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August Greene's Storytelling is Undefeated in Self-Titled Album

Malik Walker · Wednesday, March 21st, 2018

Not often do you see three music legends collaborate together on an album but with *August Greene*, the self-titled album from the trio featuring rapper Common, pianist Robert Glasper, and drummer/producer Karriem Riggins, the dream came true.

August Greene reaches the pinnacle of blending soul, hip-hop and jazz together to create themes of reflection, healing, Black empowerment and much more.

In "Black Kennedy," Common takes us on a depictive journey if he were in the shoes of the 35th U.S. president, John F. Kennedy:

If I was a Kennedy, I'd be a black Kennedy
Black car, black tux, this is black symmetry
Raised in the Chi though my family from Tennessee
I remember me, 'Riem, Dilla, we was in the D

"Optimistic" featuring Brandy (yes, Brandy) displays her well-known fluid vocals on top of the soft-playing melody from Glasper and steady rhythm from Riggins. It samples the track "Optimistic" from Sounds of Blackness. The song puts you in the correct headspace forcing you to have no choice but to be "optimistic."

While "Aya" allows listeners to reflect as Common steps away: allowing Glasper and Riggins to feed off each other with supporting vocals from Samora Pinderhughes (who is singing throughout most of the album).

"The Time" shows how much of a prolific wordsmith that Common is as he pours his soul out into the track:

The message is where the oppression is
It's single mothers, pressure, and aggressive kids
My rhymes'll be the Ritalin, let's get it
And America's divided, the dividend is the middlemen
We need to cut 'em, out, 'cause can't nobody govern the route
Of my destiny, Ebony covers and lovers, I respect them like they all mothers

August Greene is a refreshing, yet needed album combining its multiple musical genres of hip-hop, soul, and jazz. Besides the genres, the messages throughout the album are crucial especially in today's political climate in America.

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