

"We're on hella swoll." Prevail says when asked the significance of the group's name. It's a title that gets attention in this world of crews and clicks, and it suits it's membership. MadChild and Prevail are the emcees, Zodak deejays and producers, and Easyroc is the b-boy. With a few graffiti writers among them, all-element hip-hop always provides a good place to start.

"Making fun of myself/I'm quadrofrenic mentally/Not laughing at myself/I'm laughing with myself accidentally."
-MadChild, "Strength"

"I've divided myself in two. I'm split into The Misguided Angel and The Conqueror." MadChild explains, "one of the hardest things I've done as an emcee is going from being more abstract, to landing on the two and four, in the pocket, as The Conqueror." With two edges on his blade, MadChild complements the carefully guarded secret that is Prevail. "I'm not telling." Prev answers to questions about his styles and inspirations. I have an idea, but I'm not telling either. So what makes him tick? "Focus, in a word. It's all me though, the same mind."

"I choke 'em with strings from Chopin/The carnival is open/We just finished stringing the cardinal from the rope/And the hooks and the poles of the tent/To soundcrash impact intense/Dents from materials dense." -Prevail, "Out of Range"

One thing is certain, the numbers are impressive. This Canada/California anomaly has sold some twelve inches. Five thousand of the first, seventy-five hundred of the second, and in it's first three weeks, five thousand of the latest joint. All three are being reordered, and are available through Fat Beats and TRC distribution. Along with these recent successes, Swollen Members have had their share of shit talked about them. Accused of buying their way into hip-hop "We hear that in Canada, but nobody's said that in the States." What about MadChild's "rich-kid" status? "I was a Sandwich Artist. I delivered pizzas for a dollar an hour in San Francisco. I came up now, and I'm happy about it." They paid somebody \$7,000 to appear on the album? "Whoever said that is a fuckin' yahoo." Throughout this inquiry, MadChild contains his anger well. "I've been through shit," he continues, "I have a hustle. I don't need to elaborate, but it doesn't hurt anyone."

Prevail rhymes off the head constantly. "He's amazing at it," his partner says with obvious admiration. "I enjoy the challenge, and I love the pressure of a competitive atmosphere," Prev tells me. A session with Vancouver emcees Moka Only, Deps Mneumonic, and Elect One demonstrates this fluidity to me the next day. Ciphers from the Bronx, to San Diego, to Tokyo have been blessed. MadChild built Battleaxe Records from nothing. This past summer saw them perform at the Rocksteady Reunion, and in Japan on the Tribal Tour. Easyroc b-boyed for Ice Cube on tour, and with Madonna at the MTV Awards. An album ("The Sinner and The Saints"), a compilation (the talent-packed "Defenders of the Underworld"), and an ear to some new shit keep things moving.

"We've spoken to Moka Only about a twelve inch." MadChild reveals, "I've got some other ideas too." S and M plays their album, some songs off the compilation, and a few MadChild solo songs. The guest appearances are a sampling of top West Coast artistry, a few songs on the compilation showcase some of New York's nastiest for added effect. Everyone contributes their piece to the mosaic, and it forms a complete picture. What the fuck else would you want, anyway?

The Living Legends toured undercover with Hieroglyphics last month. They had two Canadian stops, Montreal and Toronto. Being a Living Legend myself, the Drunc imposed himself on the Legends and tried to get put down with their crew.

DS: Yo dude, who the hell are you?
PSC: PSC.

DS: Yeah fuckin' right, Mystik Journeymen.
PSC: For real.

DS: Pushin' Suckas Consciousness.
PSC: Ha ha, yeah!

DS: Yeah fuckin' right, Living Legends.
PSC: ...

DS: Do you know we drove 12 fucking hours to be here to see you guys?
PSC: Holy shit, you guys are hard.

DS: We've been drinking since 9:30 in the morning. You guys are the motherfucking Living Legends.

PSC: Yup, ha ha ha.
DS: I'm a motherfucking Living Legend. Do you know who I am? I'm the motherfucking

by Druncness Monster

Druncness Monster.

Alex: He's Canada's own...

DS: I'm Canada's own fucking Druncness Monster. I'm a fucking Living Legend. I drove 12 hours to see you guys tonight.

PSC: Ha ha ha ha ha, you are a Living Legend.

[Murs pushes through the crowd, crawls under the table, then pops up on the other side.]

DS: Who the hell are you?

A: I think that's Murs.

Murs: Murs.

PSC: This is the Druncness Monster.

DS: What the hell is this 316 shit you're claiming? I'm the motherfucking 316.

M: Oh yeah?

A: Yeah, he's gonna make shirts and everything.

DS: Let's fucking battle for the name.

M: Oh, how you wanna do this?

DS: Let's take it to the streets.

M: You b-boy?

DS: No, I'm gonna kick your ass.

I never did end up fighting Murs, but the Legends were pretty impressed with us, and invited us to their show in Toronto. They put us on the guest list and shit, and when Jonathan Ramos tried to give us the boot when "the band" came off stage, the Grouch told PSC to tell Mr. Beatfactory to "Fuck off, these guys drove 18 hours and they're with us." We actually conducted an interview with the Legends, but we were all so drunk that all you can make out is us laughing at the Grouch when he told us he liked Above the Law. Hopefully next issue we'll have a real interview with these guys so that they can get their much deserved props. This really doesn't do them any justice, but it's the only real conversation I remember from that weekend. Special thanks to Suroosh (Vice Magazine) for getting us in for free, good looking out.



"SWOLLEN MEMBERS" "LIVING LEGENDS"



by Birdapres
photos by Block

