



Hitting physical and digital retail October 12, 2010, *Dragon Slayer*, Pigeon John's second album for Quannum Projects, is as energetic and witty as any previous Pigeon John release but, way more than ever before, this is his album. With the aid of General Electriks' Herve Salters, he produced the whole record, including, for the first time, recording and chopping up his own instrumentation rather than just flipping samples and banging on an MPC. "It's a whole new venture," says Pigeon John, who was born in Omaha and raised in Inglewood and Hawthorne. "It becomes bigger than being a writer, and you have to be an editor, in book-form. Working with Herve Salters makes my music feel new to me. It's been a great process, I love it."

The dragon that Pigeon John slays isn't just the malaise of a quarter-life crisis; it's all the little obstacles and stories that come together to make a person. It's that moment of realization, as PJ details on the head-nodding harmonies of "Buttersoft Seats", when buying a nephew's new Jordans suddenly becomes more important than owning the hottest whip on the block. Or how, with the right mind state, sipping coffee in your backyard can turn you into "*a young Sean Connery in Cabo*"; at least while "So Gangster" sets the soundtrack. On "Before We're Gone," a classic acoustic-guitar and airy-keyboard cut about being on the road and missing *that* girl, the entertaining emcee holds onto moments as small as how she puts on chapstick while fighting off big problems like "*Suicide Girls at the Door*." Book-ended by "The Bomb" and "Ben Vereen"—two victorious sing-alongs about non-female and female-related strife, respectively—*Dragon Slayer* continually finds the center of a Venn diagram between the lives of Pigeon John and his fans.

Cultivating his talent at the legendary Good Life Cafe in the early-'90s—alongside artists like Kurupt, Freestyle Fellowship and Jurassic 5—Pigeon John overcame scattered boos at his first open mic performance to tour the world several times over. He's trekked the States more than he can count and made a name for himself in Australia, France and Canada. The man knows how to have fun and share the party; he's proven this over the years as one of the best live hip-hop acts on the planet. Featured in The Source's "Mic Check" column and among Spin's "Next Big Things" and URB's "Next 100," Pigeon John has also heard his songs in XBOX games ("Project Gotham" and "NBA Inside Drive 2002"), as the theme song for the TV show "Infomania" on CurrentTV and films ("Get Over It"). In addition to all that, he was the first rapper to be on Chuck D's Indie 103 radio show and the first artist asked for a repeat performance on FUEL TV's "Daily Habit." Then there are his appearances in print and television ads for Levi's and Nestle Crunch; he is, after all, a charismatic and well-dressed young man who in his free time collaborates with underground veteran crews like L.A. Symphony and Brainwash Projects. But it's Pigeon John's live show that really resonates with music fans; his mindblowing stage presence allowing him to command the stage between Polyphonic Spree and Brandi Carlile at SXSW without missing a beat.

With a solo discography that reads like a resume—*Pigeon John is Clueless* (2002), *Pigeon John Is Dating Your Sister* (2003), *Pigeon John Sings The Blues* (2005), and *Pigeon John and the Summertime Pool Party* (2006)—the Los Angeles rapper is absolutely ready for self-expression without the need to formally introduce himself. "[*Dragon Slayer*] isn't a step away from my other records, it's just on a different wave," he says. "It's a little risky, but c'mon man, what am I risking anyways?"