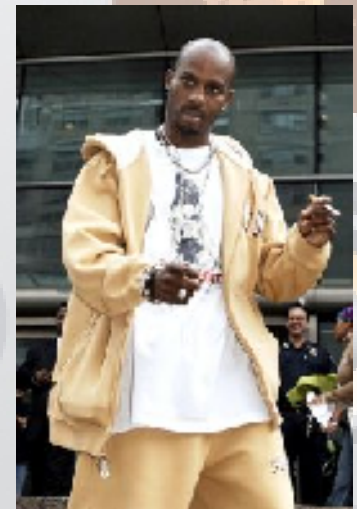




Presents DMX

Earl Simmons (born December 18, 1970 in Baltimore, Maryland), better known by his stage name DMX (Dark Man X), is an American rapper and actor signed to Ruff Ryders Entertainment. In 1998 he released his debut solo album, *It's Dark and Hell Is Hot*, and has since released 1998's *Flesh of My Flesh, Blood of My Blood*, 1999's *...And Then There Was X*, 2001's *The Great Depression*, 2003's *Grand Champ* and 2006's *Year of the Dog...Again*. He has plans to release two more albums, *Walk with Me Now* and the gospel inspired *You'll Fly with Me Later*, but his incarceration on drug possession charges had prevented him from doing so until early 2010.

Following the deaths of Tupac Shakur and the Notorious B.I.G., DMX took over as the reigning, undisputed king of hardcore rap. He was that rare commodity: a commercial powerhouse with artistic and street credibility to spare. His rapid ascent to stardom was actually almost a decade in the making, which gave him a chance to develop the theatrical image that made him one of rap's most distinctive personalities during his heyday.



Everything about DMX was unremittingly intense, from his muscular, tattooed physique to his gruff, barking delivery, which made a perfect match for his trademark lyrical obsession with dogs. Plus, there was substance behind the style; much of his work was tied together by a fascination with the split between the sacred and the profane. He could move from spiritual anguish one minute to a narrative about the sins of the streets the next, yet keep it all part of the same complex character, sort of like a hip-hop Johnny Cash. The results were compelling enough to make DMX the first artist ever to have his first five albums enter the charts at number one.



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