

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

Rose City Connections Rapper Tech N9ne makes Portland stop

The Portland Observer caught up with recording artist Tech N9ne when he came to town during his current 50 city tour. The "Something Else" tour, entitled after his latest album features hip hop industry heavyweights such as Wiz Khalifa, B.O.B., Cee Lo Green, and Kendrick Lamar, his longtime collaborator Krizz Kaliko and many more.

As the founder of his own record label, Strange Music, which currently pulls in more than \$20 million annually, Tech N9ne is often labeled as the "the most successful independent rapper of all time". With a mastery of a signature tongue-twisting delivery, the 41 year old mogul has touched on a range of deeply personal subjects in his music, such as a nearly fatal drug addiction, separation from his wife, distance from his children, death of his best friend, and most recently his accusation that a seventh grade teacher molested him during his youth.

In his brief, but compelling exchange with *Portland Observer* Reporter Donovan M. Smith, they discuss the artist's deep connections with the city of Portland, his often cited battle to gain African-American fans, maintaining his authenticity, and defining success outside of the money and his cult-like fan base. The comments are edited for brevity and language:

DMS: So basically you've done a lot of work with Portland artists out here. You've worked with Cool Nutz, Illmaculate, Bosko.

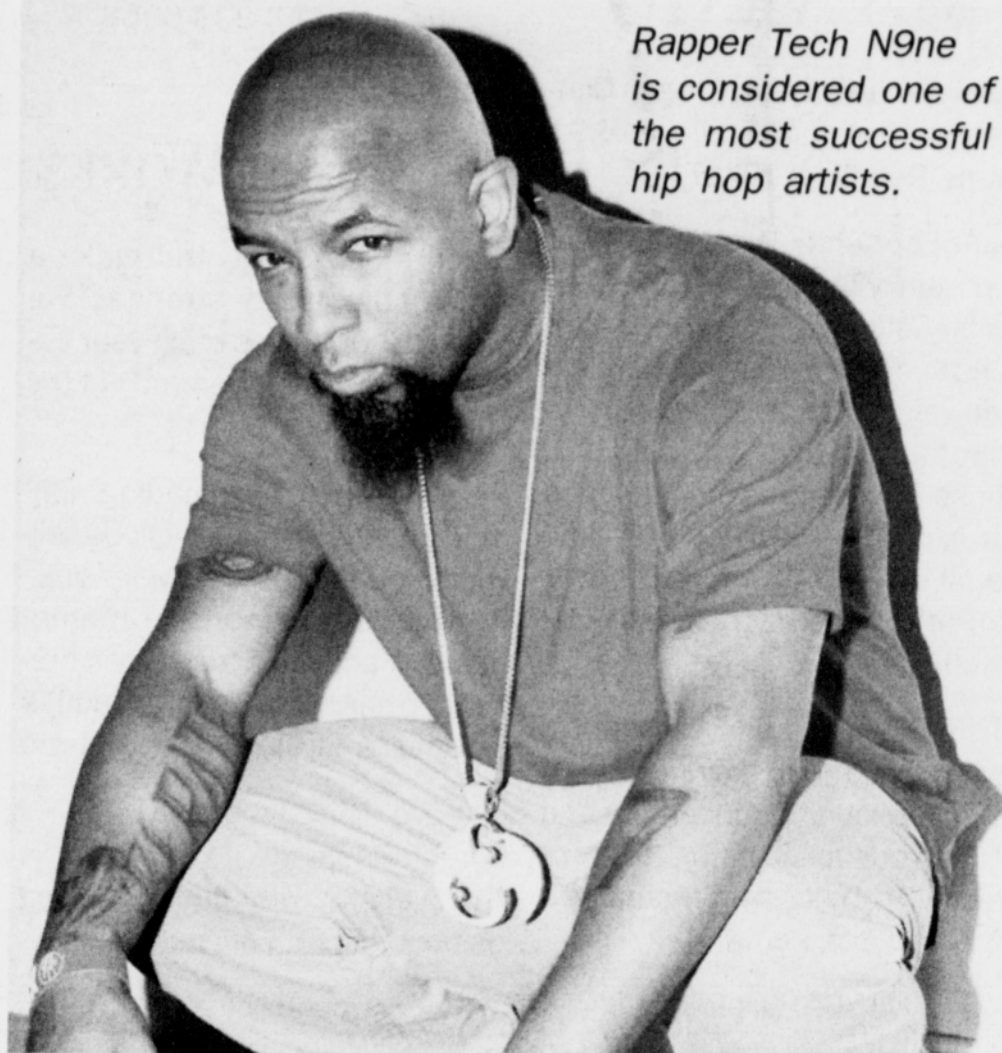
Tech: Yeah, and, uh, DJ Chill (a.k.a. Chillest Illest). He was my DJ for a while.

DMS: What keeps drawing you out here though, 'cause every time you go on tour, I think you're out here?

Tech: Real [expletive] [laughs]. I'mma come wherever my fans are. Got a lot of fans here man, so I'm gonna always be where they are. I'll still do shows in Bend, Oregon and Eugene. 'Cause some people wanna see you up close and personal you know, as opposed to the nosebleeds. I plan on getting big as the nosebleeds, but I'm always coming back where my fans are. That why I keep coming back here you know.

DMS: I saw in your interview with The Breakfast Club:

Tech: Uh-huh [smiles]



Rapper Tech N9ne is considered one of the most successful hip hop artists.

DMS: You had talked about how you're painting your face, you look a lot more like your ancestors than other people might even think.

Tech: Yeah, Yeahhh.

DMS: And you know, listening to that song, Breaking In To Colored Houses [on your new album], you've been talking about this stuff, the struggle for black fans.

Tech: Yeah, I've been tryna get my people at my shows.

DMS: I saw that you said overall that you wanted to take this album in a whole different space than you have before.

Tech: Uh, every album I do is more humongous than the last. I thought that was gonna be impossible to do with All 6's and 7's. Everybody that was on that album, the beats. But me and my producer Seven just keep getting better and better, and Empire keeps getting better and better, and, uh, I thank the Lord for that.

DMS: And I know you've probably been asked this question a thousand times, but balancing where you come from, which is bangin' and coming into an arena where a lot of your fans have been Juggalos, and white people—and—how do you find that balance of knowing who you are at the end of the day? What keeps you rooted in that?

Tech: I'm everything. I'm 3 dimensional. I'm the King, the Clown, and the G. I don't have to change myself. This facepaint has been me

since '94. They beauty of Tech N9ne is just that I give it all, and you take it as it is you nah'm sayin'.

DMS: You're called the most successful rapper

Tech: Independent.

DMS: Yeah, yeah, and people base that off of money.

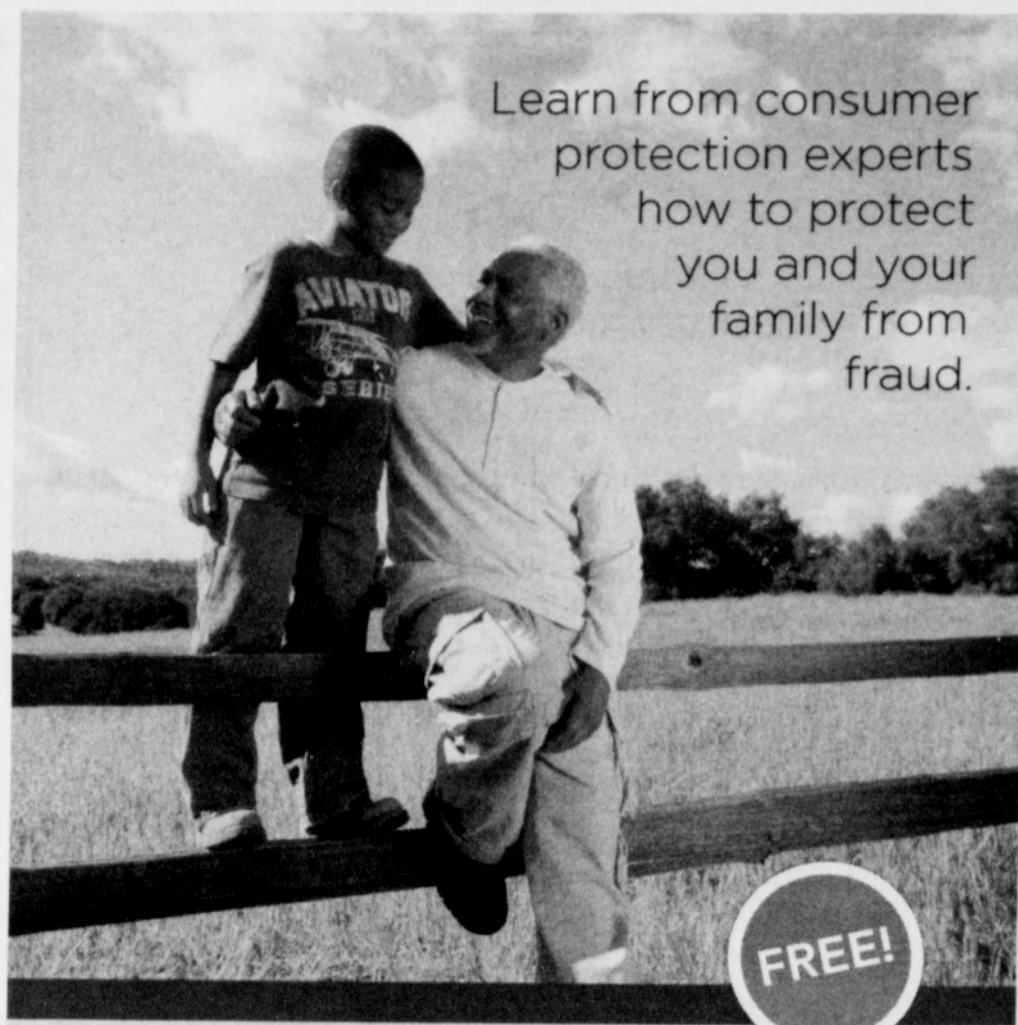
Tech: Yeah they do.

DMS: So what defines success for you?

Tech: Success for me is seeing my artists prospering as well as me, and I've prospered for years. Now I have like many artists that are prospering as well, off of something that I built. I love that, that's successful to me. When you can go from riding in a 12 passenger van almost dying flipping over back in '05 [looks down at tattoo with date of the incident], um, to paying for three humongous buses for other artists and crew to ride on to come on your tour, that's success to me. To be able to see fans, sold out every night and everybody smiling at you as opposed to frowning at you and throwing shit at you. That's real success right there, when you look out in the crowd and it's everybody smiling. That's the [expletive], yeah.

DMS: You got any advice for the young, I'll say black people tryna come up. Not just in rap, just in life?

Tech: Young black people tryna come up, it's hard if you don't have education. Education is the key to everything. The more you know, the more people you can talk to.



Learn from consumer protection experts how to protect you and your family from fraud.

FREE!

SCAM JAM

October 22, 2013

8:30 am to 12:30 pm
Oregon Convention Center, Portland

bit.ly/ScamJamPDX 1-877-926-8300

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
CONSUMER PROTECTION
FIGHTING FRAUD ■ PROTECTING OREGONIANS



FELLOWSHIP MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

4009 N. Missouri Avenue, Portland, OR 97227

503-249-0377

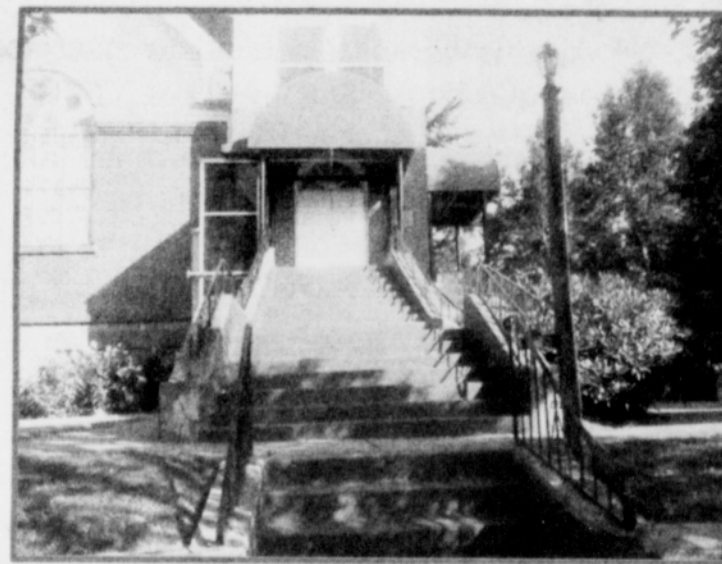
Invites you to come and celebrate with us for our
26th Church Anniversary & Homecoming
October 12th - 13th, 2013

Theme: "Hope In The Midst of a Storm" Mark 4:35-41

Saturday, October 12, 2013 1:00 pm - Banquet is at the Church **

Sunday, October 13, 2013 at 11:00 am - Evangelist Evelyn McCoy of the Highland Christian Center will be our speaker.

The celebration will climax Sunday, October 13, 2013 at 3:30 pm - Special Guest: Bethesda Baptist Church, Rev. Robert C. Jinter, Pastor



Sis Rosa Kennedy, Chairlady & Sis Vickie Marshall, Co-Chairlady

Dr. Johnny Pack IV, Pastor

** The donation is \$10.00. Please contact Rosa Kennedy at 503-281-9316 if you are interested in attending the banquet.