

The Joyful Rebellion of K-OS



Tim Wakelin
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I am sure you have turned on the radio or Much Music in the past month or two, and haven't been surprised to hear the catchy beat of "Crabbuckit" flowing through your ears, but have you really listened? There is something profound about an artist that can appeal to fans of hip-hop, jazz, reggae, and rock, while providing a song on the radio that makes my mother say "I just love that beat." But who is the man behind the music? His name is Kheaven Brereton and he is a Toronto native, but has also spent a substantial amount of his life in Trinidad. It is not hard to imagine then why Kheaven, a.k.a. K-OS, is somewhat different than your average MC. But his skills extend far beyond being an MC alone, as he is also a distinguished singer and producer as well.

His career did not start with "Crabbuckit" however, as his first album "Exit" was released under the label Astralwerks on January 28, 2003. "Exit" boasted the hit track "Heaven only knows", and also "Superstarr pt. 1", which was later remixed into "Superstarr pt. zero", which spawned an internationally acclaimed video that showcased some of the talent in the Canadian b-boy scene. For many, "Exit" marked the beginning of a movement in hip-hop that Canada could call its own. Through themes of self-discovery and spirituality as opposed to materialism, K-OS was able to attract fans that appreciated the positive message that he was sending, not to mention it was something different than the "get that money" theme which is all too common on many record label's agendas today. Before "exit", Canada was previewed to K-OS' talent when he was featured on the track "Top of the world" by fellow Canadian hip hop artists The Rascalz. Sadly, Rumor

was spreading through the Canadian hip hop scene that K-OS would not make another album, and that "Exit" would be his first and last.

Then late in 2004, Much Music aired the hit single "B-Boy Stance", and K-OS was set to release his second album shortly after. "Joyful Rebellion" is K-OS' second album, and certainly holds up to the standard that was set by "Exit." The title, explains K-OS in many interviews, expresses a state of mind, in that even though rebellion against any aspect of life may be necessary, it does not have to be violent or depressing, but rather joyful; people should rebel and be happy while doing so. Kheaven certainly rebels in his own way on the album, as his lyrics and style not only breaks the limits of what many people call "hip-hop", but also speaks out against what hip hop has become. K-OS has released four videos off "Joyful Rebellion", which include "B-Boy Stance", "Crabbuckit", "The Love Song", and of course "Man I Used to be", which is quickly approaching the level of success that "Crabbuckit" had set. If you do not already have it or are thinking of picking it up, I definitely recommend "Joyful Rebellion" to fans of all genres of music. One should not be intimidated by the hip hop feel of many of K-OS' songs, for although a ground-breaking lyricist, Kheaven's use of Jazz, Reggae, and rock, will appeal to all. "Joyful Rebellion" even includes a song with Canadian rock band Sam Roberts, titled "Dirty Water", which truly conveys K-OS' ability to bridge the gaps between one or more genres of music.

With that being said, I had the chance to see K-OS this past January at the STU/UNB Student Centre when he was doing his Canadian campus tour (and yes I am wondering why UPEI

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Constantine (2005)

Directed by Francis Lawrence
Starring Keanu Reeves, Rachel Weisz, Max Baker

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What ever happened to the good old days when God was on our side and would always protect us from the devil and his evil legions of demons? Well the supernatural thriller "Constantine" throws that idea out the window, and replaces it with another; one of amazing special effects and trips through hell, and you even get to see the devil himself! I mean not many movies can boast such elements...ok yes they can, but none have Keanu Reeves playing the main character. In the movie, Keanu Reeves is John Constantine, the hero who protects mankind from the forces of hell, and has some interesting ways of doing so. The movie is based on the DC/Vertigo comic "Hellblazer", where John Constantine is brought back from the dead after committing suicide, and is left with the task of protecting humanity from demons and such. The idea behind the story is that God and the devil have made a wager for the souls of all mankind. According to this deal, neither God nor the devil can intervene in anyone's life, evidently letting them choose the path of good or evil for themselves. Throughout this struggle we get introduced to Angela Dodson who is a cop and is played by Rachel Weisz, as well as the angel Gabriel who is played by Tilda Swinton, and of course Satan who is played by Peter Stormare. Angela Dodson meets Constantine after her twin sister Isabel kills herself for no reason, and Constantine is contacted as it is thought that Isabel may have been possessed. Gabriel is a "half-breed" in the movie, which means she is half angel and half human, able to go to and from heaven



as she pleases. The plotline is really quite simple, but of course the viewer is kept glued to the screen by an array of special effects and action sequences. The idea behind the movie is interesting, although I am not sure if it isn't just an attempt by DC/Vertigo comics to enter a contender to rival the Marvel comics craze that has sprung up in the last 3 years. If so I give them credit, but it may be hard to extinguish the fire that "Spiderman" and "X-MEN" have started. The movie references a number of biblical characters, Constantine being the first Christian emperor of Rome in the 4th century C.E., and of course most people have heard of Gabriel, Lucifer, and Satan before. I am not sure if the reference to these characters really improves the movie, but it adds a background to an otherwise typical exhibition of not so good acting and impressive special effects. As far as the acting goes, Keanu Reeves strays little from his performance in "The Matrix", which I thought to be quite impressive, but the remaining actors/actresses are just ok. I am not sure if "Constantine" lives up to the hype that grabs you when you see the commercials, but it is definitely worth the watch. I would recommend seeing it in theatres as the special effects are definitely the high point, but if it's gonna break the bank account just wait for it on video. I give "Constantine" 3 out of 5 stars for its beautiful special effects, somewhat original storyline, and its acting that was nothing to call home about. Anyone who is a fan of comic books will enjoy this movie, but don't plan your whole week around going to see it. Enjoy.