

= Enter the Wu @-@ Tang (36 Chambers) =

Enter the Wu @-@ Tang (36 Chambers) is the debut studio album by the American hip hop group Wu @-@ Tang Clan , released November 9 , 1993 , on Loud Records and distributed through RCA Records . Recording sessions for the album took place during 1992 to 1993 at Firehouse Studio in New York City , and it was mastered at The Hit Factory . The album 's title originates from the martial arts film The 36th Chamber of Shaolin (1978) . The group 's de facto leader RZA , also known as Prince Rakeem , produced the album entirely , utilizing heavy , eerie beats and a sound largely based on martial @-@ arts movie clips and soul music samples .

The distinctive sound of Enter the Wu @-@ Tang (36 Chambers) created a blueprint for hardcore hip hop during the 1990s and helped return New York City hip hop to national prominence . Its sound also became greatly influential in modern hip hop production , while the group members ' explicit , humorous , and free @-@ associative lyrics have served as a template for many subsequent hip hop records . Serving as a landmark record in the era of hip hop known as the East Coast Renaissance , its influence helped lead the way for several other East Coast hip hop artists , including Nas , The Notorious B.I.G. , Mobb Deep , and Jay @-@ Z.

Despite its raw , underground sound , the album had surprising chart success , peaking at number 41 on the US Billboard 200 chart . By 1995 , it was certified Platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America , and has sold over two million copies in the United States . Initially receiving positive reviews from most music critics , Enter the Wu @-@ Tang (36 Chambers) is widely regarded as one of the most significant albums of the 1990s , as well as one of the greatest hip hop albums ever .

= = Background and recording = =

In the late 1980s , cousins Robert Diggs , Gary Grice , and Russell Jones formed a group named Force of the Imperial Master , also known as the All in Together Now Crew . Each member recorded under an alias : Grice as The Genius , Diggs as Prince Rakeem or The Scientist , and Jones as The Specialist . The group never signed to a major label , but caught the attention of the New York rap scene and was recognized by rapper Biz Markie . By 1991 , The Genius and Prince Rakeem were signed to separate record labels . The Genius released Words from the Genius (1991) on Cold Chillin ' Records and Prince Rakeem released Ooh I Love You Rakeem (1991) on Tommy Boy Records . Both were soon dropped by their labels . Embittered but unbowed , they took on new monikers (The Genius became GZA while Prince Rakeem became RZA) and refocused their efforts . RZA discussed the matter in their release The Wu @-@ Tang Manual (2005) , stating " [Tommy Boy] made the decision to sign House of Pain over us . When they dropped me , I was thinking , ' Damn , they chose a bunch of whiteboy shit over me . ' "

RZA began collaborating with Dennis Coles , latter known as Ghostface Killah , another rapper from the Stapleton Projects apartment complex in Staten Island . The duo decided to create a hip hop group whose ethos would be a blend of " Eastern philosophy picked up from kung fu movies , watered @-@ down Nation of Islam preaching picked up on the New York streets , and comic books . "

Enter the Wu @-@ Tang (36 Chambers) was recorded at Firehouse Studio in New York City from 1992 to 1993 . The album was produced , mixed , arranged , and programmed by RZA , and was mastered at The Hit Factory in New York City by Chris Gehringer . Because of an extremely limited budget , the group was only able to record in a small , inexpensive studio ; with up to eight of the nine Wu @-@ Tang members in the studio at once , the quarters were frequently crowded . To decide who appeared on each song , RZA forced the Wu @-@ Tang rappers to battle with each other . This competition led to the track " Meth Vs . Chef " , a battle between Method Man and Raekwon over the rights to rap over RZA 's beat ; this track was left off the Wu @-@ Tang Clan 's debut album but surfaced on Method Man 's debut , Tical (1994) .

= = Title significance = =

