

# *The Oz Mix*

Thursday, March 31, 2016

## **Die Jim Crow**

Evidence that we still live on a very backwards planet shows up in how we treat people who have broken society's rules such that they have been incarcerated in prison. If we can't figure out a better way for convicts to pay their debt to society than by locking them up we can at least compassionately offer aesthetic lines of escape from the barbarity of the prison mentality and lifestyle. One such line, music, is being given to prisoners by an assemblage that includes my friend Doctor Israel (Method of Defiance, Heavyweight Dub Champion). Doc wrote me recently about their current project, Die Jim Crow:

...it's a record about racism and prejudice in the U.S. Prison Industrial Complex. We've been recording inside of U.S. prisons and with formerly incarcerated individuals on the "outside." Currently we are releasing an EP based on 4 days of recording that we did at Warren Correctional Institution, a close security state prison in Ohio. The EP is designed to build awareness for the project and to be used as a calling card to gain access to more prisons.

Doc is co-producing and engineering this. From their [website](#):

The album title is inspired by Michelle Alexander's book "The New Jim Crow" which equates the U.S. prison system to a modern day racial caste system similar to the old form of Jim Crow segregation in America

The album addresses this human rights crisis through song

Inspired by Pink Floyd's 1979 concept album "The Wall," Die Jim Crow explores the journey of the contributing artist through intimate first-person narrative, overarching political themes, and haunting musical through-lines. Fusing several genres of traditionally African-American music, the album features rock n roll, jazz, blues, r & b, hip-hop, and more.

EP release: 5/1/16

LP release 2018

There is still a few days left in what looks to be a successful Kickstarter campaign to support the project which you can check out and contribute to [HERE](#). That link will take you to a video that shows the Die Jim Crow project in action, explains it more fully and introduces you to the Producer of the project, Fury Young and to Doctor Israel. It's very worthwhile to take 5 minutes and listen to what they have to say.

Here's a 39 second teaser, but the real meat of the message is in the 5 minute video.

There is a history of philosopher/activists advocating for prisoner's rights one way or another. In the early '70s Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault were guiding lights of the GIP (Group for Information on Prisons) that held sit-ins and demonstrations in France on behalf of prisoner's rights where they were joined by Jean Paul Sartre and other prominent French intellectuals. Before that, in the early '60's, Timothy Leary led a group experimenting with psychedelic mushroom therapy with prisoners that showed successful results. And of course, we can't forget Johnny Cash. Fury Young and Doctor Israel are moving this tradition forward. They are already making a difference as can be seen in the two videos mentioned above.

Posted by [Oz Fritz](#) at [3:54 PM](#)