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For Immediate Release

Naeem Announces Debut Album, *Startisha*, Out 6/12 Via 37d03d

[Presents Video/Single, “Simulation” \(Feat. Swamp Dogg & Justin Vernon\)](#)



(*Startisha* Album Artwork)

“I’ve been really blessed to have Naeem come into my life because of the wonderful events of the first PEOPLE event in Berlin at the Michelberger hotel. He has become a great friend and I’ve gone back now since meeting him and seen what true mark he left on the city of Baltimore and its music scene today. I feel very thankful to have been a part of the making of this record.” — Justin Vernon

Baltimore-born/Los Angeles-based artist **Naeem** (full name **Naeem Juwan**) announces his debut album, *Startisha*, out **June 12th on 37d03d**, alongside lead single, “**Simulation**” (Feat. **Swamp Dogg & Justin Vernon**). *Startisha* introduces Naeem as a restlessly creative artist. Impressionistic and genre-bending, *Startisha* exemplifies artistic, daring and emotional intelligence while exploring new ideas and sounds, and philosophically excavating the artist’s histories. This music comes straight from Naeem's heart, representing the journey he's taken to get to this point as well as what lies in the future for him.

Studio work on *Startisha* started four years ago after Juwan linked up with producers **Sam Green** and **Grave Goods** in Philadelphia. After sessions in Philadelphia and New York, Juwan decamped to Minneapolis and holed up in Vernon's home studio, where *Startisha* continued to come together with contributions from Vernon, **Ryan Olson** (Gayngs, Polica), **Swamp Dogg**, **Velvet Negroni**, **Francis and the Lights**, and regular collaborators **Amanda Blank** and **Micah James**.

In Juwan's words, *Startisha* presented an opportunity to move on from past work under different monikers, and strike out under his own name, with the experimentation in the music a parallel to the personalization of its subject matter. The challenge was to "write songs from a personal place, and to write love songs – both things I've never done before." Throughout, he sings about the ideas of self-care and the attention economy, the love for his boyfriend, and personal memories of growing up in Baltimore.

Lead single "Simulation", which follows early single "**You and I**", an emotional and daring cover of the **Silver Apples** classic, offers a kind of treatise of creative resistance on art and culture. "I had been reading a few books, such as *Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art*, and they helped me solidify feelings I've had all of my life about surviving a society of institutions that presents fictions as fact, and often use these fictions to diminish my worth, or to convince me to join their gangs," says Juwan. "I wrote this song to remind myself, and hopefully everyone that hears it, that nothing is real, and our greatest defense in this life is our own creativity, and finding great faith in whatever sigils and icons we choose to guide us."

For the accompanying visual, director **Scott J. Ross** says, "Naeem and I made it without any in-person crew to avoid social contact, and rented some equipment by mail. I used simple visual effects to make our house and nearby outdoor areas look less mundane, which seemed appropriate for the themes of the song. We also were inspired by the movies we were watching in isolation, like the set extension matte paintings in 'The Wiz,' and artificial looking day-for-night scenes and spirograph animations from Hitchcock's 'Vertigo.' Swamp Dogg sent us a video of himself singing in his underwear on his home green screen setup, and Justin sent us an iPhone video of himself playing the piano part at his house, which we incorporated into the footage we shot."

Watch Video For "Simulation" (Feat. Swamp Dogg & Justin Vernon) -

<https://youtu.be/bC5HsfZT5pg>

Juwan has spent much of the last decade stretching his creative legs in a variety of ways: he's hit the road with artists ranging from the **Avalanches** and **Bon Iver** to **Big Red Machine** and **Mouse on Mars**, took part in a **37d03d residency in Berlin**, and was selected as the **music resident in 2019 for New York's Pioneer Works space**. Through it all, he's been building the songs that make up *Startisha*, a record a half-decade in the making that featured Juwan pulling from creative circles all across the U.S. to craft a truly unique document of sound.

Pre-order *Startisha* -

<https://lnk.to/Simulation>

***Startisha* Tracklist:**

1. You and I
2. Simulation (Feat. Swamp Dogg, Justin Vernon)

3. Let Us Rave (Feat. Velvet Negroni)
4. Woo Woo Woo (Feat. Amanda Blank, Micah James)
5. Us
6. Stone Harbor
7. Right Here
8. Startisha
9. Tiger Song

Purchase/Stream “You and I” (Silver Apples Cover) -
https://lnk.to/You_and_I

Watch Video For “You and I” (Silver Apples Cover) -
<https://youtu.be/4VILaJYPS-4>

Download cover art & hi-res images of Naeem -
<http://pitchperfectpr.com/naem/>



(Photo Credit: Shane McCauley)

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