Classic" tag alongside an A+ effort that everyone should consider a staple in their 2008 collection of hot new releases.

Quite possibly the most intriguing point that Theory mentioned in his home recorded promotional videos was that he kept in tact the names Vintage called each beat when he originally sent them. Typically a song isn't named until it is complete and usually derived from the lyrics. In this case however, Theory was inspired not only by the beat itself but by their name given by its producer. This makes for some unique titles... case in point "Soph Sissy". Not a typical way an album comes together to say the least but it was striking to me and something that stuck in my head when listening to the songs.

So I've already broken down the artist... I've told you what to expect on the production... I've even given you a precursor that the album is a CLASSIC. What else can I really say about 'Lord Fire' that I haven't at least eluded to so far?

Lets get down with a few of the tracks and dig a little deeper...

The first mention goes to "All Love" featuring the vocal additions of Elias who really brings the overall tone of the track to the right place needed to pull at your heart strings. Theo begins... "Dear Momma, its messed up that we don't speak. It all started when you said some foul things to me... But I talked with some friends... I went to them for advice... they was like... thats your Mom's put an end to that fight. Cause she stuck with you... from beginning of life... first step, first word to

the sinking of life... its all love. And love is a serious thing... When you love someone and all they cause you is pain."

That's just a taste but the main course is best served in whole as Theo tells a story of his troubled adolescence and heart. He continues to explain how he loves his parents and how it hurts when people you love do you wrong. How his Mom supported him regarding hip-hop and brought him up in the Word. He reminisces several times on this album how music tied into his up-bringing and how music was an escape when things often got tough to deal with. He speaks on his estranged relationship with his Dad and how he's thankful to have time left on this Earth to make a mens. The general theme here is paraphrased in the Elias chorus "...you did the best you could... you would change it if you could... but I say... its okay... all I got is love to give."

Theo tells all with this deep introspective track about what I presume is his non-fictional life from a first person perspective. I absolutely LOVE these types of songs. I've mentioned this before in reviews that artists who draw us as listeners into their world make some of the most die-hard fans. Its because we feel as though we now know the artists and we have an audible window into their lives. Also because they trust us as listeners to share their lives we respect them for that. Additionally we as listeners can sometimes relate to the those described in these songs either figuratively or directly. Something not too often found by todays standard of braggadocios pop-rap.

Moving on the guest features of 'Lord Fire' include (as mentioned) Elias as well as the rest of the Scribbling Idiots (Theory's home crew) on several tracks... Additionally Aletta and Lindsay Orr on the lead single "Grizzly"... Playdough on "Soph Sissy"... Raphi (of Tunnel Rats) and Braille on "Nobody Say"... Ohmega Watts on "Jive Turkey"... and Klarity, Freddie Bruno and Sivion on "Simply ill". A lean list but full of heavy hitters.

If I had to find fault on 'Lord Fire' it would be pretty hard to do. To nit pick it would be pointless because this is truly a solid release and probably near flawless as far as content goes. However I will make a small note that the beats... although well produced... and the tracks overall could have been more polished and professionally mixed. With simply the duo of Vintage and Theory putting this together I don't think there was an elaborate budget or even a modest one at that for hiring a professional mixing and mastering team like "Extra Credit" for example. However, I have to note its not sonically bad at all. Just not as polished as it could be. Some high notes can get a bit crunchy here and there on the samples and hi hats. Also in some tracks I would have liked to hear hitting a bit deeper and stronger on the low end but if you are not a picky audiophile like me you probably won't even notice.

So there you have it folks. 'Lord Fire'... produced by Vintage with Theory Hazit on the mic. A classic hip-hop album that you need to own! Go pick up a copy and enjoy your summer with some quality music!

For fans of: Braille, Othello, Surreal, Scribbling Idiots, Deepspace 5, Mars ill, 4th Avenue Jones, Vintage (production), classic organic hip-hop production and intelligent relevant and personal lyrics.

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