



THE LONG ROAD TO THE HALL OF FAME

FROM TONY KING TO MALIK FARRAKHAN



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TITLE

**"THE LONG ROAD TO THE HALL OF FAME"
FROM TONY KING TO MALIK FARRAKHAN**

GENRE

DOCUMENTARY

LENGTH

70'

DIRECTOR

REDA ZINE

SCRIPT AND SCREENPLAY

REDA ZINE

PRODUCTION

UNDERVILLA PRODUCTION

EDITING

DAVIDE POLATO – UNDERVILLA PRODUCTION

LOCATION

PARIS, BOLOGNA, NEW YORK, LOS ANGELES, OHIO



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LOGLINE

Tony King, aka Malik Farrakhan, African-American activist and head of security for the group Public Enemy.

His life experiences, from professional football player to Blaxploitation movie star, as well as his religious conversion to Nation of Islam, parallel the history of civil rights and the struggle for African-American emancipation during the last 50 years.



SYNOPSIS

In the 1960s, African-Americans faced moments of hardship in the struggle for civil rights alongside figures such as Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali (Cassius Clay).

Tony King (Canton, Ohio. 1947), professional football player who then became a model and actor in New York, experienced these events firsthand.

Between 1965 and 1967, he was one of the first African-American professional football players on the BUFFALO BILLS team.

Tony and his brother Charlie King were the first African-American siblings to play in the AFL on the same team at the same time.

Inspired by Malcolm X's biography and frustrated by the racial oppression his family endured, he soon decided to leave his hometown in Ohio and move to New York.

In the 70s, he established himself as a model, working with famous photographers worldwide; then as a Blaxploitation actor, starring in over 40 films. He also stood out as the only black actor in Francis Ford Coppola's "The Godfather" (1972).

After a spiritual awakening, which led him to the Black activist community, he began working as security for Nation of Islam Minister Louis Farrakhan.

In the 80s, he officially became a member of the Nation of Islam, hence abandoning his "slave name" and becoming Malik Farrakhan.

He now works as head of security for Public Enemy, a legendary Hip Hop group that was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2013, and as bodyguard for Chuck D, founder and singer of the group.

In 2009, Malik and his brother Charlie King were elected to the prestigious (NFL) Pro Football Hall of Fame.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

It all started at 1422 Pike Street Alliance, Ohio...

"My grandfather worked as a railroad worker, but he had a passion for the theater. At that time he was obliged to scrub coal on his face to become even darker. My grandmother was a champion athlete. During competitions it was prohibited to share the locker rooms with white athletes. So every time she had to change in a car parked in a field. Pure humiliation."

Those are the words Charlie and Tony repeat each time they talk about how their careers in sports began. They succeeded in playing in the AFL with the Buffalo Bills, but Tony's football career ended abruptly after he was caught reading the banned biography of Malcolm X. He then decided to move to the Big Apple to start anew.

Tony King starred in more than 40 films in USA and abroad, most notably: Report to the Commissioner, Hell Up in Harlem, The Last Hunter, Shaft, Gordon's War, Bronk, The Raiders of Atlantis. He lived in Rome for 3 years and worked with Italian director Antonio Margheriti.

At the apex of his career in 1973, Tony comes into contact with the Nation of Islam while on the set of Gordon's War. Security was provided by members of Nation of Islam and Tony was fascinated by the way these brothers managed the turbulent area of Harlem without any problem. Fascinated by Malcolm X's speeches since he was a teenager, he began listening to and following Louis Farrakhan.

He was invited to the Saviours' Day, an important annual convention, it was then that he changed his name from Tony King to Malik Farrakhan, with the approval of Minister Louis Farrakhan. "I knew that a man like this in the top of his career because of the name Farrakhan they gonna blackball him, that's what give me more respect for him" said his friend, manager, and producer Reginald Allen.

Malik Farrakhan is now Head of Security Protocol of the most respected and politically committed group. Minister Louis Farrakhan personally requested that he take care of them and Mister Chuck D in particular.

Public Enemy often mentioned Louis Farrakhan in their music and Farrakhan himself described them as models of conscious Hip Hop and models for the Black community. As written in the Authorized Story of Public Enemy (Russell Myrie 2008): "The shadow of Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam had always loomed large in PE's background". Malik has been on tour with them for over 20 years. He's their big brother and in some ways, as Mister Chuck D says, their mentor.



November 4, 2010: Public Enemy plays in Bologna, Italy.
Obama, the first African-American president of USA, was just elected.

I was in Bologna for work, and together with L'Kounache magazine, we decided it was the perfect occasion to capture this historical event by interviewing the most respected voice in the Black activist community: Mr. Chuck D.

The artists and their entourage welcomed me backstage with kindness and openness. I was especially struck by a tall and seemingly threatening man, who was actually very kind and gentle, with whom I had the chance to exchange a few words about politics, music, and society: Malik Farrakhan, head of security for Public Enemy and member of the Nation of Islam.

It was a very interesting and intense interview, and after watching the footage I felt the need to get to know Malik better.

Football, cinema, religion, music, politics, Malik Farrakhan is the eclectic protagonist of a period of great social changes, and thus represents a unique and mindful perspective on the African-American condition in the last 50 years.

Upon learning of my film project, Malik has always been very enthusiastic and encouraging, creating the perfect atmosphere to help us overcome the logistic and production obstacles typically encountered on these sorts of projects.

I visited him at his Los Angeles home, where I had the opportunity to meet his son and daughter, follow his day-to-day life made up of basketball, block parties, concerts, memories of the past and hopes for the future.

I accompanied him on a few dates of the Public Enemy tour in Tennessee, Paris, and Bologna, and will soon go to Canton, Ohio, where I already had a precious opportunity to see Malik together with his brother as they celebrated their mother's birthday in their family home, where it all began.

I did research at the archives of local newspapers and TV stations, and more importantly, at the Ralph Wilson, Jr. Pro Football Research and Preservation Center.

The story is divided into 5 chapters that describe the evolution of Tony King, aka Malik, through his careers in sports and movies, and the history of his community from the Civil Rights Movement to the Obama era.

The film will include an original soundtrack written and performed by North African and American artists revisiting Black music of last 50 years.



ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK

BY UNET FOR ALIAS 06/2014

DOWN WITH THE KINGS! DOWN WITH THE KINGS!

So raps Chuck D, leader of Public Enemy, one of hip-hop's most celebrated groups. Rhyme after rhyme, the MC proudly claims history and the life experiences of Tony King, African-American athlete and cultural icon. Behind them, the logo of Public Enemy in all its power and symbolism, evocative, in the foreground, the closed fist of Chuck D and the imposing physique of Malik Farrakhan blend in the finish of the song and the video. The location, a retaining wall of an overpass, bombarded with colorful tags, and the rapper is referring to the imaginary US, because in fact we're not in NYC but in Bologna and the writer in question is Rusty, Ciufs and Deemo, historic names from the local scene; behind the video camera there are the guys from Undervilla, a new production house. Following it all was Reda Zine, multidisciplinary artist of Moroccan origin and director of the documentary *The Long Road to The Hall of Fame*, which explores the life of Tony King aka Malik Farrakhan.

The documentary traces the life of Tony King, who became Malik Farrakhan after he entered the Nation Of Islam (NOI), exploring key stages of the experience of blacks in America. In the 1960s King was one of the first athletes blacks in the NFL, model and successful actor in the years seventy militant Nation of Islam activity and, finally, the security chief of Public Enemy. "His life through represented the most turbulent fifty years of African-American history since the end of slavery. I immediately understood that he had an amazing story to tell; this man in front of me seemed to have lived several parallel lives," Reda Zine explains. And, back to the birth of the project recalls "In 2008 I was working for a local radio station in Bologna and wrote for a Moroccan magazine. With these credentials, I asked for an interview with Chuck D. Malik was the interlocutor and as we waited backstage and the interview was delayed we talked and I immediately understood the historical importance of the character in front of me. Weeks of subsequent research and discussions with Malik only confirmed my feeling."

The story of Malik Farrakhan began in America in the forties, where racial segregation justifications institutional thanks to Jim Crow laws. In the fifties Malik was among the first young African-American to go through the process of desegregation of public schools, which almost ripped the country into open war. "In 1966, Tony and brother come in both Buffalo



Bills, one of the first African-American to play in a professional NFL team. But what people don't generally realize is that in these years professional football suffered from the same racism as the broader American society. Malik remembers, "The captain of my team told me, 'I can play with a black man, but I will never sit down at the table with a black man.'" This was only one of many racist comments that ultimately drover the King brothers from football, the last straw coming when another African American player denounced him to his coach as a dangerous person because he saw him reading the autobiography of Malcolm X. "The next day I got a call early in the morning telling me simply that I was free. Gave up my contract. The news shocked me."

After short stints with various other teams and confronting other problems, Tony King decided to move to NYC to start a new season of his life. Thanks to his athletic build and handsome face, he found quick work as a model, both starring in commercials for brands such as the highly successful Pepsi, Coca Cola and Budweiser, and collaborating with internationally renowned photographers such as Richard Avedon. His film career began to take off as well, with multiple roles in both film blaxploitation films, Shaft and Gordon's War, both in Hollywood productions, such as The Godfather. In 1972 on the set of Gordon's War King came into contact with the youth of the Fruits of Islam, who'd been hired as security service. The Fruit of Islam exerted a strong fascination in Malik; they were, young, trained and bad: always knew how to handle situations, even in times and places 'delicate'. Over the months King's association with Nation of Islam activists became more intense, and after meeting with Minister Farrakhan, he is asked to protect a new and highly political hiphop group called Public Enemy. The rest is, as they say, musical history.

The historical and cultural context within which Tony and then Malik moves is described in a careful in the documentary, which devotes as much importance to the history as to the music. The whole documentary is enriched by Pocket Piano Pieces, or short pieces for piano (in the style of John Cage), used as sound effects at particular scenes or phrases. As the director notes Reda Zine "The reason for The Long Road echoes in all the songs though always masked, developed in different ways."

And these two levels, the historic and the music seem to converge in an exemplary way in Kings, the piece of Impossebulls with featuring Chuck D. Who better than the legendary MC Public Enemy, whose lyrics are imbued with the life experiences and of struggle, he could get that effect? As he himself says, "Thanks to Minister Farrakhan, Malik following us for over twenty years by providing to our security. He's a friend, but above all, one of my mentors. He is a man of great experience and would be a crime not to feed on such knowledge. His story should be known and I have tried to contribute to the documentary in the way that I do best. "

The Long Road to The Hall of Fame (www.thelongroadproject.com) tells an incredible American Untold Story: a story that crosses the most important events of the sport, film and black politics in contemporary America. Only after forty years since their debut in the world of football, in fact, Charlie and Toni King discovered to have been the first brothers blacks to play as professionals in the same NFL team, entering the record books with their feat.

**FABRIZIO PUGLISI – PIANO, FENDER RHODES, HAMMOND B3 ORGAN,
SYNTH ARP, CONDUCTION AND ARRANGEMENTS**

**OZARA ODÈ – LEAD AND BACKING VOCALS ON "THE LONG ROAD",
LYRICS AND VOCALS ARRANGEMENT**

LESLIE POSEY – BACKING VOCALS ON "THE LONG ROAD"

PIERO BITTOLO BON – ALTO SAXOPHONE, BASS CLARINET

MARTINO "BROTHER" BISSON – TENOR SAXOPHONE, FLUTE

MIRKO CISILINO – TRUMPET

GIUSEPPE LASTELLA – TROMBONE

DAVIDE "KIDDO" ANGELICA – GUITAR

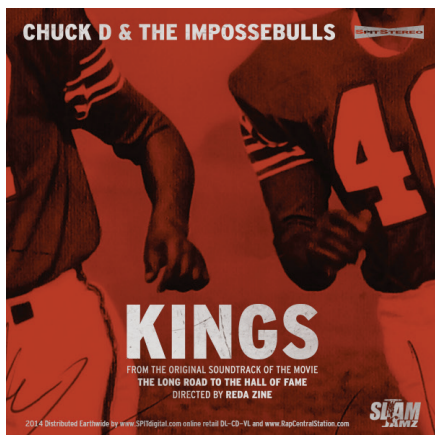
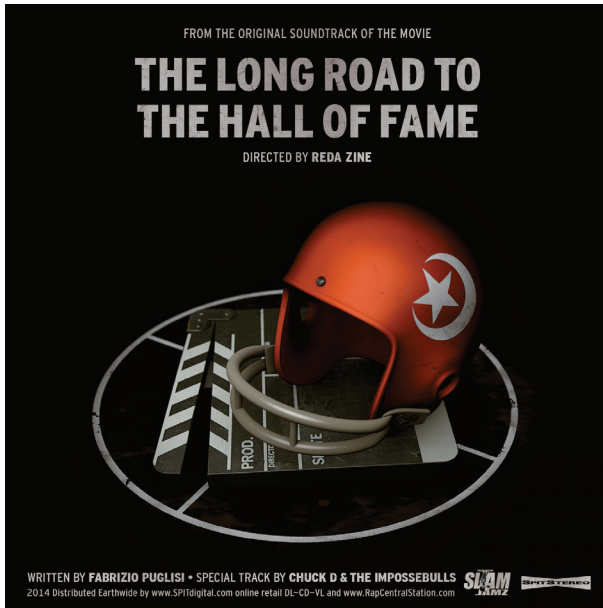
ANDREA LAINO – DOBRO GUITAR ON "OHIO BLUES"

SALVATORE "MESSICO" LAURIOLA – EL. & DOUBLE BASS

DANILO MINEO – PERCUSSIONS

WILLIAM SIMONE – BATÀ DRUMS ON "LEIMERT PARK"

GAETANO ALFONSI – DRUMS



ITUNES

SOUNDCLOUD

ALBUM THE LONG ROAD TO THE HALL OF FAME O.S.T.

LABEL SLAMjamz RECORDS

PRODUCED AND MIXED CDoc for DefBeat Posse Productions, ID!





AUTHOR, DIRECTOR, PRODUCER

REDA ZINE

Reda Zine is pluridisciplinary artist born in 1977 in Casablanca. He is actually professor of Artvideo Production for Human Rights Issues at SHC Italy Center. In 1998, he was one of the founders of the biggest independent music festival in Africa called "L'Boulevard" of Casablanca and its magazine, L'Kounache (Urban Music and Street Culture), and in June 2012 he also became the first open source community co-builder in Morocco (Creative Commons Morocco and www.opentaqafa.cc) and artistic director for Creative Commons MENA and also curator for the festival Costante Cambiamento in Florence. He studied Semiotic and Arab Media with Prof. Guy Lochard at the Sorbonne 3 in Paris, France and scriptwriting & directing at Cineteca di Bologna, Italy. In 2012 he directed "This is My Story. Or Ours?": four documentaries produced on Awareness on Migration, development and human rights through local authorities in Bologna, Seville, Bucharest, and Riga.

CO-PRODUCER

UNDERVILLA

Undervilla Productions creates video clips, commercials, event shooting, live direction, multimedia DVDs, editorial and industrial videos, editing and motion graphics. We take care of every step of the production with commitment and passion, from the creation to the end product, to create high quality products to fully satisfy our clients. Our company is made up of young professionals who have been working in the fields of multimedia and TV productions, web design and graphics for several years.

EDITOR / COLOR CORRECTION

DAVIDE POLATO

SOUNDTRACK COMPOSER

FABRIZIO PUGLISI

Fabrizio Puglisi is a pianist and composer. In 1987 he began studying at DAMS (Department of Art, Music and Performing Arts) in Bologna, where he currently lives. In 1995 he graduated with honors, writing a thesis about Cecil Taylor.

From 1997 to 2003 he spent long periods of time in Amsterdam, where he collaborated with such musicians as Tristan Honsinger, Han Bennink, Ernst Glerum, Ab Baars, Sean Bergin, Ernst Reijseger, Tobias Delius, and the Tetzepi big band. He has collaborated, among others, with Steve Lacy, Louis Sclavis, Lester Bowie, Don Moye, David Murray, Hamid Drake, John Zorn, Don Byron, Butch Morris, Kenny Wheeler, Enrico Rava, George Russell, Dave Liebman, Ronnie Cuber, Michel Godard, Deus Ex Machina, Roy Paci, Alvin Curran, Mark Dresser, Paolo Fresu, Steve Grossman, Cristina Zavalloni, Gianluca Petrella, Italian Instabile Orchestra, Keith Tippett, Gunter Sommer, Mattias Schubert, Alfio Antico.

The dutch big band Tetzepi commissioned him three pieces ("Tricofobia", "Il Satio" and "Survivors of the 00 age") which were recorded in the cds "Crush" and "Seed" for the label Trytone.

Fabrizio has played in festivals in the United States, Canada, Spain, Germany, Norway, France, The Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal, Slovenia, Turkey, Senegal, and Mexico. He is a member of Collettivo Bassesfere, an association dedicated to developing and spreading improvised and experimental music.

Since 1998 he has held ensemble music workshops at the Scuola Popolare di Musica "Ivan Illich" in Bologna.

Since 2005 he has taught the piano program in the Jazz Courses at Bologna's "G.B. Martini" Conservatory.

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

KSENIJA SAVICEVIC

DEEMO PERESSONI

Italian HipHop pioneer, Communication artist, WordPress evangelist, the private in politics, awareness + bewareness: all that and a bag of tricks.

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