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**PEOPLE
ARE
TALKING
ABOUT...**



**SETH "SOUL MAN"
FERRANTI**

author and founder of the publishing house gorillaconvict.com. His latest novel, *Street Legends Vol. 1*, is the first in a new series from Gorilla Convict Publications profiling hardcore gangsters in the drug game—legendary personalities in the Black/Latino underworld. Here, *Black Men* magazine talked with Ferranti about his growing popularity as an author and chronicler of prison life and street culture.

BM: As an author what do you want readers to come away with after reading books like *Prison Stories* and *Street Legends*?

SETH: I just want to show them the reality of my situation. I was inspired to write *Prison Stories* after reading books like *Soledad Brother*, by George Jackson, and *In the Belly of the Beast*, by Jack Henry Abbot. These are the classic prison books. After reading these books early in my bid, I had the idea in my head for *Prison Stories* and in 2005 I made my idea a reality. I hope readers come away with a sense of what it's like in the federal prisons today and in the '90s with the 'War on Drugs' in full effect. With *Street Legends*, I'm just bringing the myths to life. You've heard 50 Cent, Nas, Jay-Z, Fat Joe, and Ja Rule rap about these street stars; now read their stories. I'm bringing them to you raw from the penitentiary.

BM: You've said prisoners love your books. How do they regard you as a prisoner and a man?

SETH: I am regarded as any other man who got hit in the head with a 25-year sentence or longer. A lot of dudes on the pound want to holler at me about the book game and what I am doing. They are intrigued and interested in what I am doing and how they might be able to go about doing it. Dudes in here have a lot of different and diverse stories to tell and they are trying to get their stories out there. ■

(BM continues its talk with Seth "Soul Man" Ferranti in its next issue. Stay tuned!)

FOR STRONG, POSITIVE

CARING BROTHERS

Black Men

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Jesikah

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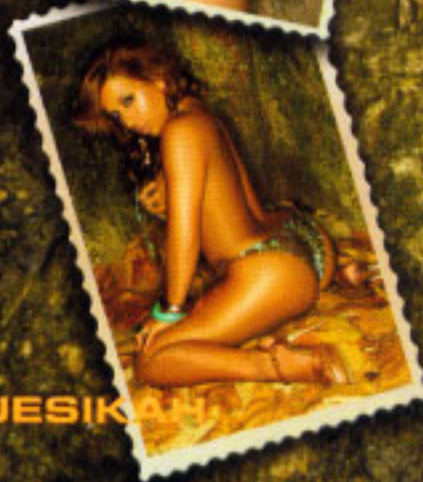
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B O O K S H E L F

PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT...



PART 2 SETH "SOUL MAN" FERRANTI

Author and founder of the publishing house gorilla-convict.com. His latest novel, *Street Legends Vol. 1*, is the first in a new series from Gorilla Convict Publications profiling hardcore gangsters in the drug game—legendary personalities in the Black/Latino underworld. Here, *Black Men* magazine finishes our talk with Ferranti about his life in the "belly of the beast" and as an author and chronicler of prison life and street culture.



BM: How have you maintained your sanity in these institutions and what part if any has writing played in it?

SETH: I have maintained my sanity by staying busy and staying productive. Through exercise of the body and the mind I have walked this 25 years down and I am almost at the door. My wife has proved a huge factor in me keeping my sanity. Her loyalty and presence has provided the light at the end of the tunnel. Writing has played a huge part, too. From when I first started writing little pieces for magazines like *Don Diva* until now when I am doing features and writing books it has helped tremendously. Just being able to accomplish something from here—something lasting that a lot of people see and appreciate. There is nothing like that. My books, *Prison Stories* and *Street Legends*, are a part of my legacy. They are lasting works that I created that other people can read and enjoy. That's a big feeling. That is why I write, and being goal oriented and accomplishing those goals has helped me to maintain my sanity throughout my bid.

BM: How do you feel about writing for a different genre?

SETH: *Prison Stories* wasn't really written as street lit but that is the genre it fell into. *Prison Stories* is real but I wrote it as fiction because of

the situations involved and the fact that I am still in prison. When people read it they told me that it was a 'hood novel set in prison so who am I to argue. Plus, the only type of publications that reviewed it were hip-hop/urban magazines so I just went with the flow. With *Street Legends*, I am just expanding what I've been doing with *Don Diva*, *Feds*, and *Street Elements*. I wrote the Supreme Team article for *Don Diva*. I was with Supreme. He told me to write the story for them. I did the Wayne Perry story with my man Eyone Williams who wrote the street book *Fast Lane*. I've been doing cover stories for *Don Diva* about five years. *Street Legends* was just a natural progression for me. I see this Black/Latino crack era gangster stuff blowing up just like the Italian mob and Colombian cocaine cartel stuff before it. There's going to be movies, more books and a lot more documentaries. Right now, we are at the forefront of this and I've been down with the magazines that started the movement, *Don Diva* and *Feds* since day one. It's like an inside-out movement. From the prisons to the mainstream. This true-crime stuff is really my passion. I would like to write a memoir, too, about my life as a drug dealer in the suburbs and how the criminal justice system turned my American dream into a nightmare. My dude Ethan Brown, the author of *Queens Reigns Supreme*, keeps telling me my memoir will be my *New York Times* best-seller.

BM: How are you preparing for the day when you walk out of prison and what do you think your biggest challenge will be mentally and spiritually?

SETH: I am doing everything I can to prepare for the day when I walk out of here. Everything has been aimed at that final result. I work for the future. Everything I have been doing is for when I reach the streets. I am trying to build my name as a brand and market it from prison. When I get out I want to make films and documentaries. That is my goal. That is the ultimate result. I think my biggest challenge will be to take it all slow and easy. I am hungry; I am ready; I am prepared for life and all it offers on the outside. I am lucky in a lot of ways because I have my wife and my family along with all that I have accomplished in here including all the contacts I have made. It will be a challenge but I am up to it. ■