

## IN THE STUDIO

# Tom Morello Debuts Heavy New Duo

**Album** Street Sweeper Social Club

**Due Out** June 16th

By David Browne

**A**FTER TWO ALBUMS OF mellow folk as the Nightwatchman, Tom Morello has plugged back in. "This is the heaviest, hardest-rockin' music I've been involved with in a long time," says the guitarist of his new project, Street Sweeper Social Club, a collaboration with rapper Boots Riley of the politically charged hip-hop act the Coup.

The two men met in 2003 and have crossed paths often: Morello contributed to a Coup album, and Riley joined



**PLUGGED IN** The Coup's Boots Riley and Tom Morello recording in Los Angeles

Morello on a few solo shows. In 2007, after the breakup of Audioslave, Morello approached Riley to do something more formal. "He didn't *ask* me," recalls the Bay Area MC. "He said, 'We're gonna make a group. It's gonna be anthems for the revolution.'"

The duo, with Galactic's Stanton Moore on drums, blasted out the basic tracks in a week in L.A. The results resemble a funkier Rage Against the Machine, fusing Morello's machine-gun guitars and Riley's class-warfare rhymes on "Clap for the Killers" and "Fight! Smash! Win!"

Street Sweeper will road-test the material as the opener on the Jane's Addiction/NIN tour. As for the inevitable comparisons with his old group, Morello says, "I haven't really thought about it yet. These days I just love following my muse." RS