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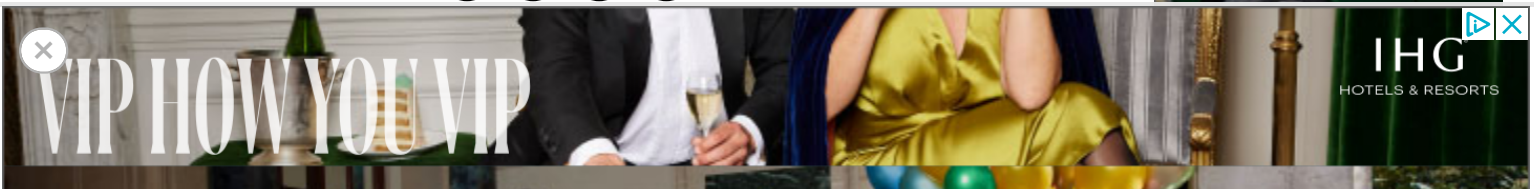
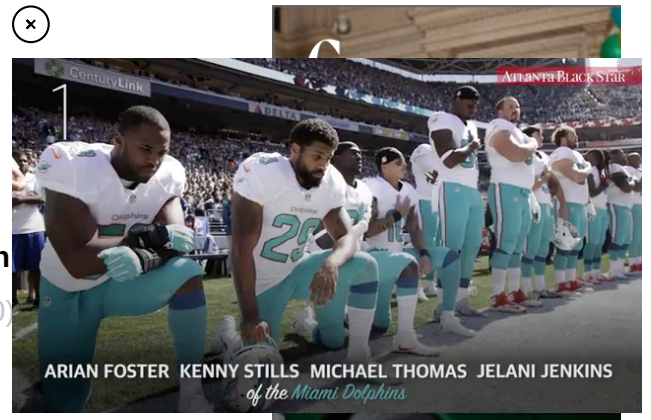
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CULTURE

“Devils Pie” Doc Is A Hearty Dish For D’Angelo Fans




By Stevan "Vegas" Smith | Published on
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gives viewers a glimpse into the past, present, and future of a musical mystery.

My wife and I are day one D'Angelo fans. Prior to the release of his comeback album in 2014, *Black Messiah*, we'd often wonder if we'd ever hear from the soul singer again.



Flash Pick



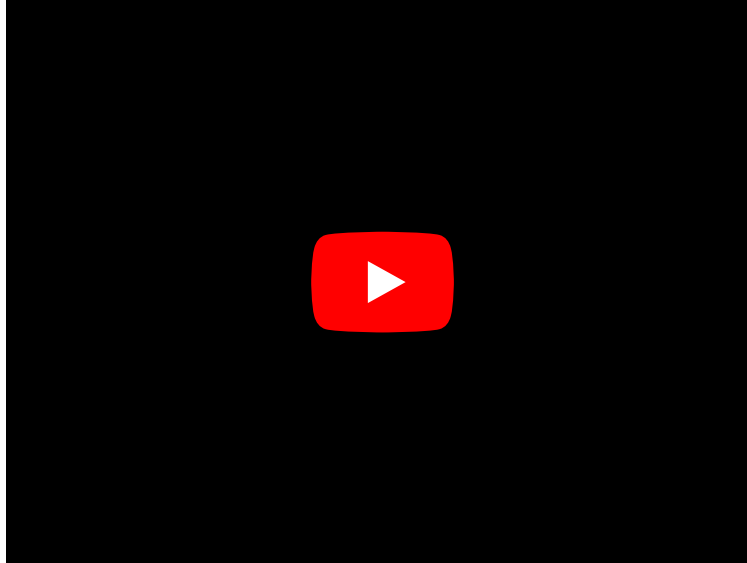
Up to 50%

New daily finds,

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The image is a vertical advertisement for Walmart's 'Flash Pick' service. It features a bright yellow background with a sunburst effect at the top. The text 'Flash Pick' is prominently displayed in a large, dark font. Below this, there is an image of a laptop showing a colorful abstract graphic. Further down, the text 'Up to 50%' is shown in a large font, followed by 'New daily finds,' and a button that says 'Shop now'. At the bottom, the Walmart logo is visible.



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A 14-year hiatus, drug abuse and more turmoil usually signal a recipe for disaster with entertainers.

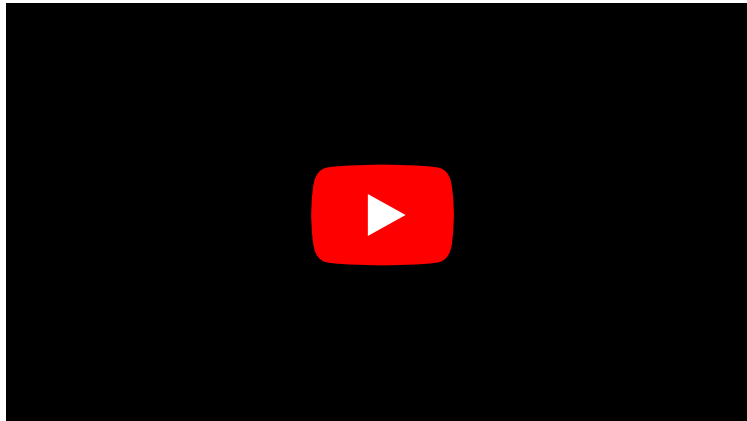
Thankfully the brother recovered from

his demons, dropped a dope album, and put on an equally dope tour. We attended the final show on his U.S. tour and left saying to each other, “Heeeeeee’s back!”

It’d been five years since that show, and we began to wonder if that would be the end of the comeback.

It wasn’t until I saw that the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival would premiere a documentary on D’Angelo called “Devil’s Pie” that those feelings of anticipation and excitement would resurface.

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Devil’s Pie, directed by Carine Bijlsma, gives viewers a glimpse into the past, present, and future of D’Angelo. Clocking in at about 85 minutes in

length, the film follows the singer and musician on his comeback tour with his band The Vanguard.

The documentary not only features behind the scenes footage of the tour but also shows footage from his 2000 *Voodoo World Tour*, along with family videos from his adolescence.

The viewer travels with D'Angelo from show to show hearing first-hand accounts about his life. You also get to meet the people that have worked with and supported him throughout the years, including Questlove of The Roots.



We arrived at the Village East Cinema in lower Manhattan excited and ready for what would be a treat for us longtime fans. As the film began to take shape and D'Angelo began speaking, I'd realized something odd.

I don't think I'd ever heard him speak for more than 10 minutes. I've seen

interviews with him before, but this was different.

He was comfortable and sharing. It was in that moment that I realized that I wasn't watching D'Angelo speak, I was getting to know Michael Eugene Archer.

 YOUTUBE DANGELOVEVO



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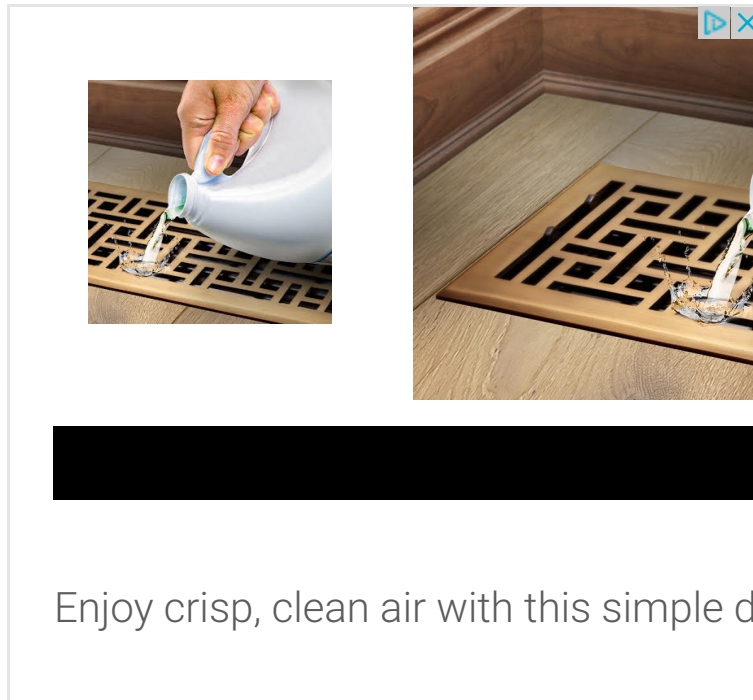
Raised in the church and deeply influenced by his grandmother, Michael used his talents to escape the crime and poverty that plagued his neighborhood in Virginia. We got to see footage of him playing in the church, or “Choorch” as he says one time in the film.

There is a point in the film where he says, “I had something I could hold on to.”

In that moment, he was referring to his talent which would serve as his way out.

As I sat there enjoying this deep dive into his past, I couldn't help but wonder about his hiatus from music.

How much would be revealed? Would D'Angelo speak on it or would we have to hear from others?



The film does go into this dark time in his life, but not as deep as some would want. D'Angelo does reveal what his mindset was at the time and when he knew he needed to seek help. The events that ultimately led to his absence from music are not given much detail.

In 2000, he was at the height of his success and the power was intoxicating. Mix that with a little bit of “survivor’s remorse”, the loss of loved ones, and substance abuse and it’s a miracle he’s still with us.

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The audience in the theater was dead silent when these moments would occur, and the women would scream when footage of his half-naked video “Untitled” was shown.

Devil’s Pie is personal invitation to his fans, and anyone interested in the

legend of a musical genius. In this day and age of celebrity social media nonsense, it was refreshing to see D'Angelo looking wide-eyed at what looked like his first experience with online reactions to his show.



This is a man who lives in his music and not in the virtual space. The documentary also revealed that he is working on new music. As a fan, I can only wish the brother good health and peace in the future as we await his next musical gift.
