

CitiVibe

Concrete concept

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TONIGHT'S TV TITBITS

20:30 NCIS Los Angeles (M-Net):
The NCIS team races to save Special Agent Dominic Vail.
22:00 Medium (SABC2):
Allison comes face-to-face with the stalker from her dreams.

Public love

LEGENDARY GROUP TRYING TO CORRECT THE WRONGS OF HIP HOP

SIBUSISO MKWANAZI

WHEN an international superstar like Public Enemy's Chuck D (born Carlton Douglas Ridenhour, below, in cap), who is busy touring

Germany with fellow group members FlavorFlav, Professor Griff, the Security of the First World and bassist Brian Hardgroove, starts off an interview by enquiring about the

progress on rapper Jub Jub's drunk-driving case, you know he has his ducks in a row.

"People say that hip hop corrupted that young man [real name

Molemo Maarohanye]," challenges Ridenhour.

"No, it did not. He did what he did on his own, but he happens to be a hip hop artist. Had it been an artist who performs any other genre, these comments would have not been made."

It is worthy to note, though, that Public Enemy was formed during hip hop's golden age, between 1980 and 1990, when it was used as a tool to highlight social ills and to innovate music as a whole.

There used to be more positive than negative in the genre.

"There is a whole lot of positivity in hip hop, it just needs to be found," says Ridenhour.

"Most modern artists have lost focus and have allowed commercialisation to reign supreme in their music."

American rappers are not the only ones that have embraced that approach. What does Ridenhour think of SA artists who blindly imitate their US counterparts?

"In America, no one cares that South Africans are dressed like them in baggy jeans and oversized T-shirts, so why bother?"

"I am not sure who they are trying to impress. These very same American artists are the ones that fly into any African state and declare 'I am home' and 'This is my Motherland', while they are so ignorant of what is going on there," Ridenhour says.

"South Africans should be true to themselves and forget about what Americans are doing, or they will find themselves in the same problematic area as hip hop is in right now over there."

If Ridenhour is so concerned about SA, why have they taken so long to tour here?

"Honestly, we just

never got around to it. A lot of artists have toured South Africa with the wrong mentality, that of seeing it as yet another market to be conquered," he says.

"Our tour will be a give and take relationship between us and the audience. Besides the concerts, there will be workshops too."

That said, it has been more than 25 years since Public Enemy was formed. Are they concerned about their relevance?

"Public Enemy will never be considered to be the best or most popular hip hop group, but we are the most powerful in terms of influence," Ridenhour says.

"The locals will find out just how relevant we have remained. We opened ourselves up to the world when other groups did not even have passports," he says.

"This will be our 71st international tour and our travels have afforded us the chance to be part of the countries we have visited."

"That is why we know what is happening there and everywhere else. We learn about our destinations and we add a human element of hip hop, which other people and genres are lacking."

PUBLIC ENEMY WILL BE PERFORMING IN JOBURG AND CAPE TOWN:

- Friday, December 3 and 4: The Alex, Braamfontein, Joburg. Tickets cost R300 at Computicket and R350 at the door.
- Tuesday, December 7: The Assembly, Cape Town. Tickets cost R300 at Webtickets and R350 at the door.
- Wednesday, December 8: Atmosphere, Lansdowne, Cape Town. Tickets cost R150 at Computicket and R200 at the door.



WALTER LEAPHART

Flutes, gumboots and yoga

8/10

SHOW: Launch of Two Voices
ARTIST: Wouter Kellerman
VENUE: Old Mutual Theatre on the Square

ANNETTE BAYNE

I AM not sure how many album launches require audiences to do a little bit of yoga in the middle of the show. But at the launch of Wouter Kellerman's new album *Two Voices*, it somehow seemed to fit, con-

sidering many of the songs, written in collaboration with JB Arthur, followed a yoga session.

In his quiet, gentle manner, Kellerman took his audience on an incredible musical journey through his new album.

He was joined on stage by Phresh Makhene on bass and vocals, Mauritz Lotz on guitar, Senegalese singer Mo Dediouf and David Klassen on drums and percussion.

At each turn, there was something new or something recognisable with a new spin. For instance, in *African*

Hornpipes, the Irish hornpipes were given a African flavour, played by Kellerman on a plastic fife.

Mzansi, written by Paul Carlos and Kellerman, was an experiment with harmony and discord.

But perhaps one of the most moving moments of the evening was the performance by Kellerman and Makhene of a song called *Sylvia*. Makhene has been Kellerman's long-time bassist and this was the song they wrote together for the new album.

The piece started with Makhene

creating percussion sounds in a bowl of water on stage.

The effect was quite beautiful.

Kellerman has an excellent, comfortable rapport with the audience and his band, giving just enough to put the music in context but always allowing the music to speak for itself.

A pair of ethnically painted gumboots stood centre stage, teasing the audience, without any mention made of them from start to finish of the show. It was in the encore that Kellerman pulled the gumboots on



in order to "prove that white men really can't dance", joining Makhene in a gumboot dance.

Upbeat and lively, the rubber-slapping high jinks was a perfect ending to the show.