

ABOUT THE ARTIST

The Cover Art is entitled Reins of Freedumb.
It was created in 2002 by Kevin Rashid Johnson.

My life began in rebellion and in a broken home. My parents separated while I was an infant. Although my father took custody of my sibling and me, he was almost never in the home because of his commitment, bordering on obsession, with rising from poverty into Amerika's Black middle class. My primary care thus fell to my dear paternal grandmother, who was powerless to rein in my rebelliousness—especially that against my absentee father. When he did find his way home it was usually to repress my behavior with violence, to no avail. In turn I'd act out my own limited violence against increasingly larger opponents outside the home, which became a tendency to challenge bullies.

My father accomplished his career goals and tried to steer me in the same direction, but I had no interest in 'success' and the empty trappings that came with it. Despite my father's years of sacrifice, including absence from his family's life, none of the people I loved outside our immediate household reaped any benefits from our rise to status. If Amerikan success meant leaving behind, abandoning, forgetting loved ones, I wanted no part of it.

Though routinely praised as being particularly bright and talented, I never made much of a career of school. I was repeatedly suspended and expelled, leading to a lengthy incarceration at age 11, 'arranged' by my father. Shortly after my return home, he and I fell out completely and irreparably in what nearly became a fatal situation. At that point I vowed to never again tolerate anyone's attempts to control me with violence.

From then on, my life was marked by living on the streets, resisting the Establishment, and learning the ways of the world. After living what seemed several lifetimes of experience, I found myself in prison for life at age 18. In prison, I relentlessly warred with guards in response to their organized oppression, terror tactics and abuses targeted at me and my peers. My resistance consisted of counter-violence and ultimately litigation. I quickly learned the futility of seeking a savior in the Establishment's institutions (the courts).

In 2001, my journey towards redemption began through exposure to and study of socialist revolutionary theory and history, beginning with the

writings of George L. Jackson. I developed, refined, and contextualized my learning by applying it to the realities of my day-to-day life and experiences. I found my calling in the people's struggle against capitalist imperialism and all its attendant oppressive features. I began compiling art and essays reflecting my ideological and political development, hoping to make what contributions I could from within these walls of confinement.

I continue to grow and develop an understanding encompassing methods of struggle toward building a world free of exploitation and division along lines of wealth, race, gender, age, sexuality, etc. A world where all life can co-exist as a community and interdependent whole. It's my heartfelt desire to contribute all I can to help bring this world about. This new order can and must happen if we expect to exist even a few generations from now.

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

Kevin "Rashid" Johnson, Minister of Defense,
New Afrikan Black Panther Party—Prison Chapter
Fall, 2006