

'Northbound'

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It's not a glorification of some of the pitfalls of urban life for African Americans, Waco says, but a spotlight on what can be an acutely-skewed experience living as a black man in what has been statistically shown to be the whitest big city core in America.

"You got the hipsters, they out there gettin' money, and all everybody else is worried about is gangbanging and intimidating people, walking around with a mean mug on their face. Everybody else just wants to have fun, there's beautiful girls out here man, what ya'all doing," he says.

The self-described "Dirty North Kid" wears a gas mask to promote his brand. He purchased the gas mask from Israel as a symbol to represent filtering negativity into positivity, something he hopes listeners will get from his tape.

"What I'm doing is flipping the stereotypes," he says. "Like so-what I'm a Dirty North Kid but look what I'm doing. I'm gonna capitalize off of that, but at the same time it's my brand now, so what are you gonna do with it? So keep calling me that."

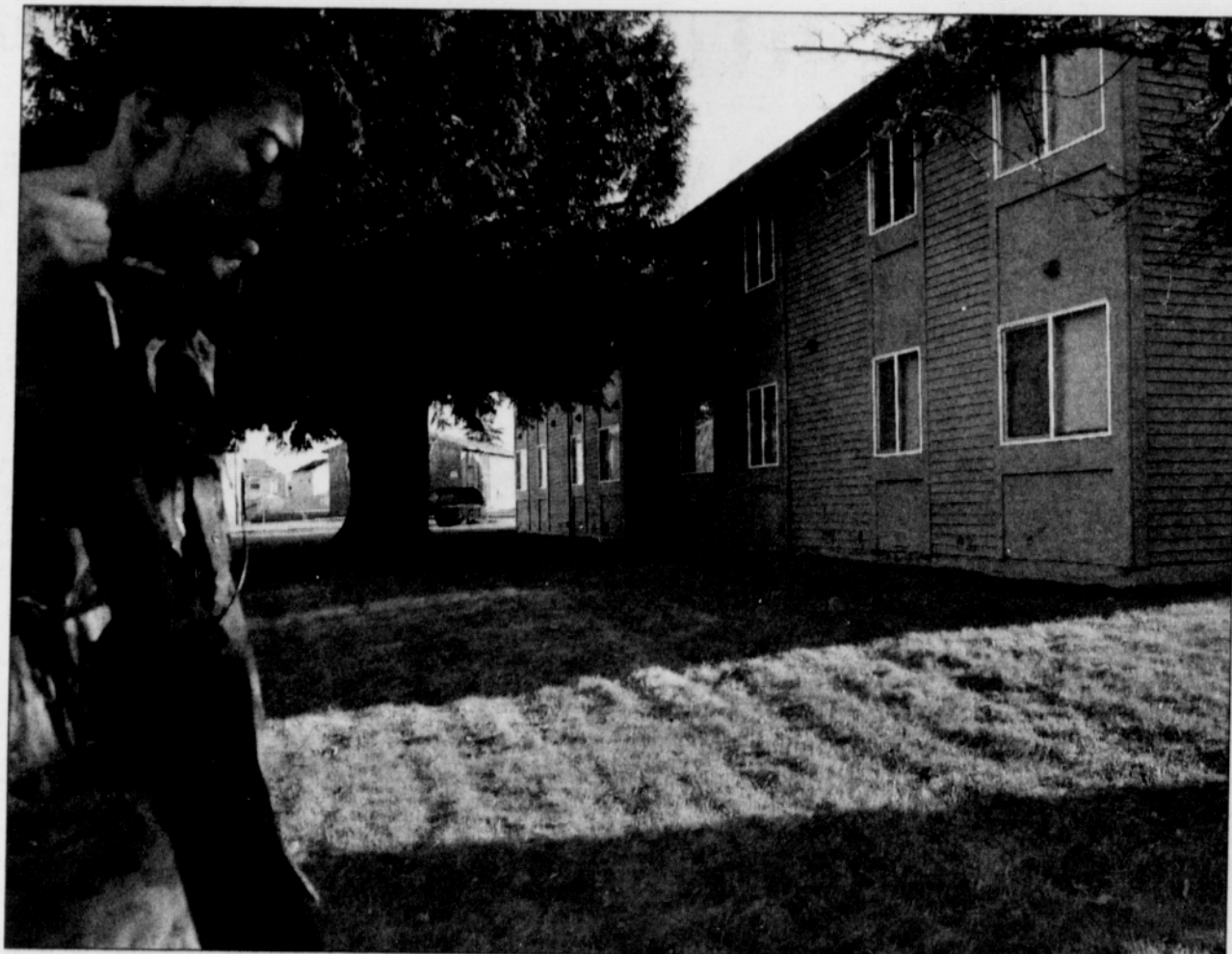


PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Glenn Waco, whose real name is Dracey Ware, is a 21-year-old rapper who draws on his impoverished north Portland roots for inspiration in his music. His sophomore project entitled 'Northbound' sees him dropping a host of nods to the city, with a knack for innate storytelling.

Waco's 17-track project is not all focused on the city. On the song "Humble" he lets listeners know about the time his little sister was hit by a car and hospitalized on life support. It's a laid back track produced by Vancouver-stationed LunchTime Legends with Portland's own Blakk Soul belting across the chorus making for a touching highlight of vulnerability.

To close out the album, Waco trades multiple verses with Rasheed Jamal and Mic Capes, the two other members of his hip hop collective called 'The Resistance.'

Each member brings something to the track

titled 'Dojo,' with their distinctive lyrical spars mixing doses of lightheartedness in between bars that will send listeners' thumbs to the replay button. Though not directly tied into the theme of the city, the track manages to stand out as a fitting end to the story of "Northbound."

The album is online for free at datpiff.com and also available for purchase at glennwaco101.bandcamp.com/ for \$10. You can follow Glenn Waco on Twitter @GlennWaco and "like" him on Facebook at facebook.com/glenn-waco.



King Rawzky, also known as Antonio PettyJohnBlue.

Rapper King Rawzky Makes Splash

Born with alcohol and drugs in his system, Antonio PettyJohnBlue says the world deemed him a lost cause before he could walk. Now, the 31-year-old northeast Portland native is pushing a signature style he's deemed "rhythm and pleasure" under the stage name King Rawzky.

With early influences like Michael Jackson, Prince, Marvin Gaye, and Stevie Wonder he hopes that he can channel the talent of these legends to become a superstar vocalist and performer himself.

Fueled by the instability of being a foster child coupled with the hardships of living in what was once one of Portland's ghettos, King Rawzky says it he is a better artist because of these pains.

"My mother's side of the family is where I developed my ability to move and serenade crowds," he says. "My father's musical gift as a professional performer and teacher of music is where I got my soul, rhythm, and funk."

As the chief executive officer of his own label, Rawzky Records, King Rawzky says he looks to serve as a role model to the youth on a journey he hopes also bring him stardom.



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