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| 00:00:00 | Morgan Rhodes | Promo | Hey, I'm Morgan Rhodes, and if you're listening to us, you're listening around Drive time, which is the Max Fun Drive. And we just want to talk to you about Max Fun and how great it is. Max Fun's business model is artist owned and it's audience supported. So, that means when you become a member, you are directly affecting our ability to continue this show. And we would love to continue this show. As well as Max Fun's ability to plan for other, future shows. |
| 00:00:25 | Oliver Wang | Promo | We know these might be challenging financial times, given everything that's going on. So, you can really choose the monthly amount that's most comfortable for you. A majority of the folks give around \$5 to \$10 a month, some upgrade to \$20, \$35, even \$100 if you're balling out like that. But it's really about what works for you. <i>[Morgan agrees.]</i> |
| 00:00:45 | Morgan | Promo | Everything helps. You can visit MaximumFun.org/join , and you'll see all the ways you can give—whatever you give, just know that we are really grateful for the level of support and for you rocking with us for this long. |
| 00:00:55 | Music | Transition | "Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under the Stairs. <i>[Music continues under the dialogue, then fades out.]</i> |
| 00:01:02 | Oliver | Host | Hello! I'm Oliver Wang. |
| 00:01:04 | Morgan | Host | And I'm Morgan Rhodes. You're listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> . |
| 00:01:06 | Oliver | Host | Every episode, we invite a guest to join us to talk about a heat rock. You know, an album that just burns its way into our collective memory. And today, we will be cold lamping with flavor by revisiting one of the greatest undisputed albums in the history of hip-hop—nay, of actually popular music writ large. That is Public Enemy's 1988 album, <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> . |
| 00:01:30 | Music | Music | "Cold Lampin' with Flavor" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy. <i>Flav in the house by Chuck D's side Chuck got the Flavor, Flav don't hide P.E. crazy, crazy P.E Making crazy Louie's for the shopping spree You're eating dirt 'cause you like getting dirt from the graveyard You put gravy on it Then you pick your teeth with tombstone chips Casket cover clips</i> |
| 00:01:46 | Oliver | Host | <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i> As I've mentioned on the show before, I didn't start listening to hip-hop in earnest until the summer of 1989. And back then, it didn't occur to me to go back to earlier recordings that I might have missed. And this meant that I never heard <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions</i> when it first came out. My introduction to it didn't come until the winter of 1990, when I took a copy of the <i>Less than Zero</i> soundtrack on cassette tape with me overseas, to visit family. I might have copped that soundtrack because it had LL Cool J's "Going Back to Cali" on the A side but waiting in the wings for me on the flip was Public Enemy's "Bring the Noise". |

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| 00:02:23 | Music | Music | <p>“Bring the Noise” from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy.</p> <p><i>Yo, Chuck, these honey drippers are still fronting on us Show 'em that we can do this, 'cause we always knew this Ha, ha, yeah, boy!</i></p> <p><i>Bass! How low can you go? Death row? What a brother know Once again, back is the incredible</i></p> |
| 00:02:38 | Oliver | Host | <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p> <p>Imagine that song being your introduction to Public Enemy and The Bomb Squad. To quote Rakim, “It was hype-er than a heart attack.” Once I got back to the States, I immediately went and bought <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions</i>. And even if I needed a late pass to arrive to it, I understood why—back then—it was considered hip-hop’s greatest album. And take your pick, here. The unique pairing of Chuck D’s baritone flow and the piercing ad libs from the ultimate court jester, Flavor Flav, The Bomb Squad’s approach to stacking samples on samples on samples to create a thrilling, overwhelming wall of sound, the group’s pummeling political polemics.</p> <p>Hip-hop has gone through many eras, many changes in style. But in the late ’80s, an album like this felt revolutionary in terms of the music and culture’s creative and social import. It wasn’t just stylistically forward. <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions</i> incited debate and awakened consciousness in a way that would forever reshape what we thought hip-hop could be and could do. Over 30 years later, that impact hasn’t faded much at all. This album still feels and sounds louder than a bomb.</p> |
| 00:03:51 | Music | Music | <p>“Caught, Can We Get a Witness” from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy.</p> <p><i>Yo, Chuck, stand up to 'em Kick it</i></p> <p><i>C'mon, get with it Something ain't right, I got to admit it Made me mad when I was on tour That I declared war on Black radio They say that I planned this On the radio most of you will demand this Won't be on a playlist</i></p> |
| 00:04:05 | Oliver | Host | <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p> <p><i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> was the album pick of our guest today, Mr. Muhammad—AKA, Ali Shaheed Muhammad of A Tribe Called Quest.</p> |
| 00:04:15 | Morgan | Host | <p>Roy Ayers said once, “DJs and people in the streets know what they like.” I’m so glad that our guest knew that he liked Ronnie Foster’s “Mystic Brew”, that he liked Weldon Irvine’s “We Getting’ Down”, that he liked Bob James’s “Nautilus”, Cal Tjader’s “Aquarius”, that he liked RAMP’s “Daylight”. I’m glad he knew he</p> |

liked Jimmy McGriff's "Green Dolphin Street". I'm glad that he knew he liked Brother Jack McDuff's "Oblighetto". Super glad that he knew he liked The Weather Report's "Young and Fine", glad that he liked a "A Chant for Bu" Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers. Glad that he liked The Young Rascals' "Sueno". I'm glad that he liked The Meter's Handclapping Song. I'm glad that he liked Albino Gorilla's "Psychedelic Shack". I'm glad that he knew that he liked Kool & The Gang's "Electric Frog", the Nairobi Sisters' "Promised Land". I'm glad that he liked Les McCann's "North Carolina". I'm glad that he liked Henry Franklin's "Soft Spirit", Willis Jackson's "Don't Knock My Love". I'm really glad he liked Eric Dolphy's "17 West".

Yo, I'm just glad that he liked music and that he bought records and that he had a turntable and that he linked up to make magic and history with Q-Tip, Jarobi, and Phife. Maybe he didn't know, but I'm so glad I have the chance to tell him how much he taught us. We got the jazz from him, snippets and touches, moments and cuts. Our guest is none other than he, one of the legendary founders of the seminal A Tribe Called Quest. He's the DJ. Ali Shaheed Muhammad in three words—other than Ali Shaheed Muhammad: so many jams.

He co-anchors the podcast *Microphone Check* alongside our homegirl, Frannie Kelly. He has served as a co-producer for the *Luke Cage* soundtrack, which is fire. He is well known for his work with D'Angelo, Raphael Saadiq, J Dilla, and others. And alongside composer Adrian Younge, he continues to marry visuals and sound to create beauty for projects like *The Midnight Hour*. For 30 years, he's been doing it and doing it well. I am so honored to say thank you for your service. We got it from here. Ali Shaheed Muhammad, welcome to *Heat Rocks*.

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| 00:06:13 | Ali Shaheed Muhammad | Guest | Wow! Um, thank you, Morgan and Oliver. That's a nice way to enter into a place. I wanna say to a lot of those records you mentioned that I have to give credit to Q-Tip, because introduced me to quite a few of them, but the love was definitely there. And I'm so thankful that you guys have allowed it into your world, because I know how special music is to people. And I'm just happy to be here today with you guys. So, thank you. |
| 00:06:48 | Morgan | Host | So, we wanna know why you chose these albums. We have discussed that we were going to talk about <i>All 'n All</i> , so I just have to put that out—shouts fire to Oliver. But we wanna know why you chose this album, and do you remember what it was like the first time you heard the album? |
| 00:07:05 | Ali | Guest | It wasn't an easy choice. I have to say that. There are hundreds of records that are very meaningful to me and have helped shape not only my musical mind as a producer, but just me as a human being. You know? I did choose this one because at the time, this album had come out—I think hip-hop was changing, and even Public Enemy with this album had changed. You know? It was greatly different than <i>Yo! Bum Rush the Show</i> , which that was also a really incredible album, and specifically I had an uncle who used to work for Columbia Records, and he was actually working Public Enemy and brought home a signed autograph of <i>Public Enemy #1</i> from Flavor, and I just was like, "Oh my—" Like, I was—you don't |

understand. In my neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, like everyone was just like how on earth did this ever happen?

That and I had an original test press of Ladee Dadee before the radio stations got that. So, again, because of my uncle. And so, just giving you little details, tidbits of—so, anyway. I was into PE. But that—the second album just sonically—it’s hard to really put into words. It was a journey. It was like—it was a very important album, and again coming from Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn, New York, knowing that crack cocaine had changed the neighborhoods, knowing that young, Black teenagers, we didn’t have much to look up to. We didn’t have the respect of government, of the communities. We were—and still are—looked upon as worthless to a degree.

And you have this album that comes and changes your thinking from a musical level—it’s just the beats are smashing; everything is just tied together. You know, they honor the DJ. If there were a hip-hop album that represented me outside of the works that I’ve worked on, then this would be it.

00:09:34 Music Music

“Black Steel in the Hour of Chaos” from the album *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* by Public Enemy.

*Here is a land that never gave a damn
About a brother like me and myself because they never did
I wasn't with it, but just that very minute it occurred to me
The suckers had authority
Cold sweating as I dwell in my cell, how long has it been?
They got me sitting in the state pen
I gotta get out*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:09:52 Oliver Host

I’m just so curious, because if I have the dates right, you would’ve been around 18 years old when this album—or I guess late 17 years old, but you’re still in your late teens when this album drops in 1988. You’re living, as you said, in Bed-Stuy. You’re in Brooklyn. Was the reaction to this LP immediate? Was it more of a slow burn? Like, what was it like being in New York at that age, in that era, when this album just kind of lands?

00:10:16 Ali Guest

I think that really depends on where you were. I have—my parents were civil rights activists. And so, my immediate community were nothing but conscious people. You know? And so, in my small, immediate community, this album was a big deal.

00:10:42 Oliver Host

Morgan, how did this album land for you?

00:10:44 Morgan Host

I just remember—and I don’t know what show it was on, just seeing the video for “Don’t Believe the Hype”. I think that was my first—my earliest memory of this album. And if I recall correctly, it was like the mix of like live footage from the shows—I think like Flavor had on the white john—the white jumpsuit. You know what I’m saying? Chuck D had on the white. Somebody dancing real fast in the corner. It was an introduction. I was starting to be introduced to sort of like the pro-Black rap. And so, Public Enemy, for me, was just this—not necessarily a new sound, because I was already listening to east coast rap. It was a new energy. It was a new philosophy that I was being introduced to.

00:11:33 Music Music So, that was my introduction. “Don’t Believe the Hype” was the gateway drug for me.
“Don’t Believe the Hype” from the album *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* by Public Enemy.

*Don’t—
Don’t—
Don’t believe the hype*

*I got Flavor and all those things, you know
(Yeah, boy, part two bum rush the show)
Yo, Griff get the green, black and red, and
Gold down, countdown to Armageddon*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:11:46 Oliver Host I wanna spin back to something that Ali was saying a moment ago about just how different it was when this album landed. Because I think when we oftentimes talk about hip-hop and the golden era in hindsight, I think there’s a kind of collective feeling as if the political nature of hip-hop had always been part of rap music from its very beginning. And if you actually look at what hip-hop sounded like for most of the ’80s, that’s not the case at all. I mean, you have quasi examples, like “The Message” by Grandmaster Flash and Melle Mel, but for the most part there was nothing really remotely equivalent to what Public Enemy was doing once they came out with first *Yo! Bum Rush the Show*, but especially with *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back*.

And that when we talk about hip-hop’s political nature, Public Enemy—as much as any other group, if not the most important group in that sphere—are the ones who introduced and created this association that we now have. And I went back and looked at the other seminal albums from ’88. And ’88 was—I mean, for hip-hop was—my god. I mean, you got *Critical Beatdown* by The Ultra Magnetic MCs. You got Slick Rick with *The Great Adventure of Slick Rick*, Big Daddy Kane debuts with *Long Live the Kane*. Obviously, you’ve got NWA, *Straight Outta Compton*. Eric B. and Rakim have their sophomore album, *Follow the Leader*. I mean, I could go on and on and on.

And those are all really important albums. Any one of those could’ve been the focus of our discussion today. But then you compare all those other albums with *It Takes a Nation of Millions*, and it feels like PE was just on some other plane of existence, especially because they made an album that was a polemic. Like, it was an LP length manifesto and statement. And you just didn’t hear hip-hop albums doing that. I mean, hip-hop was doing other things, like amazing things, but not like this in your face, this is what we’re about, here’s our ideology. And I think that is something that I can only imagine. Again, I mentioned this in my intro. I wasn’t listening to PE in ’88, so I wasn’t there in that moment to react to it, but looking back on it, I just have to imagine, yeah, this was something that nobody would’ve heard an equivalent to this at that point in time.

00:13:59 Morgan Host Public Enemy didn't sound like anything else, even on the east coast. It was such a revelation. And if you weren't sure about what their philosophy was, you knew that from the soundbites. You knew that as soon as someone was like, "Brothers and sisters!" You're like, "Here we go." You knew that from—you know, some of the spoken word that was on there, Khalid Abdul Muhammad. You knew. Chuck D's voice was the voice of authority. It was the voice of revolution. You know? How low can you go, bass?! You know what I mean? You just knew. It just—it galvanized you. It was a different vibe from all the rap I was listening to, and I was listening to a lot of music around that time, a lot of east coast music, but it was so different than anything I had heard.

00:14:37 Oliver Host Well, actually, why don't we get into talking about Chuck and Flav? And with—I mean, with Chuck D, I wanna say it was—it was either Greg Tate—actually, I think it was Nelson George who wrote about the importance of this generation of baritone rappers, and that the quality of that voice, the kind of authoritativeness that the baritone gave people like Chuck and KRS and other folks like that was such an important way in which they presented themselves. And with Chuck in particular, one thing that I've noticed over time is that you know, before let's say 1994, if you were to ask people to come up with a list of the greatest rappers on the planet, Chuck would've always been in the top five, alongside Rakim, KRS, you know, Ice Cube, etc. It wouldn't even have been a debate about him being there.

And somehow, as time has gone by, he's been taken off of that list. Like, not even dropped to like #7. Like, he's not even the top 40 for a lot of people today. Which to me just seems insane! Because if you go back to *It Takes a Nation* or if you go back to *Fear of a Black Planet*, you would never think, "He doesn't sound good anymore on this." Like, there's no kind of way of retroactively demoting him. Like, he was incredible! His presence in particular I thought was completely unrivaled. And even though I think later rappers might have developed more sophisticated and intricate flows, no other artists—or very few other artists, to me—have ever commanded a record in the way that I think Chuck was able to, especially back then.

00:16:13 Ali Guest I agree with you, 100%. The tonality of his voice was another, you know, part of the seasoning of the recipe. And I also think that Chuck might have been a little bit older than a lot of other rappers at the time period. So, mentally—I should say on an experience level, I think he was advanced. The tailoring of the sounds that were somewhat like just chaotic and confusing really blended well with the solid anchor that his voice had that the content—the lyrical education, the—you know, like ripping off this PA, it was so well put together then to have Flavor just come out of—you know, this other side with his high frequency—you know, to kind of like give another—you know, another balance to throw you off if this guy's being a little too preachy. Like, let me hit you in the head with this other character right here that's gonna—you know—bring it down seemingly. But we're all still staying on topic—you know—hitting that goal.

So, it's unfortunate that Chuck is not mentioned. He will always be mentioned if someone asks me. But you know, I mean, look at me now. I'm crazy old school.

[They laugh.]

Like crazy! It's not even old school. It's like, "Oh, you crazy old school. Get out of here, grandpa." But the parameters today, in terms of what makes an MC, you know, top five level is so different. And so, one cannot just get it on voice alone. And again, it's like cool, then let's just default to style. Chuck was hitting different styles as a poet. You know? Like, every song had a different style. Like, he wasn't a battle rapper. And I think if he were a battle rapper, he was so advanced that I think it would've gone over everyone else at that time period. They wouldn't have even been able to give him his props because it's like, yo, he's just so—he's somewhere else.

00:18:21 Music Music

"Terminator X to the Edge of Panic" from the album *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* by Public Enemy.

Getting small, making room for it all

(Flavor's on the phone, so I can make the call)

I know you're clocking the enemy, you should be clocking the time

Checking records, I'm wrecking you for defecting my rhyme

No provoking, no joking, you know the stage is set

If you're thinking I'm breaking (He ain't rocked it yet)

My education is taking you for a long ride

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:18:38 Morgan Host

The production of *The Bomb Squad*, in addition with Chuck's voice and then Flav as the answer all work together I think to make—to bring Chuck D's voice, to give it even more volume, to give it even more power. Because one overall feeling that I have when I listen to this album is crisis. The energy's very frenetic. It feels like people are running down the street. It does feel like Armageddon. Right? And then you have, out of the abyss, you've got Chuck D's voice telling you what's going on. And then, you know, he's like the serious side. And then you think that Flav is gonna, you know, take it to another level, but he's sort of reinforcing what Chuck says, but he's more animated.

We had a little bit of this discussion about, you know, these two different voices. We were talking about *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...*, and we were talking with Havoc, and we were talking about the difference between, you know—

00:19:30 Oliver Host

Rae and Ghost.

00:19:31 Morgan Host

Rae and Ghost, and how—you know, Rae's just—you know, calmly telling the story, but then Ghost just comes in hyped. You know? He's got to punctuate. And that's what I thought Flavor did, but I also felt like his punctuation made Chuck's voice even more powerful, even more authoritative, even more—he instantly had credibility. And even though he wasn't a battle rapper, the production made it feel like a battle. He wasn't rapping—he wasn't battling anybody else! But he—it made you feel like you were at—he was in a battle; you were right there with him. It was big. It was

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| 00:20:14 | Music | Music | <p>booming. It's like those scenes in movies where people are running through the street 'cause everything's gone to shit. And things are falling from the sky, and they're like, <i>[dramatically]</i> "You know, get out of here! Get—!" That's what this album feels like for me. "Louder Than a Bomb" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy.</p> <p><i>Yo, man, show 'em what you got!</i></p> <p><i>This style seems wild Wait before you treat me like a stepchild Let me tell you why they got me on file 'Cause I give you what you lack, come right and exact Our status is the saddest, so I care where you at, black And at home I got a call from Tony Rome The FBI was...</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p> |
| 00:20:32 | Morgan | Host | <p>I'm not a huge fan of boxing, but the times that I've watched boxing, one of my favorite interactions is when the boxer goes to his corner and his men come in and they're like, "Keep doing what you're doing! You know, you just gotta keep jabbing. You know, keep doing. You—you got him on the ropes. You got him on the ropes." That's what Flavor Flav's adlibs remind me of. They serve a dual purpose: one, to report back what's being said, 'cause he's always reporting what's being said. "Yo, Chuck, they're saying we too Black out there! You gotta tell 'em what—"</p> <p>He's a reporter for what's going on, what's being said in the media, on the radio, in the streets. And also, he's a hype man to Chuck to get him ready to spit that fire, and he does that all throughout "Rebel Without a Pause". He's always telling him, "Chuck, you need to—you know, go on, man! You know!" And that's what I like. Like I said, he's a hell of a multitasker on these bars.</p> |
| 00:21:20 | Music | Music | <p><i>[They laugh.]</i></p> <p>"Rebel Without a Pause" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy.</p> <p><i>I caught you pissing your pants You're scared of dissing us The crowd is missing us We're on a mission y'all</i></p> <p><i>Yo Chuck, yo! Yeah, man! Yo, you got 'em running scared!</i></p> <p><i>Terminator X</i></p> |
| 00:21:34 | Oliver | Host | <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p> <p>Ali, as a DJ and a producer, what is it that you hear The Bomb Squad doing—especially in this album—that really stands out to you?</p> |

00:21:42 Ali

Guest

I think that they have picked the best energy sources for this record. You know? When you're a band, you can easily—one person starts something, someone else feels out that energy, adds their own energy to it, and it mutates. It grows into something. You know. And if all the band members are really just in this kind of trance, this energy is—you know—transcended into something else. You know that you probably could not, before walking in the room, say, "This is what we're gonna do today." You know? You may have an idea what your plan is, but when you come together there's this energy that is established. So, you're relying on having to dig through records to find all this energy to be the bedrock of the ideas that you want from this poet. You know?

And they did an excellent job at just taking what seemingly—it sounds like chaos, but it is, and it isn't. It's perfectly placed chaos. You have a song that starts off, "Too Black, too strong." It's like what is about to happen here? *[Chuckling.]* You know what I mean? Like, that's how the song starts! Like, that hasn't happened before in hip-hop, so it's like, oh shit! And then they come with it, and every song is bespoke. You know? Every song. I mean, I've spoken with Hank about it a little bit. He never gave me the indication that they were just like, "I don't know. We opened up the cupboards and it said some cinnamon and something, and whatever, we just threw the whole—all spices in there. We just—" Like, I never, ever got that sense from it. I got the sense that they knew what they were picking, myself being a DJ/producer, I know sometimes—you know—you're just listening for an element, and you keep going.

You know, it's like record after record. It's needle picking up, moving and moving it around. You're just trying to find that one element. And so, to be so dedicated to that—because you're not gonna find it in one place, and I don't think that PE cleared all of their samples. So, if—

[Oliver agrees and they laugh.]

So, if you break down the entire record, I'm pretty sure it's a publishing nightmare, but on top of that, it just—again—shows how all these little blips, these little clips, these pieces were perfectly placed. And so, it's one of the reasons why The Bomb Squad has been like one of my favorite production teams. Because it's—you can try to pretend and think like, "Oh, I'm just gonna mash up and throw all these samples in there and come up with this gumbo." It's like, nope. You don't have it. You know? And they were—whatever they had, their chemistry and the energy that they created from sampling *[sighs]*, it's the best. It was what Q-Tip and I were striving towards. Like, they were so—such an influence to—not that we wanted to, you know, sound like The Bomb Squad, but it was just the level of detail that they had.

And so, that's what Q-Tip and I were striving towards when we go into the studio. Prince Paul is another producer who doesn't get enough credit, but kind of—I think he's from that ilk, a little bit. You know? I don't know if that's that—
It's some Long Island thing, right?

00:25:24 Oliver

Host

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| 00:25:25 | Ali | Guest | I was about to say, the water in Long Island. I don't know if that's what it was to allow them to all kind of vibrate like that, but Prince Paul, he—you know, he's definitely of that ilk. And we looked to those guys, and they were our center point. |
| 00:25:43 | Morgan | Host | While we're talking about samples, I guess it's fair to ask what are some of our faves from the album. Ali, what are some of your favorite samples from this album? |
| 00:25:54 | Ali | Guest | You know what? I've never—it's funny, as much as I've listened to this album, I've never really dissected what it was that they did. If one really stands out, it's just the Spoony Gee song. That's the only one that I know is like immediately in my head for "Terminator X to the Edge of Panic". |
| 00:26:15 | Music | Music | "Love Rap" from the album <i>The New Rap Language / Love Rap</i> by Spoony Gee & The Treacherous Three. <i>From the south to the west, to the east, to the north Come on, Spoonie Gee and go off, go off</i> |
| 00:26:24 | Music | Music | <i>[Fades seamlessly into the next track.]</i> "Terminator X to the Edge of Panic" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy. <i>Go, go, go, go "The federal government is the number one killer and destroyer of Black leaders!"</i> <i>Take a look at his style (Yeah!) Take a check of the sound off the record people keeping him down</i> <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i> |
| 00:26:36 | Ali | Guest | That sample I think is what—I hate to use it and put it this way, but it kind of brought PE down to a—they weren't so esoteric. They were like, "Oh, they're right here on the ground. They right here. They're right here in the Bronx." Straight up, this is a Bronx tune right here, with some new flavor added to it. So, that was the one song—that one, hands down. But everything else, I mean, I've never really broken it down. |
| 00:27:06 | Oliver | Host | Well, you know, I think part of it is because so many of the songs on here have a gazillion samples layered together. It's not in the same way—just to use maybe an obvious example, it's not like listening to a Tribe song and then plucking out like, well, what's that guitar on the beginning of the album that starts it off? Right? Because it's not like it's easily isolated in The Bomb Squad style, with the exception of—at least, to me what jumps out would be the Isaac Hayes piano stabs that are on "Black Steel in the Hour of Chaos", which is taken from—and I'm not gonna be able to pronounce this, but "Hyperbolicsyllabastic—blah, blah, blah" right off of the <i>Hot Buttered Soul</i> album. It's one of the examples on this album where they're not going with that wall of noise style where you have, again, 20 things stacked on one another. It's much more minimalistic, because they recognize that all you really need is to have those keys from Hayes. That'll do most of the work for you, to set the tone, to give the song a sense of drama, a sense of intensity. And I think that for that reason, it |

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| 00:28:13 | Music | Music | stands out, because it's not buried beneath anything else. It just gets to live on its own. "Hyperbolicsyllabicsesquedalymistic" from the album <i>Hot Buttered Soul</i> by Isaac Hayes. |
| 00:28:23 | Music | Music | <i>[Fades seamlessly into the next track.]</i> "Black Steel in the Hour of Chaos" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy. <i>Yo, Chuck, you really gonna trust this, man?</i> <i>Light 'em up, I'm looking for that steel</i> <i>Yo, man, we're gonna break you out of there, man</i> <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i> |
| 00:28:32 | Oliver | Host | How about you, Morgan? |
| 00:28:33 | Morgan | Host | You know, I like "Rebel Without a Pause", because it's James Brown. It's the JB's, so you hear—you know—a lot of that drum, a lot of those drums that you hear in other places. But I think what I paid attention to is "Show 'Em Whatcha Got". And I paid attention to it more this time, because for whatever reason, when Jay-Z had "Show 'Em Whatcha Got", I was like what—I kept thinking like why does this sound familiar? And it didn't occur to me until listening back to this album. I was like oh my god! And I love that. And I played that over and over and over again. And that's Lafayette Afro Rock Band. |
| 00:29:10 | Oliver | Host | Yeah, "Darkest Light", yeah. |
| 00:29:11 | Music | Music | "Darkest Light" from the album <i>Malik</i> by Lafayette Afro Rock Band. |
| 00:29:25 | Music | Music | <i>[Fades seamlessly into the next track.]</i> "Show 'Em Whatcha Got" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy. <i>Freedom is a road seldom traveled by the multitude</i> <i>Public Enemy number 1</i> <i>Show, show, show 'em whatcha got</i> <i>Show 'em whatcha, show 'em whatcha got</i> |
| 00:29:37 | Oliver | Host | <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue.]</i> We will be back with more of our conversation with Ali Shaheed Muhammad about Public Enemy's <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> after a brief word from some of our sibling Max Fun podcasts. Keep it locked. |
| 00:29:48 | Music | Music | <i>[Volume increases.]</i> <i>... wisdom to Adam Clayton Powell</i> <i>Show 'em whatcha got</i> <i>Public enemy</i> <i>Show 'em whatcha got</i> <i>Public Enemy, Public Enemy number 1</i> |

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| | | | <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i> |
| 00:29:57 | Oliver | Promo | We know there are, of course, many, many worthy causes out there, especially now. And we know that not everyone is in a financial position to become Max Fun members. We understand that completely. If you are in a position to invest in this show, we would really appreciate you supporting our ability to make this show that we love doing, and hopefully you love checking out every week. |
| 00:30:21 | Morgan | Promo | We also wanna shoutout a couple of other Max Fun shows. We wanna shout out <i>Minority Korner</i> , <i>FANTI</i> , <i>Who Shot Ya?</i> . These folks are also working hard as they're going through this to make sure that they've got something to share with you guys that's meaningful during this time. And we are really grateful for those of you that are rocking with us, that support our ability to keep doing this, not just for ourselves, but for everybody out there that enjoys what we do, and so that we can continue to do it. And we can only do it because of your membership. |
| 00:30:46 | Oliver | Promo | We really appreciate all of the love audience folks and Max Fun members give us out there. This is all off of Twitter, from The Max B. They say that, "Gentle reminder that Heat Rocks Pod"—with myself and Morgan is, quote, "One of the best music podcasts out. This is the intersection of fandom and scholarship, where people love what they critique and critique what they love. So much care and research with each album they discuss." Unquote. |
| | | | So, thank you so much for—to The Max B for that very kind, very generous comment. And for everyone out there who has shown us love since we launched the show a couple years back, we really appreciate—as Morgan would say—the tweezees and the retweezees. But really, just the sentiment and the support that folks have shown us over the years. It's such a pleasure, such a blessing, to be able to see that. |
| | | | <i>[Morgan agrees.]</i> |
| 00:31:46 | Music | Transition | If you wanna become a member, all you gotta do is to go to MaximumFun.org/join . That is MaximumFun.org/join . |
| 00:31:48 | Morgan | Host | "Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under the Stairs. Yo, and we're back on <i>Heat Rocks</i> , talking <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> with Ali Shaheed Muhammad. |
| 00:31:54 | Oliver | Host | So, Ali, I gotta ask you this. The first Tribe Called Quest single I ever bought—which was at Leopold's Records in Berkley, California. Rest in peace—was "I Left My Wallet in El Segundo". And on the b side of course was the song "Pubic Enemy", which I still think is one of the greatest hip-hop puns in history. |
| | | | <i>[Morgan laughs.]</i> |
| 00:32:23 | Ali | Guest | Did you all come up with the title first and then you wrote the song? Or was it the other way around? And very importantly, did anyone in Public Enemy ever give you feedback about the song? <i>[Laughs.]</i> Nah, no one from PE ever gave us feedback—not me. I don't know if anyone ever said anything to Q-Tip, but no. That song was done—I wanna say we were 17 when we wrote that? So, without giving away— |

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| 00:32:41 | Oliver | Host | It was early. |
| 00:32:42 | Ali | Guest | —too much of that. |
| | | | <i>[They laugh.]</i> |
| | | | It was just a moment in time is the best way to put it. And so, Q-Tip decided to make a song about, you know, a situation that if you don't look after yourself—yeah. The funny thing is that <i>[chuckles]</i> Barry Wiess, who was at the time the president of— |
| 00:33:08 | Oliver | Host | Jive Records, right? |
| 00:33:09 | Ali | Guest | Of Jive Records. He refused to say, “Pubic Enemy”. |
| | | | <i>[Oliver cackles.]</i> |
| | | | He would always say “Public Enemy”, and it's like— |
| 00:33:18 | Oliver | Host | There's no L in there, Barry. |
| 00:33:19 | Ali | Guest | Yeah, you know that's not the song name. You're like you know it's not. Just come on and just say it. It's okay. Pubic Enemy. Say it slowly. But that was just a time, you know, where—who else had a song? Was it Kool Moe Dee, “Go See the Doctor”? You know, so... it was a moment in time, in hip-hop. |
| 00:33:44 | Oliver | Host | Yeah. Alright, turning our attention back to Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back, let's get into—and I think this might be a tough choice, given how many possible selections, but what is the fire track off of this album for you, Ali? When you—whether when you first heard it or when you listen to it now, what is the one song that just, boom, jumps out at you? |
| 00:34:04 | Ali | Guest | That's tough, man. “Rebel Without a Pause”, you know, we talked about that. And “Terminator X to the Edge of Panic”. And more so maybe that, because it was a brilliant kind of a DJ spotlight featured song. But it was—which was popular at the time. You know, in hip-hop, it would be those—you know, Tribe had one with Mr. Muhammad. You know, Eric B. had one. “Eric B. for President”. You know, so there was a time where people would—you know—kind of honor their DJs. But the beauty of this song was that—I mean, and it starts off like, again, I go back to this is like an epic movie about to take off. You know, starts off with that flash, kind of a soundtrack thing. |
| 00:34:56 | Music | Music | “Terminator X to the Edge of Panic” from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy. |
| | | | <i>Terminator X Ah, savior of the universe Terminator X, it! Go, go, go, go Go, go, go, go</i> |
| | | | <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i> |
| 00:35:14 | Ali | Guest | Hearing that, it's just like mind is blown. Like, we barely into the record. We're barely—we're barely 30 seconds in. It's just like what is going on? But then, Chuck comes in, and it's like I know this is a DJ song, but I'm keeping this on topic about what PE is about. Like, we are really about our business and talking about the oppression of the government. Like, we just laced it from a place where we got y'all. We hooked you. You thought it was gonna be a DJ joint where |

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| | | | <p>you can just dance and wild out, but it's like cool, do that, and I'm tell you about the government destroying Black leaders, killing Black leaders. Like, he kept it on topic.</p> |
| 00:35:57 | Music | Music | <p>"Terminator X to the Edge of Panic" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy.</p> <p><i>... his own race playing him close Understand his type of music kills the plan of the Klan You know the pack attack the man with the palm of his hands Police, wild beasts, dogs on a leash No peace to reach, that's why he's packing his black piece Terminator X, yelling with his hands Damn, almighty ruling, ready to jam</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p> |
| 00:36:12 | Oliver | Host | <p>It also—that song also features one of the great Flavor Flav adlibs on there, which is, "Who gives a fuck about a goddamn Grammy."</p> |
| 00:36:18 | Ali | Guest | <p>"Goddamn Grammy!"</p> |
| 00:36:19 | Oliver | Host | <p>And I don't wanna detour too much here, but if we're gonna talk about DJs and scratching on this album, I gotta—you know—give recognition to Johnny "Juice" Rosado, who was a Puerto Rican DJ who did a lot of the cuts on both the first two Public Enemy—maybe even <i>Fear of a Black Planet</i>, but definitely on the first two albums, he was actually the one doing a lot of the scratching on it. Chuck actually did some of the scratching on some of the songs, too. But Juice actually—I don't think—I mean, he wasn't part of the group in a formal way, oftentimes has not really gotten the credit for doing—for being called in to handle some of the more intricate scratching.</p> <p>I mean, X was apparently like a really great party DJ. He was a very great—a very good stage DJ in that sense. But in terms of the actual scratching work, it was Johnny Juice who was handling a lot of that work. So, I just wanted to—you know—put that out there, as someone who studies DJs. Like, I wanna give credit where it's due in that respect.</p> |
| 00:37:09 | Music | Music | <p>"Terminator X to the Edge of Panic" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy.</p> <p><i>Rocking like that! Like that! Like that! Yeah, man! Yo, that's right, boy! Terminator X, driving you to the edge of panic, boy! Yeah, that's right! And yo, Terminator</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p> |
| 00:37:19 | Oliver | Host | <p>Morgan, how about you? What's your fire track off of here?</p> |
| 00:37:23 | Morgan | Host | <p>Mine is—I gotta say "Don't Believe the Hype". One of my favorite lines is he says, "Some claim that I'm a smuggler, some say I never heard of you, rap burglar." That's just one of my favorites. I'm like, ooh! Ooooooh! <i>[Laughs.] Ooooooh!</i> So, I like that one. But I also love "Rebel Without a Pause". What about you?</p> |
| 00:37:43 | Oliver | Host | <p>I mean, for me, "Bring the Noise" just in terms of sheer energy. It's just—even listening to it today, it is such a atom bomb of a song. And the hypeness of it is so immense.</p> |

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| 00:37:55 | Music | Music | <p>"Bring the Noise" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy.</p> <p><i>Turn it up! Bring the noise!</i></p> <p><i>Yo, they should know by now that they can't stop this bum rush Word up, better keep telling me to turn it down But yo, Flavor Flav ain't going out like that</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p> |
| 00:38:12 | Oliver | Host | <p>We were kind of touching on this a little bit, which is about favorite moments on the album—so not songs, but really just moments that, especially for an album that I'm sure collectively here, we've heard countless times. And for me, it was then, and it still is now, it's on "Bring the Noise". And it's the isolated "Funky Drummer" break portion that comes out of the first chorus.</p> |
| 00:38:35 | Music | Music | <p>"Bring the Noise" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy.</p> <p><i>Ayo, Chuck, they're saying we're too Black, man Yo, I don't understand what they're saying But little do they know they can get a smack for that, man</i></p> <p><i>Never badder than bad 'cause the brother is madder than mad At the fact that's corrupt like a senator Soul on a roll, but you treat it like soap on a rope 'Cause the beats and the lines are so dope Listen for lessons...</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p> |
| 00:38:53 | Ali | Guest | <p><i>[Singing along.]</i> "Listen for lessons I'm saying inside music that the critics are blasting me for!" Oh my god. Woo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo!</p> |
| 00:39:00 | Oliver | Host | <p>I don't know if that was the first time I heard "Funky Drummer" on a song, but it was definitely the first time that I heard "Funky Drummer" and thought, "What is this?!" And just to isolate it and let that ride, even to this day, that is just—it has me so hype. Morgan, favorite moment for you?</p> |
| 00:39:18 | Morgan | Host | <p>You always put me in the hot seat. You know what I mean? But I love the beginning of "Louder Than a Bomb". Because the beginning of that song doesn't sound like the beginning of anything else on that album. There's that sweet Kool & The Gang sample of "Who's Gonna Take the Weight".</p> |
| 00:39:32 | Music | Music | <p>"Louder Than a Bomb" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy.</p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue.]</i></p> |
| 00:39:39 | Morgan | Host | <p>And then I'm just sort of like lulled into some smoothness. And right as I get lulled, Flavor's like:</p> |
| 00:39:46 | Music | Music | <p><i>[Volume increases.]</i></p> <p><i>They claim we're products from the bottom of hell 'Cause the Black is back, and it's bound to sell Picture us cooling out on the Fourth of July And if you heard we were celebrating, that's a worldwide lie</i></p> |

Yo, Chuck...

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

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| 00:39:59 | Morgan | Host | And I wasn't expecting that. So, I liked the twists and turns that that song takes at the opening. |
| 00:40:04 | Ali | Guest | Just for "Louder Than a Bomb", I wanted to say about that—to me, I think that that is the definitive Public Enemy song, in my opinion. I think it's Chuck really being so "I don't give a fuck". He's older than me, so he's—I'm pretty sure, you know—witnessed the killings of Martin Luther King. You know, witnessed the killings or was—maybe not eye witnessed, but was around at the time of the killing of Malcolm X, the killing of John F. Kennedy. And so many other unsung civil rights activists. And seeing the silencing of people who are just trying to make people's lives better and being massacred only because of our skin color. |

And I think with "Louder Than a Bomb", I think he knew that he had the master weapon of his pen. He had the master weapon of not only television—because television at that point in time, obviously gave a pivot to what was happening, you know, in the '60s, where people can see this, these things happening in America and where it was talked about like a, "Oh my god, this is really happening. We gotta do something about it." To having that moment to still, you know—shutting people off, but he still had that. In addition, he had the culture of hip-hop, which was nonconformist at that time. And he had the power of the broadcast of his record company.

And at that time, he can say some of the things that he said in that record, and it's not a matter of getting away with it. It's a matter of you really gotta deal with this. You can't tuck us under the way you've been tucking us away, at this point. You know, really addressing the CIA, the FBI, like just straight calling them out, not hiding. You know? To me, that—"Louder Than a Bomb" is like the ultimate mission of Public Enemy.

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| 00:42:25 | Oliver | Host | Yeah. Two quick things about this, too is—number one, and we keep hammering this point: it may not seem like a big deal for people to call out the FBI and CIA by today's standards. But again, who the hell was doing this in 1988? Right? Let alone like a Black man, number one. Right? Number two—and this goes back to something we were talking about in the first half: is one of my favorite things about "Louder Than a Bomb"—I mean, everything, Ali, that you said is completely on point. But like, Chuck and his flow on this song is incredible! Like, stylistically, he is <u>killin</u> g it on this song! And saying something at the same time. But I always marvel at just the alacrity of his rhyme scheme that he puts together on this song. |
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| 00:43:07 | Music | Music | "Louder Than a Bomb" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy. |
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*Cold holding the load, the burden breaking the mold
I ain't lying, denying, because they're checking my code
Am I bugging 'cause they're bugging my phone - for information?
No telling who's selling out - power building the nation so
Joining the set, the point-blank target
Every brother's inside, so least, not you forget, no*

Takin' the blame

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

- 00:43:23 Oliver Host Well, anyways, we've been talking about favorite moments. Ali, do you have a favorite moment off of this album?
- 00:43:28 Ali Guest Hmm. I can't say that I have a favorite moment. I really—like, I would have to listen through the whole album again and go, "Oh yeah, there we go. That's it." There are so many moments of this album.

[Oliver agrees.]

- 00:44:30 Oliver Host That they all just—this is one experience, to me. And like even, you know, "She Watch Channel Zero?!" is like a weird song to me. Very weird. It doesn't stand out as a moment, but it stands out because Chuck never really addressed a woman or women in that regard. You know? And you know, the merging of hip-hop and rock—you know, was a thing that I think continued on after this. And it was—it's a different side of Public Enemy, but that song always was like the, "Hm. I wonder if they decided—if there was an argument of should we keep this on or should we take it off?"
- 00:44:30 Oliver Host And they've taken a lot of heat for that song, especially from Black feminists over the years, because it is one of the few songs where they're really addressing women, and not in a particularly positive way. So, you know, it remains kind of a—one of the few divisive moments, I think, on this album for a lot of people. Yeah.
- 00:44:45 Music Music "She Watch Channel Zero?!" from the album *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* by Public Enemy.

*Hey yo, let me tell you a little something, baby
I'ma take your set, and I'ma throw it out the window, G!*

*2, 7, 5, 4, 8, she watched, she said
All added up to zero, and nothing in her head
She turns and turns, and she hopes the soaps
Are for real, she learns that it ain't true, nope
But she won't survive and rather die in a lie*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

- 00:45:02 Morgan Host You know, I've spent a number of shows—and Christian and Oliver can attest, too—I have spent a lot of shows extolling the virtues of skits and voicemail messages and interludes. And this album did not disappoint for interludes. Right? And one thing I like about the interludes is they don't feel like a stop moment of the album. They're so tethered to whatever came before it and whatever came after it that I'm not disappointed by that. Starting with "Countdown to Armageddon". It is such a—it's not an interlude. It's the introduction to the album, but it just gets you in—I mean, you are ready.
- 00:45:42 Music Music "Countdown to Armageddon" from the album *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* by Public Enemy.

*Let me hear you make some noise!
In concert for BBC Television tonight and a fresh start to the week*

Let me hear you make some noise for Public Enemy!

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:45:56 Morgan Host

After that, I think my favorite is “Mind Terrorist”. And there’s not much being said, but it is very cerebral and mental. It’s like your conscience talking to you, you know, all through it.

00:46:07 Music Music

“Mind Terrorist” from the album *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* by Public Enemy.

*Kick that!
Ha-ha
Yeah, boy
Bass for your face
Kick that!
Ha-ha
Yeah, boy
Bass for your face*

*Kick That!
Bass, bass for your face
Bass for your face
Bass for your face*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:46:20 Ali Guest

You know, one thing that comes to mind in listening to that is—and we haven’t talked about it—is their stage presence. And that particular interlude—like, I saw PE a couple times back then, and I’m like, “Was that like a moment where they kind of just like stepped off and like regrouped and changed the scene? And I don’t recall, but it seems like that would be a moment to do that.

[Oliver agrees.]

Which they were excellent at. You know. It wasn’t just the studio sharpness; there was the stage. Like, seeing PE was—I didn’t grow up going to see Kiss or Aerosmith or great rock bands. I saw Public Enemy. You know? I’m sorry, I didn’t even see—you know—Parliament. Like, I was too young. *[Chuckles.]* Or Earth, Wind & Fire. But I saw Public Enemy. And to me, that was better than Ringling Brothers. You know? Like, it was just like what is going on right now? Like, I don’t even—can’t even put it to words. When the S1s come out, it’s just like, “Whaaat?” Like, you—I felt like, oh , the world is over. Like, this is—I’ve never seen anything like this. Is this a show? Is this real life? Is this—like, are they just playing with everyone?

00:47:46 Oliver Host

“Countdown to Armageddon”, yeah.

00:47:48 Ali Guest

Yeah, it felt like a real takeover. So, you know, that speaks to that.

00:47:55 Music Music

“Countdown to Armageddon” from the album *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* by Public Enemy.

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:48:08 Oliver Host

Ali, if you had to describe *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* in three words, what three words would you choose?

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| 00:48:15 | Ali | Guest | Hm. Black. Majestic. I'm trying to find another colorful word for fearless. And because I don't have it yet— |
| 00:48:28 | Oliver | Host | Yeah, I think fearless seems pretty good. Very apt. |
| 00:48:30 | Ali | Guest | Yeah, but I wanted something a lot more colorful than fearless. But I'll just leave it at that. Black, majestic. |
| 00:48:37 | Oliver | Host | Black, majestic, and fearless. Yeah. |
| 00:48:40 | Music | Music | "Don't Believe the Hype" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy. |
| | | | <i>Let me tell you a little something, man: A lot of people on daytime radio scared of us Because they too ignorant to understand the lyrics of the Truth that we pumping into them clogged-up brain cells That just spun their little wooden skulls they call caps You know what I'm saying? But the S1s'll straighten it out quick-fast, in a hurry Don't worry, Flavor vision ain't blurry, you know what I'm saying?</i> |
| | | | <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i> |
| 00:48:59 | Oliver | Host | Last thing would be we always wanna leave our audience with something else to check out besides the album under discussion. And so, if people who are out there really got into <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions</i> , we wanna give you something else to put onto your list. I was gonna suggest that—and we've devoted an entire episode of <i>Heat Rocks</i> to this, but go back and listen to James Brown's compilation from 1986, <i>In the Jungle Groove</i> , because I guarantee you, The Bomb Squad spent a lot of time listening to that comp, because a lot of the songs—or I should say, a lot of the samples that they use on this album I think almost definitely came off of that compilation. |
| | | | And if I'm not too self-serving, then go listen to me and Morgan talk about that album to kind of get a sense of what made it such an important anthology and the ways in which it shaped sample culture, especially in the mid to late 1980s. And it's just a really funky album, 'cause—I mean, yeah, it's par excellence. |
| 00:49:54 | Music | Music | "Funky Drummer" from the album <i>In the Jungle Groove</i> by James Brown. |
| | | | <i>I'm about to blow One, two, three, four Get it</i> |
| | | | <i>Ain't it funky</i> |
| | | | <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i> |
| 00:50:10 | Oliver | Host | Morgan, how about you? |
| 00:50:11 | Morgan | Host | Well, you know I always have two. So, I'd say skip ahead to 1990 and jewel called <i>To the East, Blackwards</i> , from the legendary X Clan. Professor X, The Overseer, Sugarshot, the Rhythm Provider, and Brother J. |
| 00:50:26 | Oliver | Host | Brother J. |
| 00:50:27 | Morgan | Host | You got the pro-Black Black nationalists, and they are protected by the red, the black, and the green, sissy— |

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| 00:50:33 | Crosstalk | Crosstalk | Oliver & Ali: With the key! |
| | | | <i>[They laugh.]</i> |
| 00:50:34 | Morgan | Host | Yeah! With the key! So funky, so funky, and you wanna—a couple of tracks you should check out on that one are two of my favorites, which are “Raise the Flag” and “Grand Verbalizer, What Time is It?” |
| 00:50:45 | Music | Music | “Grand Verbalizer, What Time is It?” from the album <i>To the East, Blackwards</i> by X Clan. |
| | | | <i>For you the funk will never flow, and that's another blow. Make your move beef apprentice, I never step. I'm a tribal move your master hasn't figured yet. Run your weapons through my swords and shield What's the higher level if your shit ain't real My mystic magic, What cha gonna do. Think before you step</i> |
| | | | <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i> |
| 00:51:01 | Ali | Guest | Can I give you guys a little bit of history? |
| 00:51:05 | Oliver | Host | Oh, please! |
| 00:51:07 | Ali | Guest | So, I was born Muslim, but my mother and father got divorced when I was two. And so, my mom—who had become Muslim when she met my father—went back to the church. And now she just calls herself spiritual. So, she’s not tied in. But I say that to say I spent time in the Mosque, and I spent time in the church. And a lot of time in church organizations—going to Bible camps every summer and Sunday School repeatedly. And at the age of 12 is when I met Brother J in a Sunday School class. |
| | | | <i>[Morgan laughs with delight.]</i> |
| | | | And so, that was my homie. And the crazy thing is, I would always see him in church. And at some point, I stopped going. In freshman year of high school, they had this orientation before school—like a month before school—and come walking in is Brother J. And I’m like, “Yooooo! What are you doing here?” So, you know, it’s crazy. And then, at some point—you know—we formed Tribe, and he formed the X Clan. And you know, our paths have been pretty much a line. So, just crazy how life takes you sometimes when you look back at it like that. |
| 00:52:29 | Oliver | Host | Morgan, what was your other choice? |
| 00:52:30 | Morgan | Host | Oh, my second choice would be <i>AmeriKKKa’s Most Wanted</i> . If you wanna hear this type of production—Bomb Squad production, Chuck D, Flavor Flav make an appearance. And of course, the banger that is “Endangered Species”. So, those were the two I would recommend. |
| 00:52:45 | Music | Music | “Endangered Species (Tales from the Darkside)” from the album <i>AmeriKKKa’s Most Wanted</i> by Ice Cube. |
| | | | <i>"When I got a sawed-off, bodies are hauled off" It's a shame, that n-ggas die young But to the light side it don't matter none It'll be a drive by homicide But to me it's just another tale from the Darkside</i> |

*Standing in the middle of war, the minute we flex
When we die, we won't make Jet
Ebony can't see to the light side*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

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| 00:53:03 | Oliver | Host | Ali, how about you? What would you recommend to our audience about what they should check out after <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions</i> ? |
| 00:53:10 | Ali | Guest | Probably nothing from the world of hip-hop. I mean, I understand the question, just keeping it in—you know, like you discover PE, and this is the first one. So, what's next? You know, clearly their next album. But this album is that rich to me that it would—I actually wouldn't listen to anything other than this. I don't need it. |
| 00:53:29 | Oliver | Host | It just shuts it down. That's a wrap of the day, yeah. |
| 00:53:32 | Ali | Guest | <i>[Laughs.]</i> I just need a time out to really digest it all, because it is filling. Chuck sang a lot. He's doing a lot. Flavor's doing a lot. Everything is so—that's why I chose this album. It's a powerful record, and it's not just like, oh, let me just have this going on in the background. You know. You could do that, but I'd say like if I were going to say to someone like you should listen to—there's an album I wanna introduce you to, I would then—you know—follow with, "Don't do anything else. Just listen to this record." Like, you know? "Don't check your emails. Don't check your text messages. Don't go on IG. Like, just listen to this record. So. |
| 00:54:21 | Music | Music | "Louder Than a Bomb" from the album <i>It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> by Public Enemy. |

*Come on, come on (Louder!)
Come on, come on (Louder!)
Come on, come on (Louder!) (Yeah!)
Come on, come on (Louder!)
Come on, come on (Louder!)
Come on, come on (Louder!)
(Right)*

*'Cause the D is for dangerous, you can come and get some of this
I teach and speak, so when it's spoke, it's no joke
The voice of choice*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

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| 00:54:37 | Morgan | Host | Well, that's gonna do it for this episode of <i>Heat Rocks</i> with our special guest, who I'm honored to have on the show, Ali Shaheed Muhammad. Please tell us what you're working on now. |
| 00:54:46 | Ali | Guest | <i>[Theme music fades in.]</i> I'll just say long live Tribe, long live Lucy Pearl. Right now, presently, I have The Midnight Hour. So, that's my band with Adrian Younge. Adrian Younge is also not only my bandmate but he's my co-composer when we put on—we take off our producer hats and our artists hats, then we put on our composer hats. And we're working on a couple of television shows that I wanna be able to mention right now, but I don't think I contractually can mention them by name. But they are important, and people will be happy to see that we're associated with those and a movie. And the one thing |

that I'm really proud of our work, putting the producer hat back on, is Jazz is Dead, which is our event/record company. We released an album called *Jazz is Dead 001*, which features works of Roy Ayers, Gary Bartz, Doug Carn, Brian Jackson, Azymuth, Marcos Valle. I feel like I'm forgetting someone. This is horrible.

And the Roy Ayers album will be coming out in a few weeks. Marcos Valle comes out in another couple of months after that. So, right now we're just really trying to heavily promote the work that we did with those—oh my god, legends! Like, this—you gotta bring me back to talk about Jazz is Dead, but if you go to JazzisDead.co, you can see what we've been constructing there.

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| 00:56:32 | Oliver | Host | We just wanna say thank you again to everyone who has gone out of their way to support our show by becoming Max Fun members. You all are really the reason that we continue creating this show, because without our audience—I mean, Morgan and I love talking music with one another, but we don't need to do it in this fashion. We're doing it because we know that you enjoy it and through your feedback we get a sense of what it is that you get out of this, and it's the same thing for us. So, thank you again so much for your support and just being fans of the show over the years. |
| 00:57:01 | Morgan | Host | Thank you so much. And if you haven't had a chance to become a member yet, you can do so at MaximumFun.org/join . And thank you so much, again. |
| 00:57:10 | Music | Transition | "Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under the Stairs. |
| 00:57:11 | Oliver | Host | <i>[Music continues under the dialogue.]</i> You've been listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> with me, Oliver Wang, and Morgan Rhodes. |
| 00:57:15 | Morgan | Host | Our theme music is "Crown Ones" by Thes One of People Under the Stairs. Shout out to Thes for the hookup. |
| 00:57:21 | Oliver | Host | <i>Heat Rocks</i> is produced by myself and Morgan, alongside Christian Dueñas, who also edits, engineers, and does the booking for our shows. |
| 00:57:28 | Morgan | Host | Our senior producer is Laura Swisher, and our executive producer is Jesse Thorn. |
| 00:57:33 | Oliver | Host | We are part of the Maximum Fun family, taping every week live in their studios in the Westlake neighborhood of Los Angeles. |
| 00:57:44 | Sound Effect | Transition | <i>[Music fades out.]</i> Cheerful ukulele chord. |
| 00:57:45 | Speaker 1 | Guest | MaximumFun.org . |
| 00:57:46 | Speaker 2 | Guest | Comedy and culture. |
| 00:57:48 | Speaker 3 | Guest | Artist owned— |
| 00:57:49 | Speaker 4 | Guest | —audience supported. |