

## Passage Theatre's 2024 Gala

April 6, 2024 | 6:00pm

Trenton Country Club

### **Culture Freedom — The Poor Righteous Teachers**

Straight out of Central New Jersey, this Trenton native is no newcomer to the hip-hop forum. Writing rhymes and producing beats since the young age of thirteen, **Culture Freedom** has the experience of a well-seasoned poet and the ability to captivate an audience with his powerful presence. Through his rhymes, Culture Freedom conveys a scenario of what's going on in the inner city without all the hype of glorifying negative lifestyles and perpetuating violence.

To his credit, Culture Freedom, a.k.a. Cult-Free, has been actively working in the music business performing, writing, and producing for over 30 years as a member of the trio, Poor Righteous Teachers, one of the most revered and critically acclaimed rap groups from an era sorely missed by hip-hop fans, and also as a solo artist. Poor Righteous Teachers is responsible for such classics as “Rock Dis Funky Joint” and “Shakiyla” and having sold over a million copies of their last four albums on Profile Records where they were label mates with the legendary RUN-DMC and worked on collaborations with artists such as KRS-ONE, Lauryn Hill, and Wyclef Jean. Culture Freedom is also the Creator of the show, “Hip Hop’s Top Chef”, formerly shown on the FoodyTV App as well as creator of his own “Put It In There!” BBQ Sauce and Rub.

Raised in Trenton, New Jersey, he was parented by a single mother, and the middle child of three. He gained his love for cooking from his mother who was an awesome cook herself. Although he did not go right into cooking immediately, it has always been a major part of his life. Between shows, he would work at various restaurants, hotels and different eateries around town developing his skills as a Chef.

In 2001, Culture Freedom and his family moved to Nashville, Tennessee, where he continued his career, and eventually landed a lead position at Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center, known as the largest non-casino hotel in the continental U.S. After five years, he moved on and a highlight of his career was when he became Head Catering Chef at Belmont University, in Nashville, TN where the 2020 Presidential Debate was hosted. Culture Freedom was responsible for leading that culinary team consisting of chefs from around the country. He continued making music while honing his skills as a Chef. His goal with the “Hip Hop’s Top Chef” Show is to share his experiences and love for cooking. Also, on Juneteenth 2022, Poor

Righteous Teachers was inducted into The National Hip-Hop Museum's Hall of Fame in Burlington, VT.

Culture Freedom along with his wife, were youth ministry leaders for 15 years and he also was a mentor for the Armed & Ready Program for young men ages 7-17 in Antioch, TN. Culture Freedom has experience publicly speaking to various groups including students at Stockton State University in Galloway, NJ, the youth at the Omega Boys Club of San Francisco Street Soldiers "The Knowledge Conference" in San Francisco, CA, at-risk young people at the AMER-I-CAN Foundation for Social Change in Trenton, NJ, families at the Martha O' Bryan Center in Nashville, TN, the young males of Bruce Boyd's Boys Will Be Boys Mentoring Program in Trenton, NJ, as well as ministering on numerous occasions to the congregation of The Living Word Community Church in Antioch, TN.

What has always remained a constant in the life of Culture Freedom is his determination to teach strong positive messages that can help motivate people, and ever since being drawn closer to the Word of God, Culture Freedom is determined to spread the "Good News" to the masses through the creative movement of film, food, music and fashion (Cult -Free Collection) without pushing away the very audience he is trying to draw.