

the Vinyl Exchange

a newsletter for deejays and vinyl junkies

DECEMBER 1996

Trackheads Anonymous

For the regular readers of *the Vinyl Exchange* my name should not look unfamiliar; I have been doing reviews and things for a while now. I listen to pretty much everything and think more people should expand their musical horizons. There is so much good music out there; people shouldn't be so quick to judge it because of how it's labeled.

Comeback Player(s) of the Year award without question goes to the **Jungle Brothers**. I really like both of the cuts on their 12". I can't wait to hear their LP, due early next year. While on the topic of awards, Best New Label goes to Fondle 'Em in a landslide victory. Five releases and not one weak one in the bunch. I also happen to like how all the Fondle 'Em releases so far have just had the die cut black or white covers. By doing this it places the emphasis back on what's really important—the music. Don't forget they are vinyl-only releases; another huge plus.

"I don't try to be different...I am." **Company Flow** was kind enough to send me their new 12" (on their own Official label once again). Two tracks: "Info Kill" and "Population Control." To make a long story short, it is an essential piece of vinyl. Buy the record and see what the future of hip-hop sounds like.

I picked up a mix tape the other day, **DJ RipOne**, "Inner Connections." In a time when mix tapes are a dime a dozen, RipOne's tape is a breath of fresh air. Fellow turntablists **Babu** and others drop by to go off. Rip One plays many cuts by underground acts that I had never heard (the best being the **Twisted Mind Kids**), and a few classics like the **Jungle Brothers** "Straight Out the Jungle." To call this simply a mix tape is an injustice. RipOne didn't make a mix tape, he made an event.

The new **Siah and Yeshua Dapo ED** record on Fondle Em is very, very good. Very witty and imaginative lyrics and tracks on this six-song platter. Any group that can have a song about 12 minutes long and keep my attention is doing something right. **Bobbito** just keeps them coming.

Dischord Records in DC have a great new record out by a band called **Blue Tip**. I highly recommend it if you like the "post hardcore" type of sounds. **Jason Farrell** (ex-Swiz) plays guitar and sings.

M.O.P.'s album right now is red hot on the east coast. **Premier** did some incredible work beat-wise (check out "Brownsville" for a prime example) but M.O.P.'s

tales of gunplay don't do much for me. Having said that, in today's hip-hop world you could do worse than that album.

A **Kool Keith** record under the name Kool Keith? Strange. Check out the new 12" on Funky Ass Records, "Don't Crush It" b/w "Sex Style." Also prepare yourself for the return of **The Cenobites** soon...

Mo' Wax has put out some great stuff lately (**DJ Krush**, **DJ Shadow**, **Dr. Octagon**). They have the best packaging I have seen in a long time. If everyone put as much effort into their work as they did, records would be much more fun.

I wrote an article for this fine publication last year about how to press a record. Since then many people have asked me for phone numbers of pressing plants. Here is a handy, updated list:

Pressing: Nashville Records 615.259.4200; United Records 615.259.9396; Rainbow Records 310.829.0355; Erica Records 310.926.8922; Alberti Records 213.283.5446; Bill Smith Records 312.322.6386; Alpha Records 954.587.6011.

Mastering: Frankford/Wayne Mastering 212.302.8300; Richard Simpson Mastering 213.462.2545; Metropolis Mastering 312.631.3526; Quad Teck Mastering 213.383.2155; John Golden Mastering 805.498.3490. Hope you find these helpful.

Anyone wanting to get in touch (send things for review) you can do so at: **Daniel Ladd**, 61 Esker Lane, North Kingstown, RI 02852. You can email me at: **Dan@IDS.Net**. Thank you and good night.

—DANIEL LADD

The P-Minus! Potpourri

Please don't pass up on the latest from the almost forgotten **Mad Flava** (Raw Deal). I love the **Hype Dawg** beat on "Point Blank," but Hype should probably pass on the mic check with lyrics like "[I'm] feenin' the cream like the middle of a Suzy Q." The AA-side, "Can't Get Enuf," features a guest rhyme from **M.Y.K.** (from I-phlomatix). It has another nice beat and pretty good lyrics. Keep an eye out for it.

Moonshine (Arcane) is a crew that is new to me and I'm impressed by "The Origin of Species," but the remix has "radio" written all over it. The B-side, "Duck Season," is a decent song featuring some nice scratching (actually both tracks do). Call the label for more info: 310.479.4769. **Tha' Mexakinz'** (Wild West) new record is more enjoyable than their first effort, mainly due to the strength of the

continued on page 3...

Toph's High Plains Drifter Lucky 13

1. **Tranquility Bass** - "Cantamilla" (Exist Dance)—I plan on founding a religion based on this song—it's that good.
2. **Invisible Hands** - "Oil Oil Oil" (Cup of Tea)—Killer multi-textured hip-hop dub soundtracking for a peyote Western.
3. **O.G.C.** - "God Don't Like Ugly" (Duck Down/Priority)—Simple, rugged beat from Buckshot and Lord Jamar; dig the lyrical flow.
4. "Jazz On a Summer's Day" movie by **Bert Stern** (New Yorker Video)—Swingin' opening segment with Jimmy Guiffre... great cuts with Thelonius Monk, Anita O'Day and George Shearing going Latin at the '58 Newport Jazz Festival.
5. **Lil' Kim** - "We Don't Need It" (Big Beat)—Haven't heard sisters rip sh't like this since Cassidine back in '88 on 75 Girls! Wicked!
6. **James Brown** - "Escape-ism, Part 2" (Polydor)—I won't tell y'all how much I picked this up for (coins)...
7. **Kid Capri** - "52 Beats" (mix tape)—The Original Black Italian keeps heads noddin'... with Chief Rocker Starchild on the mic...
8. **Headz 2 - A & B - VA** (Mo' Wax)—8 record set, beautifully packaged, chronicalling the past few years of avant garde beat music...A must!
9. **Prince Paul** - *Psychoanalysis LP* (WordSound)—Someday, Prince Paul will be King and the world will be a much nicer place...
10. *Another Double Sack of Soul LP - VA* (Black Label)—Saves countless hours and dirty fingers.
11. **Fatboy Slim** - *Better Living Through Chemistry LP* (Skint-UK)—Another milestone in breakbeat/fusion. Blows those Chemical boys away.
12. **Homeliss Derilex** - "Cash Money"/"Operations" (Stonesthrow). I listened to DJ Serg (Oct. VE) and picked this up... lovely production by The Architect lay the foundation for Grand's smooth raps...
13. **LUCKY 13**. *Live from Death Row* book by **Mumia Abu-Jamal** (Avon)—After hearing so much *about* him, it's good to finally read the man's own words. With a little luck and a knowledgeable public, justice may one day be heard...



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1996 West Coast DMC Battle Results

October 26, 1996, Crenshaw, California

1st Place: **Rhettmatic**
2nd Place: **Scratchin D**
(tie) **Swift Rock**
Finalists: **Rags, RipOne, Remedy**

(Source: Doc Rice's POWER Link - DJ Battle Resource, <http://www.slip.net/~docrice>)

ITF's "Night of the Turntablist!"

November 13, 1996, San Francisco

The line had already formed a good distance down the block by the time the doors opened at 9:30 pm for the International Turntablist Federation (ITF) exhibition. At the back of the stage, **J-Rocc** and **Babu** from the **Beat Junkies** wrecked havoc on a pair of 1210s, using cuts, scratches, fades and other mixing and trick techniques to train together a wide variety of hip-hop. At the front of the stage, Cerwin Vega L-36s were lined up as platforms for the 1200s of ITF's performers. The agenda would include the **Invisible Skratch Piklz**, the **Beat Junkies** and the **X-Men** in single and team performances.

D-Styles from the **Beat Junkies** performed a short set. **Mixmaster Mike** was next with a considerably longer set and his presence, as always, stimulated an intense reaction from the crowd as he managed to pull off what most other DJs can only visually imitate, including his "Natural Born Killers" routine. **Rob Swift** from the **X-Men** represented next, the first in the night's lineup of turntablists to use body motions to extract new rhythms from old familiar ones. Then there was **Babu** with a totally new set which was premiered at the recent Gavin Convention. He started with his usual tricky sounding flares and then moved into his tight-as-ever beat juggling skills. World champion **Q-Bert** went up and used "All that scratching's making me itch" in conjunction with **De La Soul's** "Stakes Is High"—flawless. **Roc Raider** performed some of his 1996 World DMC routine, amazing the crowd with his quick body

Tom Thump's Holiday Feast

Groove Merchant, San Francisco

1. **Forbidden Territories - AVENUE A** (King Size)
2. **Spanish Fly - AKASHA** (Wall of Sound)
3. **Roots: Dub Out West Vol. 2 LP - VARIOUS** (Nubian)
4. **Plenty Good Eaton LP - CLEVELAND EATON** (Black Jazz)
5. **Haunted Music (Double 10") - EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES** (Output)
6. **Detroit Hip-Hop Mixes—The Shit Vol. 1** (Blue Collar)
7. **Sweetback LP - SWEETBACK** (Epic)
8. **Same/Down in Rwanda - SMITH & MIGHTY w/ TAMMY PAYNE** (More Rockers)
9. **Boogie Up Rock Down Ride a Funky Starship - CARLIS MUNRO** (West-bound)
10. **Avid EP - SPY MANIA ALLSTARS** (Spy Mania)

movements while still manipulating beats into something totally original and unique. **Mista Sinista** went crazy using his body trick skills while tearing up the **SWAT** theme and using **Just Ice's** "Cold Gettin Dumb" beats in conjunction with the "change the bass" sample. **Shortkut** was also eagerly anticipated as he started off with **Gang Starr's** "ALONGWAYTO-GO" using the "Now here's a funky introduction" sample by **Tribe**. He also presented his revised Beat Box routine. **J-Rocc** also performed a short set, although turntable problems were apparent.

The **X-Men** and **Skratch Piklz** performed their team routine, much of it similar to the one they used back at the original **Rocksteady Showcase** this summer (minus the dissing, of course). The **Piklz** finished off the night as they performed the mad-dening and hyper-intensive routine that took the crowd right along for the ride. Non-stop action of cuts, beats, tones and manipulations carefully coordinated between **Mixmaster Mike**, **Q-Bert** and **Shortkut** sent the crowd in a frenzy.

Although this was one of the best turntablist events in some time, there were several problems with the turntables, either due directly with them or the sound system connected to them.

Several cameras were in place in the venue, so it can be assumed that whoever missed the event could always watch the video when it comes out. But it definitely won't be the same as *being there!*

For more information, call the ITF Hotline at 310.971.1213.

—DOC RICE

(This report is from Doc Rice's POWER Link, <http://www.slip.net/~docrice>.)

continued from page 1...

first single, "Burnin' Hot" b/w "Headz or Tailz," and there are several other tracks worth a listen: "Plead Insanity," "2 Many MCs" and "Provoke the Extreme." **Total Devastation** is back on the blunt with "The Stone Age EP" (Hog Life), which brings forth another slew of weed raps over Frisco gangsta beats. This is a nice party record surely satisfying all the bud-dha heads, but it is lacking in depth.

Newcomer **Meaner's** "It's Been a Long Time (Real Rap Song)" b/w "How We Do" (Loose Cannon) has been getting lots of club play. **DJ Clark Kent's** beat is intoxicating and the hook is addictive.

ATAK Distributing's got some new material for you all to scoop up. On the DJ tip, I have three new tapes. First is **Uprise** (from SF), whose "Metaphysical" tape is full of scratching, dope hip-hop (with a slight West Coast edge), and features guest appearances by DJs **Dos Rexx** and **RipOne**. **DJ Soloman** has served up an as-yet-untitled mixtape with a B-side brimming with his exclusive remixes of the hottest tracks around. **DJ Heather** (Chicago) should soon be sending me her latest hip-hop and downbeat/acid jazz tapes, which exhibit some of the smoothest mixes I have ever heard. Please send me a stamp if you would like the full catalog, or send a copy of your mixtape/group tape/vinyl for inclusion into the catalog, to ATAK at PO Box 420504 San Francisco, CA 94142.

If you claim that I'm a sell-out, when we meet in the street we'll see who bails out—it's all good!

- P-MINUS!

DJ Serg's Top Ten

Rotation, Mondays @ the Up & Down Club, San Francisco

1. No Soles' Dopest Opus - SIAH AND YESHUA DAPO ED (Fondle 'Em)
 2. The MC - KRS-ONE (Jive)
 3. Rotten Apple - ROYAL FLUSH (Blunt)
 4. Get Ya Swerve On - THE DUTCHMIN (Dolo)
 5. Unassisted - RASCO (of Various Blends) (Stones Throw)
 6. Rhymes Lika Scientist - THIRD SIGHT (Darc Brotha\$ Records)
 7. Home Improvement - E.B.F. (of Various Blends) (All Good Vinyl)
 8. Hush the Crowd - J-LIVE (Raw Shack)
 9. Escape Forever - MYSTIK JOURNEY-MEN (Outhouse Records)
 10. That's How It Is - REDMAN (Def Jam)
- Record of the Month: Super Duck Breaks - TURNTABLIST (Stones Throw)
- Retail Question of the Month: "Excuse me, what is vinyl?"

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Trippin': The Groove Merchant Compilation (Luv n' Haight) Compiled by Chris Veltri

"Trippin'" is the latest in a series of highly consistent reissues from America's premier rare groove label, Luv n' Haight. A few of the tracks are more rare than groove (i.e. the CALS' "Amazon Bossa Nova" or WEST COAST REVIVAL's "My Mind Is At Ease"), but much of it is raw and nasty. Standouts include the JOHNNY FRIGO SEXTET's version of "Scorpio," DAVID BAKER's "Le Miroir Noir" or EUGENE BLACKNELL's "Gettin' Down" (I'd like to see a whole album devoted to this Richmond pioneer's output—he released some of the hardest funk on 7 inches). This is a great starting point for those who want to explore the obscure side of black groove music or for impoverished record guys like myself. Regardless, kudos to Luv n' Haight for releasing great music. —MATT AFRICA

O.S.T.

The Revenge of Mr. Mopoji (Sam Lung/Pure Records) Production: Mike Jackson and the Soul Providers

Over the past few years, Pure records has been responsible for a series of excellent funk bootl—uh, I mean reissues. Main man PHILLIPPE, perhaps the illest record collector on the planet, insists that this album is the long-lost soundtrack to a karate flick of the same name. I have my doubts, in part because this is too good to be true, but also 'cause the snares sound a little tight (I suspect the reason all current funk bands suck is because they get the drum sound totally wrong—use one, at most two, mics and take those gates and reverbs off—please?).

Regardless, this is some raw dog instrumental funk. The riffs are ill, the rhythm section is top notch and the soloists groove along nicely in a MACEO PARKER/FRED WESLEY vein. Phillippe may be counterfeiting the funk, but at least he ain't fakin' it. —MA

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Objective Exotic Directions (white label import)

This is one of the nicest bootlegs I've heard lately. "Objective Exotic Directions" serves up healthy portions of breaks, loops and hard-hitting songs. Some of the material should sound familiar to rap fans, notably CARLA BLEY's "Song Sung Long" and the AMBASSADOR's incredible "Ain't Got the Love." The real strength of this compilation, however, is the wealth of unfindable obscurities like TONIO RUBIO's illmatic "Bass in Action No. 1" or the ELEC-TRIC PRUNES-ish psychedelic funk of the ANIMATED EGG's "Sock It My Way." Even the bonus break fragments at the end of each side are generous. One beef—the paltry liner notes are pretty annoying ("As sampled

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Cutting Teeth and Hair with Bobbito the Barber

Vinyl Exchange: So how have you been?

Bobbito the Barber: Chillin'. I'm chillin'. I'm tired too. I interviewed **Gil Scott-Heron** this morning for *Vibe*.

VE: Oh yeah? How did that go?

Bobbito: It was incredible. That motherf*cker was so cool. I couldn't believe we connected the way we did. The brother completely extended himself to me.

VE: I love those types of interviews.

Bobbito: Yeah, sometimes people make it hard to interview. They'll be giving one word answers and nondescript visions...

VE: Forget the nondescript visions. Let's talk about something very real and concrete: **Fondle 'Em Records**.

Bobbito: Fondle 'Em erected, no pun intended, in December of 1995. Our first release was **The Cenobites** which everyone calls **The Cenubites**. It is properly spelled C-E-N-O-B-I-T-E-S. The named was misspelled on the label. Speaking of the label, it was such a parody of the record industry. I had the Christmas lettering on the Fondle 'Em Records logo and underneath it had "Subsidiary of Squeeze 'Em Entertainment which is a division of Tickle 'Em label groups." I was having fun with the whole label stuff. On the bottom of the label we put, "No promo, no marketing, no videos, no stickers." That statement was me heralding my vision of Fondle 'Em as being an independent label that is going to be about music and artists first and not being so far removed from the music as a lot of the recording industry has become. But without doubt I have to mention **Rich King** who does distribution at **Fat Beats**. He definitely coaxed me into starting the label because over the years I have had a great resource for unsigned talent between the radio show I do with **Stretch (Armstrong)** and all the showcases I host. So I'm always meeting unsigned artists.

VE: Is it because of these activities that people have hailed you the patron saint of unsigned artists?

Bobbito: I think that's kind of funny, but I always have just looked out for people and given them consultation, direction. It's somewhat draining at times because people always ask me the same questions. Anyway, that's how Fondle 'Em started. It was an outgrowth of the discouraging experience I had with **Hoppoh Records**. Me and **Pete Nice** were partners in that label and it was distributed by **Columbia**. Being an independent label distributed by a major, I felt, really wasn't being inde-

pendent. **Columbia** was making the decisions on how much they would promote **Kurious** and how much of a priority they were going to make **Count Bass D**. We wanted to sign **KMD** when they got dropped off of **Elektra**, we wanted to sign this kid named **Cage** and all these groups were being turned down by **Columbia**. That didn't mean independence to me. So me and **Pete**, we're still cool, but we've gone our separate ways as far as that label was concerned. So I started **Fondle 'Em** in its place because I love being able to put out music that I like.

VE: How difficult is it to do all of the distribution by yourself?

Bobbito: Fondle 'Em is a unique situation. I don't promote my records. **Rich King** who is responsible for getting the records distributed, he calls up all the record stores and solicits the records and sends out faxes. So I have help, but yeah, if one of my records was on a major label it would get into a lot more stores. But then again, Fondle 'Em doesn't press CDs or cassettes, it's strictly vinyl, so my vision with the label is to target that die-hard hip-hop head—the person who doesn't want to be overpromoted to, who doesn't want to see a million stickers, who doesn't want to see ads in magazines, who doesn't want to see the video five times before he determines he's going to buy the record—that is the person I want to sell records to. I want to sell records to the person who goes into a record store, sees something on the wall that he's never heard of before and says, "Wow, I can have something that not everybody else is up on." That's a relationship, a bond, that I feel Fondle 'Em has created with those people. It's a special bond and I never want to lose that because that's the relationship I have with people who send me demo tapes. A case in point is when I spin all by myself sometimes on **89.9**, my whole goal is to completely flip people's heads and play them something that they've never heard before and may never hear again.

VE: A lot of people see you as a hip-hop renaissance man. Is that a valid observation?

Bobbito: Well, my life is in disarray at this point. I do four radio shows. I write two magazine articles. I run this record/clothing store. I consult for **Nike**. I host and produce two showcases a month. I spin at clubs and bars. So if that constitutes a renaissance man...

VE: Can you finger one reason, or one driving force behind all these things you do?

Bobbito: I just love music so much. My father was a Latin jazz musician. People

I go out and buy records. Stretch goes out and buys records. That's how we keep on our sh*t.

ask me how I got down with hip-hop and I remember the first time I heard "The Mexican" by **Babe Ruth**.

Nobody told me that this would be a hip-hop classic, that this would be a breakbeat that people would play for the next 20 years in clubs. Nobody told me that but the emotion that record evoked from me was like, yo, that's my f*ckin' sh*t. That's always been why I've been drawn to things because of that emotion, that passion. Being on **WKCR (89.9 FM in NYC)** with **Stretch** is just a labor of love. It's basically college radio. Obviously it's grown a lot beyond that because of the things me and **Stretch** have done outside of **WKCR**. People almost look at **WKCR** as this radio entity but they forget that it's just a non-commercial radio show. I don't mean to belittle it or demean it by saying "just" but that's what it is at heart. It's a non-commercial radio show.

VE: Is the radio show the platform that got everything else, meaning the writing and the consulting, rolling for you?

Bobbito: It's done some things and opened some doors but I think a lot of the things that I've done have been predicated on the fact that I try to be a considerate, cordial and honest person. When I first started writing for *Rap Pages*, **Sheena Lester** had no idea that I'd been writing for *The Flavor*, *Straight From The Lip* and *One Nut Network*. She didn't know that I was a freelance writer already but she saw me at the **Gavin** one year and dug my vibe with everybody and that's why she took my column.

We are sitting in Bobbito's Footwork™ and if you couldn't have guessed from the name, it's Bobbito's store. He sells used records, shoes and clothing. Two large Puerto Rican fellows come into the store and this exchange takes place:

Big Guy #1: "What happened to **Fat Beats**?" (He means the record store that used to occupy **Footwork's** current location.)

Bobbito: "They moved to 8th Street and 6th Avenue."

Big Guy #2: "What's up Bobbito?"

Big Guy #1: "Word? You're Bobbito the Barber? Do you do private parties?"

Bobbito: "Not right now. I've been too busy with the store and everything."

Big Guy #2: "Yo, how's that Ironman?"

Bobbito: "It's dope. I like that sh*t."

Big Guy #1: "How's that Mobb Deep?"

Bobbito: "I haven't heard all of it yet..."

Big Guy #1: "Alright dunn, keep doin' your shit."

Big Guy #2: "Yeah, keep your sh*t rolling."

Bobbito: "Peace..."

VE: What's your philosophy behind not promoting or marketing Fondle 'Em's records?

Bobbito: I worked at Def Jam for four years and I won awards for being the best promoter of the year. I did great things there and I really busted my ass. But doing promotions is harrowing and I never want to do it again. In regards to not sending out to college DJs and not sending out promos, what I'm trying to do is impress upon people that if they love this culture so much then they need to support it. People are so used to getting free stuff from majors who have the promotion budgets that independents don't. The recipients are so spoiled that they'll say, "If you don't send me a free record, then I won't play it." It's horrible. I go out and buy records. Stretch goes out and buys records. That's how we keep on our sh*t. If you want to rest on your laurels and say, "Go ahead and send it to me," then you'll miss out. What I'm trying to do is recondition people to actually support something. Instead of being on a guest list, go to this club and pay to get in. If the club makes enough revenue then maybe instead of hearing someone complaining, "Ah, there's no places to go and hear dope sh*t." Maybe we'll hear, "Oh now I have a place to go because I supported it." It's the same with independent labels. If people don't buy my records I can't put them out. The other thing with Fondle 'Em is that I split my profits with my artists 50/50. So when I tell people, "I'm not going to send you a promo and I really appreciate it if you buy it," that's not just to support me or the label. It's to support the artists. So when I give the artist 50 percent of the profits, I'm not subtracting cost for 700 promos, I'm not subtracting \$5000 for a video...

VE: Or transportation to and from, say, the Gavin Convention?

Bobbito: Exactly, I'm not doing none of that sh*t. So when the artist gets 50 percent, it's 50 percent. I hope that no one gets pissed off about that but I always take the time to explain to people when they ask for promos...

VE: What are your thoughts on vinyl as a medium and its apparent resurgence in popularity?

Bobbito: It's taken a long time for all of us to make the statement that a lot of people are still buying vinyl. When the major labels tried to eradicate vinyl, we were still buying new and used vinyl and buying bootlegs. Labels are only now seeing that, maybe for slightly different reasons than ours, but they're learning they need to keep vinyl around.

VE: Is having one record store in every small and large city by the year 2000 a pipe dream?

Bobbito: That would be incredible if that happened but I don't know if it's possible at this point. A lot of people still want me to press up CDs and they say, "I don't have a record player." I'll say, "Why don't you have one?" If enough people just put out vinyl and say that they'll sacrifice CD and cassette sales in the short term then it might force people to buy turntables...It's a long term goal of mine. I tell my artists coming in that their music might not be heard by a lot of people because of the vinyl-only thing, and they accept that. Also, I don't sign them to any

deals. I don't own any of their masters and I don't have any recording contracts. It's a free environment.

VE: Are there any drawbacks to that aside from the obvious financial one?

Bobbito: No, because everybody I deal with I trust and they trust me.

—ALAN YU

Visit Bobbito at Bobbito's Footwork on 323 East 9th Street in New York City. While you're there, listen to him and Stretch Armstrong late Thursday night, early Friday morning 1 am to 5 am on 89.9 FM WKCR.



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by BUCKWILD on..." and the like). Fortunately the music speaks for itself, and at its best it is adventurous and funky. —MA

DJ SHADOW

Endtroducing LP (Mo' Wax import) Production: DJ Shadow

After several years of production for SOLESIDES and a number of Mo' Wax import singles, DJ SHADOW has unleashed his genre-bending debut album. The style he labels "hardcore instrumental hip hop" has made him a sensation on sales charts overseas and with the trip-hop crowd here.

Is it hip-hop? I don't know. Shadow is deeply grounded in b-boy traditions (I kinda doubt any of the trip-hop guys would know who MANTRONIK was, let alone shout out his engineers in their liner notes). On the other hand, this music is ambient in a way that is fundamentally un-hip-hop. This functions comfortably as background music in a way that hip-hop simply cannot.

It's far more than background music, though. It bears close listening in a way most trip-hop does not, and that's a testament to Shadow's abilities. He escapes the monotony of predictable arrangements with imagination and virtuosity. Check the way he chops the MOTHERLODE break (popularized by PREMIER on "Credit Is Due") on "Changeling" or the arrangements on "Organ Donor." I gotta confess he loses me every time he dips into that jungle isht (like on "Stem/Long Stem"), but I'm probably being small-minded. Regardless, the album is superb.

P.S. Yeah, that is the Vinyl Exchange's own BENI B (looking diesel) on the back cover. —MA

BABYFACE

feat. GHOSTFACE KILLAH - "For the Lover In You" (Epic) Production: Puffy

One of my New Year's resolutions last year was something about not being shocked by R&B/hip-hop remix hybrids, but lately I've been sorely tested—MARIAH CAREY singing over "Sound Bwoy Bureill" for God's sake! Anyway, this combination is particularly bizarre—BABYFACE is softer than goosedown and GHOSTFACE is, well, Ghostface. Fortunately the mix here is like 70% Ghost, 30% Baby with a nice track credited to PUFFY. —MA

CAMP LO

"Luchini (This Is It)"/"Swing" (Profile) Production: Ski aka Joe Chink

I think I like these guys better each time they come out. Here both sides hit. "Luchini" is a slow, smooth disco jam with a dope chorus and strong verses from emcees GEECHIE SUEDE and SONNY CHIBA. I'm still not sure what they're talking about half the time, but I can't resist the way they deliver impressionistic Blaxploitation nonsense.

"Swing" is a nasty party-rocking jam. SKI

freaks a simple piano loop and the LOU DONALDSON drums (which will never play out provided kids stay creative like this). The track features BUTTERFLY of DIGABLE PLANETS and though I'm not a fan of them, I have to give him his—he comes off. —MA

DSA

"Unholy"/"Uncontrollable" (Black Dog Entertainment) Production: RNS

DARK SKIN ASSASSIN is probably the most slept on of the WU-related artists out there. He dropped a dope single on Doe Loe Records a couple years ago. "Unholy" is nice; it sounds kinda like "Unsolved Mystere." DSA's rhyme is a street story with a thoughtful edge.

The other song is a crew rhyme over BILLY SQUIER's "Big Beat." No instrumentals, but "Unholy" has an acapella. Recommended. —MA

FIERCE

"Grab"/"Come Close" (Wreck House/Hot Wax Records) Production: Mad Man G/Close Range

My mans FRANK and SERG pulled my coat to this record, hyping me up with comparisons to RAS KASS or O.C.'s "Time's Up." FIERCE is aptly named—he sounds passionate, raw and angry, rhyming over a very minimal piano-and-drums track. His flow is nice and the lyrics have bite. Check for it. —MA

HILLFIGUZ

"Up On Prospect"/"Boom!" (Dolo Records) Production: T-Hall/Hillfiguz

When I write reviews I try to avoid clichés like "infectious" and "head nod," but damn if they weren't made up to describe this record. On "Prospect," HILLFIGUZ rhyme over a slow bassline so dirty it might stain your speakers. Vocally they sound a lot like M.O.P., but don't be afraid: "Sweet like molasses/Turn emcees to Clay like Cassius/Rhyme style puts Earth off its axis/I smash this/Better yet I blast this/Type of style to turn Catholic into Baptist." Highly recommended. —MA

HI-TECH

"24/7"/"Book of Life... Page 2" (Mass Vinyl) Production: DJ Shok/Jaybiz

Mass Vinyl has released a number of good independent records over the past couple years, but this is by far the best. "24/7" features a dope piano track punctuated with moog noises and an ill scratch hook from "Stakes Is High." As for HI-TECH, he sounds a lot like NAS (I feel stupid saying this since so many sound-alikes are coming out, but yo, he really does sound like a pre-Escobar Nas) and rides the beat real well: "I'm padlockin' this/Hip-hoppin this/Fraudulence/Brothers is portrayin/I got to just put a stop to it/Me and the mic's monogamous/I promised it I would never leave/So I'ma stay forever married to her rockin' isht."

On the other side they vic PORTISHEAD for a haunting loop. This record is a little derivative but I like it a lot. —MA

HOMELISS DERILEX

"Cash Money"/"Operations" (Stones Throw Records) Production: Architect (G. Luv)

The Milpitas mic-ripper 50 GRAND is back and on point like BREVIN KNIGHT. "Cash Money" is his best yet. ARCHITECT's track is definitely fucked-up, and I mean that in the best sense of the word: the noodling bassline, the on- and off-beat drums and the nasty "C.R.E.A.M." scratch all sound kind of off-kilter, but they work.

"Operations" is a mellow groove detailing daily life; the details and delivery put it over. This a must for those who didn't catch HD's single last year or Grand's appearance on the PEANUT BUTTER WOLF EP (watch for more collaborations from them—RASTA CUE-TIP played me a tape that was smoking). —MA

MONEY BOSS PLAYERS

"Walk With the Limp"/"Players Pinnacle"/"Crap Game" (Warning Records) Production: Father Time/Minnesota

MONEY BOSS PLAYERS have been steadily building a rep over the last year through cameos and production for SADAT X, REAL LIVE and others (LORD TARIQ is all over the new SHAQ album). "Players Pinnacle" and "Crap Game" came out last year but they still sound fresh.

On "Walk With the Limp" they pull off the hook of the year using the best line BIG BANK HANK ever said (even if he didn't write it). Lord Tariq kills it over a mellow piano and rimshot groove. By all means check for this one. —MA

PMD

"Leave Ya Style Cramped" (Relativity) Production: PMD

I thought he was done, but it looks like PARRISH is in it to win it. If there was anything good on his first solo album I must have missed it, but P sounds rejuvenated. "Ruff, Rugged-n-Raw" kicked off the comeback with its irresistible vocal hook, but this has a much darker feel to it. He sounds like he has a chip on his shoulder, and the track complements this; P combines a menacing bassline with eerie beeps and fluttering noises. Watch for more. —MA

REAL LIVE

The Turnaround: The Long Awaited Drama LP (Big Beat) Production: K-Def/Marley Marl

Kids are sleeping on this record, in part because Big Beat is folding and wasn't really pushing this album to begin with. Mark my words, though—it's a classic.

K-DEF is one of the illest producers working in hip-hop. Nobody else can make strings sound so damn hard (check "The Turnaround" or "Real Live Isht") and only

CLASSIFIED ADS

VINYL for sale or trade

HIP-HOP LPs and 12-inches from 1984 to 1995. Some old school, R&B, techno, 1980s club/freestyle. Sell or trade. Info: Carlos A. Rojas, 4081 Home Ave. #212, San Diego, CA 92105. Phone 619.262.5397.

CONSUELO'S CORNER at Behind the Post Office, 1510 Haight Street, San Francisco. 415.861.2507. Jazz, hip-hop, vinyl treats!

STACKS OF WAX. Jazz, soul, funk, rap, etc... call or fax want list to 415.252.7817.

SOUL, R&B & jazz LPs, buy, sell trade. Visa, MC, Amex. Dane C. LaBarr, P.O. Box 260834, Tampa, FL 33685, USA. Tel/fax 813.882.3929. E-mail dcLabarr@gate.net.

SPECIAL ED's "Think About It"/"One In a Million" 12", sealed. \$10. Contact Parlay Graphics.

VINYL wanted

WANTED!! Souls' "Never No More" 12" and ANY old De La, Gang Starr, JBs or Kwamé 12"s. Contact Jay Dub at 404.223.0247 (phone/fax).

LOOKING FOR BDP's "Jack of Spades" 12", De La Soul's "Plug Tunin'" 12", Gang Starr's "Step In the Arena" 12" and Kool Keith's EP on the Funky Ass label. Call Albert 510.814.9237.

WANTED: LA the Darkman's "As the World Turns" and Mobb Deep's "Still Shinin'" on 12-inch. Contact me at: Gregg Schmidt, 83 Maple Pkwy, Staten Island, NY 10303 or e-mail poohjn@wow.com

WANTED: Old and new Hieroglyphics music—12-inches, LPs, cassettes or CDs. Desperately looking for Casual "Me-O-Mi-O" b/w "Rock On," Souls of Mischief

"Never No More" b/w "Make Your Mind Up." 312.722.0210, ask for Wiley. TOP CASH PAID.

LOOKING FOR Native Tongue house remix i.e. Queen Latifah's "Come Into My House," ATCQ's "Luck of Lucien," De La Soul's "Saturday." Call Miquel, 415.552.6328.

LOOKING FOR these domestics: Del's *No Need For Alarm LP*, De La Soul's *Buhloone Mindstate LP*, ATCQ Mr. Incognito (unreleased). Call Ritchie at 510.799.6266.

TAPES mix tapes for sale

FREE MIX TAPES. Send \$1.00 for postage to Four Foot, 3107 W. Colorado Ave #212, Colorado Springs, CO 80904.

UNDERGROUND hip-hop mix tapes. No radio-played wack sh*t. East coast influence (no disrespect

to the west). For a catalog, please send a SASE to: Scratch Off Tha Serial, 369 S. Doheny Dr. #106, Beverly Hills, CA 90211.

Str8 outta Atlanta, GA. Phat R&B/hip-hop mix tapes. No 10,000 shout-outs, just cutz and scratches, ghetto remixes on 90-min. tapes. Only \$10. 4 more info 1.800.484.8336 code 8273.

Unique 90-min. acid jazz, rare groove and hip-hop mix tapes by DJ Tom Thump. 415.282.7052.

EQUIPMENT for sale

Custom, refinished CABINET SPEAKERS. Affordable, portable or not. All speakers made for your specific or general or mobile needs. Call Andy 415.449.8434. Let's make a deal.

PEAVEY CS-800 Power Amp, 200/400

watts (8/4 ohms) in SKB rack case, \$500. 510.548.7452.

MACKIE MS1202 mixer. Ultra clean mic pre-amps (no-noise vocals on your four-track!) \$200. Matt 510.526.8569.

16 TRACK MUSIC SOFTWARE \$299, also available phat computer systems & setups. 510.473.9638 ext.4.

DJs for hire

MOBILE DJ. Clubs, private parties, fashion shows, school dances. R&B and hip-hop. Clark Parker, Fog City Entertainment, P.O. Box 591171, San Francisco, CA 94159-1171. 415.560.6800.

EVENTS battles, seminars

Beat Junkie Classic/Represent '97. San Francisco, January 5, 1997. Call 310.986.2775 or 619.689.6483 for information.

KALX Record Swap Feb 2nd, 10 am 4 pm. MLK Student Union on the UC Berkeley campus. Loads of vinyl (soul, funk, jazz, hip-hop and more) will be available. For table info, call Beni B @ 510.642.1111.

1997 Gavin Seminar, Feb. 12-15, 1997 at the Hyatt Regency, New Orleans, LA. Call the Gavin Hotline at 415.495.3200.

MISCELLANEOUS

BREAKBEATS wanted! Alert! DJs, producers and lyricists. Strong Sounds are looking for product for stores, labels, mix shows and distribution. Send tapes or wax to: Strong Sound Records, 6253 Hollywood Blvd. #817, LA, CA 90028, attn: Chris Wild.

Classified ads are FREE up to 35 words and run for at least three issues.

reVIEWS

PETE ROCK comes close to the soulful feel of "Ain't No Love" (check the moans). He even squeezes stuff out of records I thought I never wanted to hear again ("Nautilus" and "It's Your Thing"). Last but not least, his cuts are real nasty.

LARRY O is much-maligned as a lyricist. No, he doesn't reinvent rhyme-saying or anything spectacular, but his delivery is thick and his criminal minded lyrics are usually on point. This one deserves a listen. —MA

SOULS OF MISCHIEF

"Unseen Hand" (Industry Records) Production: Opio, Kool DJ EQ

Due to creative differences, SOM are no longer associated with Jive Records. Instead they opt for the independent route. No fancy wordplay, no complex beats. SOM finally manages to resurrect the lyrical skills that made them famous many moons ago. "Unseen" remix courtesy of KOOL DJ EQ. It is good to hear these talented young brothers back on wax again. For more info, call 702.889.4526. —BENI B

NON-PHIXION

"5 Boros" b/w "Four W's" (Serchlite Music) "5 Boros" and "Four W's" represent NON-

PHIXION's wake-up call to the hip-hop community. "Why you feel the need to hold me down/Who, who the hell is you to think you down/Where, where ya gonna be in 2002/Take these words home and think it through." Hip-hop's chock-full-o' shook ones in 1996. Artists spend more time writing than listening. Hopefully, both "5 Boros" and "Four W's" will inspire Non-Phixion's brethren to square up before 2002 hits them like a ton of bricks. MC SERCH appears on both tracks. (It's good to hear him doin' his thing.) "5 Boros" also features D.V. ALIAS KHRIST on back up vocals. For more info, call 212.673.3883. —BB

SIAH AND YESHUA DAPO ED

Self-Titled EP (Fondle 'Em)

If you are into hip-hop that borders on the cutting edge musically, then you'll definitely want to check for the fifth release from BOBBITO's Fondle 'Em Records. After the first listen, this record brings to mind memories of past efforts put forth by the SOLESIDES crew. In fact, their sound is Solesides circa 1993. Standout joints include the eleven-minute beat excursion "A Day Like Any Other," "The Visualz" and "No Soles' Dopest Opus." This record is definitely not for the one-dimensional fan of

hip-hop. Instead, check for LUMINATI's "Triple Beam" on the LOB label. For info, call 212.673.3883. —BB

THIRD SIGHT

"Ballsacks" b/w "Rhymes Like Scientist" (Darc Brotha\$ Records)

This joint is bugged. "Ballsacks"—the title alone should tell you what THIRD SIGHT chooses as the topic of conversation. "Rhymes Like Scientist" may sound pleasing to the ear, but that's due to that TOO \$HORT wail, "Beeeaatch," in the opening segment. If independents are your thing then check it out, but only if you got a credit slip. Otherwise, kindly pass on this joint. —BB

ROYAL FLUSH

"Rotten Apple" (Blunt) Production: EZ Elpee Good God, this is ill. Flush sounds perfect over this mellow, buttery groove. EZ ELPEE's bassline and keyboard loop has been ringing in my ears for like three weeks now, and I'm sure it's gonna torment me until I find a copy.

Yo, Blunt: this is FLUSH's third single and I still haven't seen a one of them in stores. If you want to sell records, you have to release them first. Got it, Einstein? —MA

NEW WAX

BAD BOY

Single Can't Nobody Hold Me Down - Puff Daddy & Mase

BEYOND REAL RECORDINGS

Single Hip-Hop b/w Beyond Real (Remix) - Jigmastas

BLUNT RECORDINGS

Sampler My Xperience - Bounty Killer (features Junior Reid, Busta Rhymes, Raekwon, Jeru and more—promo)

Single Unstoppable - Mic Geronimo

COLUMBIA

Single Music Evolution - Buckshot LeFonque

CORRECT

Single Everybody's Talkin - AI' Tariq

DATABASE

Single Boogie Down's Got the Flavor b/w Don't Get It Twisted - Foundation & ReZidue

DEATH ROW

Single Snoop's Upside Ya Head - Snoop Doggy Dogg
LP Tha Doggfather - Snoop Doggy Dogg

DEF JAM

LP Muddy Waters - Redman

DELANCEY STREET UK

EP The Love Supreme EP - Pimp Daddy Nash

DOGDAY ENTERTAINMENT

LP Greens - Closed Caption

EMO RECORDINGS

Single Allstar Jam b/w It's Rare - Wisdom

EPIC

Single Every Time I Close My Eyes - Babyface

FONDLE 'EM

EP Siah and Yeshua Dapo ED

FUNKY ASS RECORDS

Single Don't Crush It b/w Sex Style - Kool Keith

GOOD MUSIC RECORDS

Single Death Becomes Her - Cassidy (7"; 310.939.5112)

JIVE

Single Hot To Def b/w Love L.O.D. - Keith Murray

LOUD

Single Eyes May Shine (Remix) - Xzibit featuring Mobb Deep

KICK ASS RECORDS

Single Everyday b/w Queens Stand Strong - Darcysyde

MEPHISTO RECORDS

Single Flava Lamp b/w A Song For Peace - Q-Burn's Abstract Message

NEW BREED RECORDS

Singles Crime Scene - Dirty Fingaz
EP Other Sounds, Other Worlds - Hustletron

OFFICIAL

Single Infokill b/w Population Control - Company Flow (Call 212.539.3722.)

PAPER MUSIC

Single Can't Hold Us Down - Babigezus feat. Greg Nyce

PRIORITY

LP Da Storm - Originoo Gunn Clappaz

PUSSYFOOT (UK)

LP Ruban D'Alpha - Sie

RELATIVITY

LP Firing Squad - M.O.P

SEPIA ENTERTAINMENT

EP The Khromozome Project

STREETLIFE ENTERTAINMENT

EP Westbound - Mac & A.K.

SUNBURN RECORDS

EP The Toast EP - Q-Burn's Abstract Message

TOMMY BOY

LP Big Blunts Vols. 2 & 3 - Various Artists

TRU CRIMINAL RECORDS

Single One Life Ta Live b/w East Ta West - Ak Skills (For info call 212.997.7669)

WHITE LABELS

Single Harlem USA b/w American Dream - Children of the Corn

LP From the Crates to the Files - Lord Finesse (double vinyl)

Single Fast Life b/w The Bizness (Vinyl Reanimators Remixes) - Nas & De La Soul

Single Leave Ya Style Cramped - PMD

WORK/SONY

Singles I Got Money b/w Flip On This - d.b.a. Flip
Cosmic Girl - Jamiroquai (double vinyl, club mixes by David Morales and Jamiroquai)
One O'Clock - Sabelle includes remix by Freddie Bustone

the Vinyl Exchange

a newsletter for deejays and vinyl junkies

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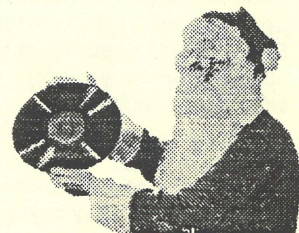


**InterVIEW with
Bobbito Garcia!**

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the Vinyl Exchange

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Happy Holidays!