

INTERNATIONAL OBSCURITY

The Global Vision of Swollen Members

Most of you have probably never heard of Vancouver's Swollen Members. But Mad Child, Prevail, Zodak, and Easy Roc have sold over 15 000 copies combined of their three independently released 12"s, have recorded with some of hip hop's most elite participants (Aceyalone, Hieroglyphics, Mixmaster Mike, Funkdoobiest, Everlast, Divine Styler, etc.), and own and operate their own independent label, Battle Axe Records, which will soon see the release of *Defenders of the Underworld*, a compilation album featuring appearances from Del, Dilated Peoples, Kool Keith, Rasco, the Arsonists, Moka Only, and more.

After trying for a while to hook up an interview, and with deadlines coming dangerously close, I faxed a few questions over to Prevail (a.k.a. Prev One), and he faxed back his responses within a few hours. Check out what this kid had to say, and look out for the upcoming *Swollen Members* LP and the *Defenders...* compilation, both on Battle Axe.

VICE: So what do you guys all do in the group?

Prevail: Between the four of us there are 2 DJs, 3 MCs, 2 B-boys, and 3 writers.

What's Vancouver's hip-hop scene like?

In the past 3 or 4 years the scene has become a more supportive base. As the heads matured you saw a unification of those whose dedication never swayed, and a drop off in the population of those in it for a minute.

How do you guys fit into Canada's hip hop scene?

We bring a dynamic that's a rarity. From our stage show to our studio sessions. Being able to fit into our national scene isn't a focal point. Being able to maintain obscurity internationally is.

What are some highlights of your careers so

far?

As the group is concerned we've had our biggest successes just recently. We opened up the Rock Steady Anniversary this year in New York and then five days later went to Japan on tour with Tribal's crew.

What are your immediate plans for the future?

More music, more shows. The label is putting out a compilation and obviously the Swollen album.

How did you guys hook up with so many people for your project?

We made some very solid connections with people that we knew we wanted to work with and that helped us to build the line-up we have. Everybody that we connected with on this project has offered us a lot of info and experience.

Respond to the criticism that you guys are using guest appearances by known rappers to gain fame and record sales.

Get the macadamias.

Respond to the rumours I've heard that you're a bunch of rich kids who are "buying" your way into the hip hop scene.

How do you go about doing that? If buying your way in includes sleeping in your ride, moving to another country just to be able to MC, endless performances and battles, 8-15 years of everyday focus on mastering your element, then we're guilty on all accounts.

How do you feel about other Canadian rappers?

The same way I feel about all other rappers. Some deserve more, others shouldn't bother making claims about greatness when they lack longevity.

Who inspires you in life and music?

Personally, Zodak is a huge influence on the way I view my presence. Aceyalone, Del (what's up brother?), MF Doom, La Familia,

Alex Haley, Spike Lee, Posudnos, Chuck D, Rakim, and my mentors Moka Only, Dubnut One, T-Dou-ble, and Degree.

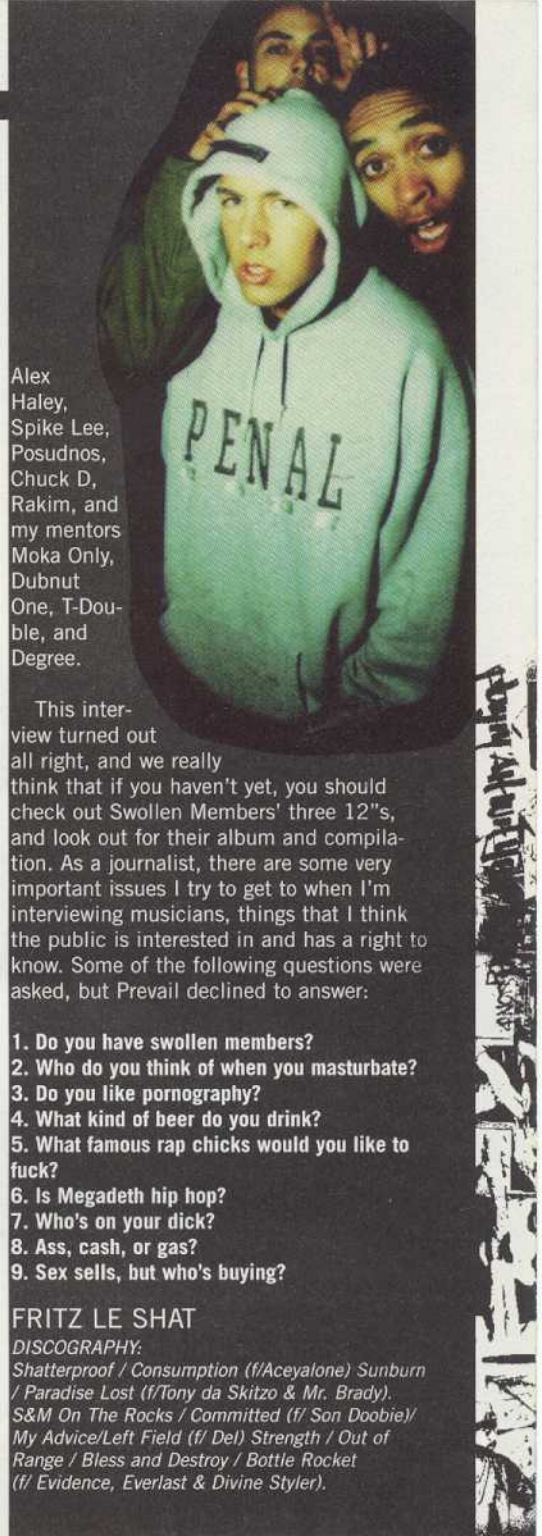
This interview turned out all right, and we really think that if you haven't yet, you should check out Swollen Members' three 12"s, and look out for their album and compilation. As a journalist, there are some very important issues I try to get to when I'm interviewing musicians, things that I think the public is interested in and has a right to know. Some of the following questions were asked, but Prevail declined to answer:

1. Do you have swollen members?
2. Who do you think of when you masturbate?
3. Do you like pornography?
4. What kind of beer do you drink?
5. What famous rap chicks would you like to fuck?
6. Is Megadeth hip hop?
7. Who's on your dick?
8. Ass, cash, or gas?
9. Sex sells, but who's buying?

FRITZ LE SHAT

DISCOGRAPHY:

Shatterproof / *Consumption* (f/Aceyalone) *Sunburn* / *Paradise Lost* (f/Tony da Skitzo & Mr. Brady). *S&M On The Rocks* / *Committed* (f/ Son Doobie)/ *My Advice/Left Field* (f/ Del) *Strength* / *Out of Range* / *Bless and Destroy* / *Bottle Rocket* (f/ Evidence, Everlast & Divine Styler).



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