

## **And Black Men Don't Jump No More . . . (2004)**

**Raimi Gbadamosi**

### **It's Hot Out There**

*Summertime*<sup>1</sup>, by Fresh Prince and Jazzy Jeff, first released in 1991, and re-released in 2002, has become both a rap and seasonal standard for many. Based on Kool & The Gang's *Summer Madness*, *Summertime* synthesised an acceptable face of 'street' culture that was easily appropriated by a 'white' mainstream. Presenting scenes devoid of social deprivation or political commentary, the tune romanticises life lived in the public eye. It served as just another good time song of what black urban youth are known to do; look good and hang out. Will Smith and DJ Jazzy Jeff inadvertently presented a pliant black self to a willing white public, producing the song that climbed the highest for the duo in the music charts, a piece made with one eye on the 'crossover'.

De La Soul comments on crossing over, and the rejection by the record industry that black experience, can represent 'humanity'. On *Patti Dooke*, a short drama is presented:

[In white record company executive voice, to band]:

We have decided to change the cover a bit, because we see the big picture.

Negroes and white folks are buying this album.

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Everybody's gonna know who this group is, we just felt that the picture wasn't as important as it was that we succeed in crossing over.<sup>2</sup>

[In black rapper voice, to listeners]:

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<sup>1</sup> DJ Jazzy Jeff & the Fresh Prince 'Summertime' Homebase Jive Records, Philadelphia 1991.

<sup>2</sup> De La Soul. 'Patti Dooke.' on Buhloone Mindstate. Tommy Boy Music Inc., New York. 1993.