



## Die Jim Crow Records

### *Music That Matters Podcast*

Die Jim Crow Records is the first Record Label in the United States for formerly and currently incarcerated musicians. Their mission is to provide artists with a high quality platform for their voices to be heard.

Die Jim Crow Records began as an idea to basically make the greatest concept album of all time. In 2013, inspired by Michelle Alexander's landmark book *The New Jim Crow* and Pink Floyd's rock opera *The Wall*, artist/activist Fury Young embarked on the quixotic journey to make an epic double album about racial injustice in the U.S. prison system.

The initial idea was to work with formerly and currently incarcerated black musicians to form a collective narrative that spanned pre-prison, prison, and reentry. Though Young, who identifies as a "New York Jew," had never been incarcerated or produced a single song before, his personal

experiences with friends who had been to prison led to him pioneering the project with a ceaseless conviction.

For six years, while working full time as a carpenter, Young pursued DJC as a passion project and had the diligence to gain access to prisons across the country for recordings. During this time he built close relationships with several musicians and writers both in and once-in of the system. In 2020 Die Jim Crow Records officially launched as the nation's first non-profit record label for formerly and currently incarcerated musicians, with Young as Executive Director and label artist BL Shirelle as Deputy Director.

While Shirelle's debut LP, Assata Troi, was released to critical acclaim and media attention in June 2020, the team also helped send over 30,000 masks to prisons across the country with their PPE Into Prisons campaign between April and October.

With four projects in the works for 2021, and a monthly concert series showcasing justice-involved musicians alongside popular performers, Die Jim Crow Records is both a music platform and catalyst for social change.