



Gangrene Bio

The Alchemist and **Oh No**, respected and accomplished MCs and producers in their own right, weren't acquainted until they met at a show headlined by Dilated Peoples member and mutual friend, **Evidence**. Inspired, Al contacted Oh No and proposed a collaborative project. From that point they "just clicked", says Oh No. "I sent him a verse and a beat, and he sent a beat and a verse." The creative sparring continued, and they began to refer to the work as **Gangrene**. As the project began to flesh itself out organically over the course of these exchanges, each artists relished the opportunity to best his cohort with the most profoundly disturbing, cut-throat concoction he could muster, be it a threatening stanza or traumatic instrumental. The friendly competition was spurred on by a deep-rooted mutual respect and admiration for each other's work, and the music began to reflect this as they exchanged sonic influence, ultimately contributing to an aesthetic that resides at the corner of Crenshaw and Elm Street.

In the early 90s, The Alchemist was inspired by street level hip-hop at a young age, but his surroundings differed starkly from those surrounding his favorite MCs. Seeing beyond the glimmering façade of his Beverly Hills neighborhood, he sought mentors who would expose him to a different reality. **Cypress Hill's DJ Muggs** kept him grounded under his tutelage, schooling him on the use of the ASR-10 sampler. Muggs eventually began to pass on work to the young producer/MC who landed his first beats on **Mobb Deep's Murda Muzik**. After visiting, Al felt more home in the cramped quarters of NYC and made the trans-continental leap of faith in order to better acquaint himself with the environment that had birthed hip-hop culture and he thrived amongst it. His solo debut, *1st Infantry*, was a veritable who's-who of mean-mugging rhyme spitters like **The Lox**, **Mobb Deep**, and **The Game** and it served as the red carpet that introduced Al as a formidable rhyme teller himself.

Meanwhile, in Oxnard, **Stones Throw Records** had just gotten off the ground, bolstered by the success of their premier release, **Lootpack's Soundpieces: Da Antidote**. Lootpack member and Stones Throw exec **Madlib** had tapped his younger brother for a few verses, and the fledgling rapper/beatmaker went by Oh No. His subsequent releases on the label, 2004's *The Disrupt* and 2006's *Exodus into Unheard Rhythms*, were later met with a great deal of acclaim. Oh No cemented his status as one of the most forward thinking instrumentalists and lyricists making hip-

hop with the release of *Dr. No's Experiment*, a concept record that lifted samples strictly from Middle Eastern and Mediterranean vinyl.

Three years after the creative mutagen was introduced, the Alchemist and Oh No stand upon a seething heap of rugged de-compositions to be released as an album titled *Gutter Water* on **Decon**. Together as Gangrene they present a dense canvas from which verses by guests **Planet Asia, Raekwon, Evidence, MED, Twins Gambino, Fashawn** and **Roc-C** leap into action alongside rhymes of their own. Oh No explains, "Our sounds are really raw, gritty. It just worked."

Though both are life long students of the school of sampling, they're approach to doing so differed initially. Gradually breaking down analog recordings to there elements, Al and Oh have since become a force of nature, accosting beautiful pieces of music, turning them inside out and repackaging them into an ominous, pitch-colored void of thuggery. Gangrene is a hood-certified existential demonstration of creative conceptualism; creating something by taking less from more, returning an organic creation to the soil, diamonds into coal.

About Decon Records

Officially formed in 2003 after the success of their first feature length film and cult classic, *One Big Trip*, Decon Records has become a leader in the independent music scene, home to legends and tomorrow's cultural leaders alike. Operating as an artistic partner, Decon only signs 50/50 deals with their artists, bringing their strategic marketing and video production arms into the fold, fostering multi-media experiences with every release. Decon artists cross a wide spectrum of talent, and include the likes of Dilated Peoples, Freestyle Fellowship, Jurassic 5, Chali 2na, Aceyalone, Evidence, Rakaa, RJD2, Lyrics Born, The Alchemist and Oh No (as Gangrene), 88-Keys, Freddie Gibbs and recent partnerships with Jay Electronica and Nneka.

<http://deconrecords.com/>

Decon also operates a full-service creative agency under the banner Decon Creative Group with clients that include Activision, HBO, Red Bull, Universal, Teva and Viacom.

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