

## Mp3 Billy Woods - The Chalice



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Chainsaw lyrics and laser-guided production aimed at the system and your favorite rappers noggin. With appearances by Cannibal Ox, Karneige (Def Jux), Monsta Island Czars and backwoodz extended fam. 21 MP3 Songs HIP HOP/RAP: East Coast, HIP HOP/RAP: Hip Hop Details: backwoodz studioz is kicking the door off the hinges in '04 with a new release from billy woods featuring Cannibal Ox, Kong of Monsta Island Czars, Karneige (Definitive Jux), Thrill Gates plus Priviledge and Stretch Nyce of Rec Circle. The Chalice is a follow up to backwoodz studioz's 2003 concept album, Camouflage which paired Can-Ox's Vordul Mega and billy woods. This album is a step forward as woods and co. throw down for 21 tracks of rugged rhymes and insightful lyricism. In-house producers 007, Aerotaxi and Casino Earl craft a landscape of sounds with help from No-Cal's DJ Marmaduke and North Carolina's Dan Datiles of Brutha Monk. It's an election year and backwoodz studioz aint leaving no hanging chads, sic semper tyrannis moth#&rs. INDEPENDENT REVIEW from URBANSMARTS.COM There's real hunger on this album. Shameless simplicity and bareness. A brashness. A commanding silent anger. Everything that's said is a speech. A call to arms. An impatience imposed by the empty stomach of the have nots. A report on the political uphill battle. The hand of short straws. Frustration. Despair. Powerless. Quiet weaponry in a loud, flashy and glistening war. What used to be a mixtape/work in progress sound, has now been fully perfected and adopted, in all its imperfect rough-around-the-edges growing appearance (listen to "Shinin"). What Billy Woods and comrades put on this record is sounding like a minimized version of a groundbreaking artist. It offers the promises of something soon to be very big. Soon to be the hype of the moment. Soon to be the hushed secret tip one true head gives to the next. And not necessarily because Billy Woods is the best rapper. He wouldn't (and shouldn't) demand such a position for himself. But because he is an honest rapper. And he's the student of a Vordul (who's on "Mind Control" and "Last

MC's") that is now pushing his professor forward to not lag behind. They are bizarro twins: related but different. Both good, both esoteric. Both at times complicated to follow, both with a lit fuse nearing the body that will explode. And much more political: so says Billy "if I'd have a hammer, you'd be with Assata in Havana" and "[the] only video I got out is on surveillance cameras". Both on "High Treason". The song after "Capture The Flag", a storm up the hill, in a misleading friendly beat. And speaking of beats, "BBC" and especially "Blowout" are surprisingly uplifting with less grit. The variation of music can go from the spacey funk of "Gourmet", to the creativity of "Damage" or the resemblance to old RZA material on "Sativa / Stilllife", a collaboration with Stretch Nyce. And as political the vast majority is on here is, as much angst carries every song, with "CJ's" we raise a glass, almost content. While so much is just straight talk, some is detoured flowing, like the thematically barely related "Drinks", which features Vast Aire and Karnegie Sativa. But the revolution is never avoided or abandoned, even if Billy says that he's "dead like a Palestinian on a mission" (on "Get Out The Kitchen"). Instead he recruits like-minded people, like Kong from the Monsta Island Czars army for the soulful "Cross My Heart". With impatience running through this record like broken contracts run through the history of Native Americans and white settlers. Impatience that's not a weakness, but rather a 'ready to go'. As this album is strong. A strength hardly described but obvious upon listening. It's an unlikely promise as much as a kept promise. It's pureness in many ways. It's what rap still can be. And it's what more rap should be like more often. review: tadah

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