

‘Success Through Stillness’

Rap Mogul Reaps Benefits from Meditation Regimen

Kam Williams
Special To The Skanner
News

Master entrepreneur and visionary Russell Simmons has influenced virtually all aspects of business and media: in music with the cofounding of the immensely successful Def Jam Recordings; in the fashion industry with the trailblazing Phat Pharm, Baby Phat, Run Athletics, and Def Jam University clothing lines; in television with HBO’s Def Comedy Jam and Russell Simmons Presents Def

talent a chance by exposing them to Hollywood, which is very segregated. Hollywood is full of very liberal people, but it still has an infrastructure that needs to be broken. So, my idea is to integrate black stars into mainstream stars. It hasn’t been explored properly. That’s what I’m doing in Hollywood. And that’s what All Def Digital is doing. I’m probably going to shoot TV 10 pilots this year.

KW: Any ideas you care to share at this point?
RS: One’s a detective show for J.B. Smoove.

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Poetry; on Broadway with the Tony Award-winning stage production Russell Simmons Def Poetry Jam; in digital with All Def Digital, All Def Music, and Narrative; as well as numerous other ventures in the financial services industry, mobile communications, and philanthropy.

A native New Yorker currently residing in Los Angeles, Mr. Simmons is the proud father of two daughters. Here, he talks about his new book: Success through Stillness: Meditation Made Simple.

University Book Store will host Russell Simmons at a free book talk and signing event on Monday, March 24, 7 p.m., at University Temple United Methodist Church in the U District, 1415 NE 43rd Street, Seattle.

He will be in conversation with interfaith leader Jamal Rahman to discuss Simmons’ new book Success Through Stillness: Meditation Made Simple. Parking is available across the street at University Book Store.

Kam Williams: Hi Rush, thanks for the time.
Russell Simmons: My man, how you feel?

KW: Great! How about you brother?
RS: I’m doing fine. I’m still moving around, Kam. I’m in Texas at the South by Southwest Music Festival announcing All Def Digital’s partnership with Samsung. We’re building a platform to put a song out every week for 52 weeks called ADD52.

KW: Why’d you start All Def Digital?
RS: To give all this black

talent a chance by exposing them to Hollywood, which is very segregated. Hollywood is full of very liberal people, but it still has an infrastructure that needs to be broken. So, my idea is to integrate black stars into mainstream stars. It hasn’t been explored properly. That’s what I’m doing in Hollywood. And that’s what All Def Digital is doing. I’m probably going to shoot TV 10 pilots this year.

KW: Good luck with that. Let’s talk about your new book. AALBC’s Troy Johnson asks: How long have you been practicing meditation and how has it helped you?
RS: 20 years. Sitting in stillness has got to be the greatest asset I have in terms of attaining happiness. Nothing increases happiness like quiet time. The truth is, the only



CELEBRITY
INTERVIEW

by Kam
Williams

moments that make you laugh or happy are seconds of stillness. At the shock of a joke, everything disappears but the present moment. When you read a book, and it’s really, really beautiful, you’re so engaged you forget to breathe. If you’re in a car accident, and everything moves slowly, you can be shocked into the present. The past and the future disappear. Here’s

another great example. If you play basketball, you get into the zone. You can’t miss. That’s the expansive mindset we’re all seeking. But that only comes when the mind is quiet and separate from the noise. And the greatest tool to eliminate the noise is meditation.

KW: Environmental activist Grace Sinden says: With people connected increasingly to their “apps” and the 24-hour cycle of often-disturbing news, it is more necessary than ever to have quiet and Stillness in our lives. She asks: Did you write this book somewhat as a reaction to the noisy, always-connected culture



Russell Simmons

we live in?
RS: The always-connected culture isn’t as much a contributor as Grace might think. The nervous mind, the monkey mind, will create its own noise. It doesn’t need a new toy. Sometimes, a new toy, a new technology, will focus you. The world is always trying to draw you out, so you always have to remember to go in. I didn’t write this book in
See SIMMONS on page 7

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