

the Vinyl Exchange

the newsletter for deejays and vinyl junkies
www.vinylexchange.com

DECEMBER 1997

DJ and Vinyl News

Like **Diamond**, the *Vinyl Exchange* is back from the hiatus! I spent an extended vacation in Pennsylvania, home of cheese-steaks, Wawa and Yuengling, not to mention the **PA Pigeon Chompers**. Check out my conversation with Philly residents **Jedi Mind Tricks** and their label Superegular Recordings, who have just released their first full-length album. Look out for more Philly-style treats on deck for next month.

Here in the Bay, congratulations are due to **The Automator (Dan Nakamura)**, the **Hardkiss Brothers** and **Peanut Butter Wolf (Chris Manak)**, recipients of 1997 Goldie Awards, the *San Francisco Bay Guardian's* Guardian Outstanding Local Discovery Award. (**DJ Shadow** was a winner in 1996.) In his acceptance speech, PB Wolf thanked his mom, "Mrs. Butter Wolf." (**Billy Jam** came up with that one.) Stones Throw released the **Persevere** single, with cover artwork by **Doze** of the original **Rocksteady Crew**. Coming soon from Stones Throw are those **Rasco** and **Encore** remixes, the **Rasco LP** and the **Lootpack** (of the **Likwit** crew).

Om Records' *Deep Concentration* Tour successfully made its way across the US and Canada in October, featuring Peanut Butter Wolf and **Cut Chemist** plus several guest DJs: **Prince Paul**, **Shortkut**, **The Beat Junkies**, **The X-Men**, **A-Trak**, **Radar**, **Kid Koala**, **Q-Burn's Abstract Message**, **Wally & Swingsett**, **Anna**, the list goes on. "It was one of my most positive experiences that I've had," says Peanut Butter. "As far as being able to DJ all over the US, I never thought it could be possible, playing the kind of music that we're playing. Just to even be able to do that was an experience, and to get paid on top of it, that's always a plus."

Also back in October, the '97 **Rap Sheet Battle** was won by **P-Trix**, a member of the **BPM Record Pool** out of San Diego (619.462.5903). Look out for P-Trix.

ITF is working on a DJ compilation due out in March, featuring the ITF champions as well as some of the judges. It'll be double vinyl, on the ITF label. **Alex Aquino** promises an even better year for '98; with some reconstruction, ITF is working on making things run smoother.

Congratulations to Conception Records (**Mr. Supreme**, **Sureshot** and **Strath**) in Seattle, who now have a distribution deal with Sub Pop Records. While I'm on Seatown I'd like to big up ITF Northwest Finalist **DV One** who's teaching a DJ class for a non-profit organization, and to **DJ WD4D** of Sea Level Productions, www.angelfire.com/wa/sealevel.

Relativity has re-issued **Common (Sense)'s** *Can I Borrow A Dollar* album. Notice that

"Common Sense" has been changed to "Common" on both title and liner notes. While we're in Chicago, let's not forget **Da Molemen** who have a new EP out on their own label, "Below the Ground," featuring **Vakill**, **Juice** and **All Natural**. Buy it.

Thanks for your support. Happy New Year!

—DJ STEF

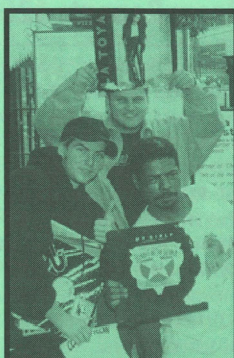
Trackheads Anonymous

Welcome back.

Nice to see all you kids again. Much has happened since the last time. The summer was ill, one of the craziest in recent memory without question. Thanks to everyone who made this summer a crazy one, you all know who you are. If this winter is half as good as the summer was, I'm in for a treat. Let it snow. Happy holidays to all of you out there, whichever holidays you choose to celebrate (P.C. points for me).

The most interesting turn of events is that I am now running a little hip-hop store here in Rhode Island called **Central**. We are focusing on hip-hop vinyl, mix tapes, some clothes and some skateboard stuff as well. If any of you have something I'd be interested in selling you can call, 401.826.4895.

Rawkus just continues to dominate underground hip-hop as we know it, dropping jewel after jewel with the quickness. Five or six new projects are out, or are in the works and will be finished shortly. The first in the Rawkus fall/winter assault is a mix tape called "Soundbombing." They enlisted the services of **Evil Dee** to hook up this showcase of the best Rawkus releases of the past (**Company Flow**, **Indelibles**, **Mos Def**, etc., etc.) and of course some extra treats you won't find anywhere else (freestyles by **Talib Kweli** and **Mos Def**). Definitely a nice treat for your walkman, available on CD and cassette. Next up is the **Black Attack 12"**. You are all probably familiar with **Black Attack** from his time with Correct Records a year or so ago. Expect more of the same, **Ghetto Professionals** production and a B-side featuring **Problemz**. There are two songs, both kind of nice but really nothing to write home about. If you're a fan of the **Beatnuts** or the **Artifacts** I could see you digging this record. Definitely worth a few spins. Next up is the **L Fudge 12"**. This is a



Ricky Pigeons, Dan Ladd and friend display their vinyl finds in Boston.

three-songer with production from **Sean C. (Vinyl Reanimators)**, **Rich Boogie** and **Spinna**. Out of all the Rawkus new releases I think this is the one with the most potential. All three tracks are slamming, and **L Fudge** definitely drops some jewels all over them. The Sean C.-produced "Liquid" is blazing with a funk guitar-driven track while the second cut "Show Me Your Gratitude" rocks an ill sounding scratch on some keys. On the Spinna produced "What If?", **Talib Kweli**, **Mike Zoot**, **Shabaam Sahdeeq** and **Skam** show up for an ill posse cut. This record is killing it right now, a must. Up next is the **RA The Rugged Man 12"**. People in the know will remember this man from his time with Jive with the group called **Crustified Dibbs**. If you knew this you would also know that this man is quite crazy, and pretty ill lyrically as well. This single is a two songer, "Till my Heart Stops" b/w "Flipside." The A-Side features RA and his man **8-Off the Assassin** going off on fake emcees who can't flow and the like. Sounds familiar right? Not the way these guys do it, they take dissing to a new level. The B-Side is the gem here—"Flipside" is RA basically venting all his frustrations with the music industry as a whole over a fat track. You just need to hear what he has to say about record labels and the people who work at them. Rawkus gets the brave soldier award for signing this man, good luck dealing with this guy. He might be abrasive, but it sure is hot. Next up is a far less abrasive record by the name of "Body Rock." This is a single from the upcoming *Lyricist Lounge Vol. 1* double album that is scheduled for release next spring. It features the mighty **Mos Def**, **Q-Tip** and **Tash** from **Tha Alkaholiks**. Hot producer of the moment, **Shawn J. Period**, drops a perfect track for these three emcees' flow, something incredibly smooth. This is sure to be a track heard on mix tapes and mix shows for a while. The album features a virtual who's who of hip-hop—**KRS**, **Zach** from **Rage Against the Machine**, **The Last Emperor**, **Rah Digga** and tons more. Something to look forward to next year.

While the next record is not exactly brand new, it's hot so don't sleep. Get out your dictionaries and medical journals for the **Seven-L & Esoteric 12"** out on Brick. This is a three-songer, two were previously on the Rebel Alliance record, but don't let that stop you, they are redone. The first song, "Protocol" (a Vinyl Reanimators remix is also included), lets Esoteric concoct his medical doctrines and journals solo. He drops lines like, "your situation's the worst case, you've got creative control but aren't creative in the first place." "Touch The

continued on page 6...



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PHOTOS

Mike McRath, Stef; courtesy of
1200 Hobos, Rawkus, Superegular

Big shouts go out to the whole Philly crew:

Jedi Mind Tricks, Superegular, Steve,
Big Rich, the Mountain Brothers, Gruffy
Combs, Ryan, Cora, Ricky Pigeons, Mark

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12/97

New Vinyl Stores Open

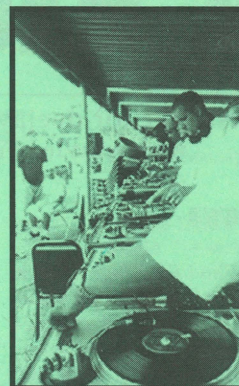
Amoeba Music of Berkeley opened its
massive San Francisco location on Novem-
ber 15, at 1855 Haight Street. In a former
bowling alley, the new store is a humun-
gous 24,000 square feet. The new and used
hip-hop, soul, dance, jazz, rock, 45s and
loungecore vinyl sections are impressive.
DJs **Rasta Cue-Tip** and KUSF's **J-Boogie** are
among the knowledgeable staff. Amoeba is
trade-in friendly; call 415.831.1200.

A new store located on the lower east side
of Manhattan is **5 Borough Groove**. The
address is 185 Orchard Street, New York,
NY 10002; phone 212.358.9751. They sell
95% hip-hop. Keep buying that vinyl!

Crew Report: 1200 Hobos

If you haven't heard of the **1200 Hobos**
yet, then prepare yourself, because eventu-
ally you will. The 1200 Hobos are: **Mr. Dibbs** (Ohio), **DJ Skip** (Ohio), **John Doe** (Ohio), **DJ Jay** (Florida), **Sureshot** (Florida), **DJ Jerm** (Alabama), **DJ Fingaz** (Cali), and the newest member, **DJ Signify** (NY). The Hobos were formed in 1993 when Mr. Dibbs and DJ Skip met. It was from that moment on that the 1200 Hobos started their journey to gain fame in the world of turntablism.

To get a taste of the 1200 Hobos' incredi-
ble talents, check out their must-have mix
tapes, "Evolution" and "Tapes, Skills, Tech-
niques." The unique style and skills of Mr. Dibbs can be heard on "B-Boy's Revenge 96 Porkopolis Turntable Jazz," which is featured on Bomb Records' *Return of the DJ II*. One of the greatest mix tapes in history to date is "Turntable Scientifics" by Mr. Dibbs—his style and skills shine throughout the tape. Dibbs and producer **Jel** teamed up to form the group **Presage** and that mix tape is called "Outer Perimeter." Mr. Dibbs also has a breakbeat record available called "Unearthed Vol. I" with Volume II in the works. Be on the lookout for a full album by Mr. Dibbs as well as his next mix tape titled, "Resurrection." DJ Signify, the newest addition to the Hobos ranks, has a mix tape out called "Signifyin' Breaks" and is now working on his next mix tape project. Other members of the crew are currently working on various projects. DJ Fingaz has a new breakbeat record coming out soon and John Doe's mix tape "Kjeldahl Determination 1200 Hamburgers" will be available soon. John Doe's tape will feature cameos by fellow Hobos, so you can expect to hear many different styles and techniques throughout the tape. Also watch for a new 1200 Hobos tape titled, "Tapes, Skills, Techniques 98" in the future. 1200 Hobos Mr. Dibbs and John Doe can be heard on the wheels of steel every Friday from 2 am to 4 am on 88.3 WAI-F's "B-Boy Underground" show. The show is hosted by **G-Fresh**, who together with Mr. Dibbs runs a record pool called **3rd Finger**.



DJ Skip, Sureshot, Jay Storm, Mr. Dibbs and John Doe are shown here.

As far as battles go, most of the Hobos are busy working on numerous projects, but keep an ear out for DJ Jay who continues to enter local battles and rip wax. Rest assured you will be hearing a lot about the 1200 Hobos in the future and don't forget to check out any of the tapes and other projects

mentioned. Listening to a 1200 Hobo mix tape is like taking a musical journey through the world of turntablism, so hop on and enjoy the ride.

—NICK CALDARONE

Superegular Recordings Releases Jedi Mind Tricks Full-Length LP

Part One of Two: South Street, Philadelphia

How do you run an independent record label? It's not easy, even when you have the dopest new product on the planet, which is the case for onesoul productions and Superegular Recordings out of Philly, label for **Jedi Mind Tricks**. Following the loud buzz created in the underground by "The Amber Probe EP," the full-length LP has now hit the streets. Guest artists the **Sun Pharaoh**, **Apathy the Alien Tongue**, the **Lost Children of Babylon** and **Yan the Phenomenon** join forces with **Ikon the Verbal Hologram** to lay down vocals amid producer/DJ **Stoupe's** dark soundscape, to create *The Psycho-Social, Biological, Chemical, Electro-Magnetic Manipulation of Human Consciousness*. Prepare for the second coming.

Superegular Recordings: The label is run by **Ryan** (aka Yan), **Pablo**, **Steve** and **Jedi** members Ikon and Stoupe. "As it was in the beginning," Superegular started out with the hardcore band **Superegular**, named after a choice of gasoline (unleaded, regular, *superegular?*). The band put out their own CD but eventually broke up, and Ikon wanted to keep the label going and put out hip-hop. "I said 'word to that' because I just wanted to put out music," says Pablo.

Distribution, Promotion and the DIY Method: Ikon, Stoupe and Pablo started out doing a lot of tapes of underground music, like their group **Soulcraft**, but the Jedi Mind Tricks EP, released in November of '96, was the first release for which they had a formulated approach. They started with a promo vinyl pressing of 300, then moved more copies once distribution picked it up. It was extremely well received overseas. When asked about their approach to promotion, Pablo answers, "We called every number in the Vinyl Exchange."



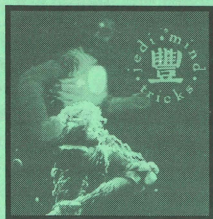
"We took it to the chamber on the new one," is how Ikon describes the new Jedi Mind Tricks LP.

Ikon adds, "We really did, seriously. We started politicking like, 'Yo we got this record.' Because it's like NY and Cali, and if you're not in that loop—we were like, f*ck it, if it's a raw record it's gonna sell itself no matter what. That's the essence of independent music."

Yan feels they didn't sell as many copies of the first record as they could have. "We ran into one of the independent label pitfalls real early. We didn't really plan for the success of the record and therefore we really only had enough money for two pressings of about 600. I know that record had at least 3,000 copies in it. Distributors were calling us, asking, 'Yo, where's the product?' We're like, 'Yo, where's our money?' We learned a lot from that. This time around we're prepared. We know there's a pretty substantial buzz for the full-length." They've learned by experience that you have to stay on top of distributors because as an independent label, you're a low priority. Yan says, "As an independent label you rely on that check to come in. We can't go back and do another \$2,000 press of the record without the thousands that we're owed. That was the most important lesson we learned, was to be prepared this time around. If someone wants to order a thousand records tomorrow, we'll be able to do it."

Yan reflects on the first release: "We didn't really have a plan—we sent out a few copies in November, a few in December, January—we were still getting reviews this summer for a record that came out last November, just because our promotion was all scattered. This time around we have a plan, we have advance cassettes and got them all sent out at the same time, the vinyl will all be sent at the same time, so there's definitely more coordination."

"The biggest thing I realized is that no one's trying to help you," says Ikon, "No one. You have to keep it self-contained. We were so meticulous about it this time. It's all our fault if we don't blow this record up, no excuses involved." The new strategy is working—they had almost the whole first pressing sold before they had it in their hands. "It wasn't like that at all the first time, now people like TRC (Distribution) are like, 'We sold it all, so it's logical that the full-length's gonna sell.' This album has a full-color cover—I wanted it to be as dope-looking as it is, to make sure that it wasn't



just a white label—not that there's anything wrong with that, but I wanted it to be like, there's a reason to buy this." The LP's cover art was created by Ikon himself, inspired by the *Bhagavad-gita*, the Hare Krishna bible.

In an industry where a record is considered old after just a few months, Ikon points out the need to stay on top of things: "If we're gonna sell 5,000 of these, I want them all on the streets in two months." Orders are still coming in for the first release. "I'm like, get that thing away from me!" This is where the conflict between the business and the art comes into play. "With me and him [Stoupe] on this new one, that EP is nothing like what we're doing now." He sees the financial need to sell the old record as well as the new, but as an artist doesn't feel it's a representation of what he's on now. "It's an evolution. I want to show that we took it somewhere else. We took it to the chamber on the new one."

"When everyone sees this record," says Yan, "they're gonna be like, wow, these are five kids who work 9-to-5 jobs, with no other financial backing whatsoever. They're going to be impressed." With limited time and resources, organization is vital. Yan is the backbone—he's the A&R; Pablo handles the PC stuff, accounts, contracts and shipping; Steve does some A&R, he has a night job and can handle things during the day when the others are at their day jobs; Ikon and Stoupe do street promotions. Yan, Ikon and Stoupe handle talent; Ikon is out there in the clubs, making connections with other groups and getting feature artists, while Yan works the business end. The Superegular crew has learned that *they* are the only five people that they can rely on—it's all come from within from day one, from the music to promotion and finances, and they plan on keeping it that way.

"It's sounds so cliché—'creative control'—it is the truth, though," Ikon says.

I asked Ikon how he feels now about the possibility of signing to a major label as opposed to the DIY (do-it-yourself) approach, after this experience. "I think it's easy for people to say, 'I wouldn't sign a label deal now' but they're talking out their ass. I truthfully now would *not* sign to a label. I'm so down with what we're doing and I'm genuinely proud of it. I know we can make this a profitable business as well as something that I enjoy doing. **Rasoul** who is in Lost Children of Babylon, who is on the record, he's tight with **Killah Priest**. Priest's album has been done for two years! That record's a classic. Same with **Sunz of Man**. Rasoul has tapes and tapes of all their stuff, done. And where is it? And they're with **Wu!** So imagine if I was on there, someone from the dungeons that no one knows about. That shows you how labels prioritize themselves. If you're not **Puff**, you're not coming out, that's how it is."

(End of Part One—to be continued. Contact Superegular at 610.853.1149 or superegular@hiphopsite.com)



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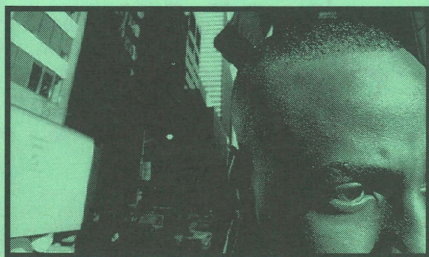
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InterVIEW: Sir Menelik

How did you hook up with Keith?

I was at this birthday party for **Busta Rhymes**. I used to go to school with the **Leaders of the New School**. So I get there and you know, I've been rhyming since like '82, '83 and I'm just trying to get on, you know—getting dissed, catching vapors here and there, just trying to do my thing—and I bumped into **Keith, Ced Gee, Flavor Flav** and people from his label and we was all kicking it; so I was like, "Yo, I got something to drop on you, something real ill that you might want to check out." And after I hit them with it you know him (Keith) and Ced was like, "Oh, you wild."



This is back when Ultra was still together?

This was when *The Four Horsemen* album just started going down, right after "One, Two, One, Two." So after that mad people at the party like **Lord Finesse** and **Biggie**, you know he used to live right across the street from me, so I was always around people in the industry. I'm kinda like in the new round draft, I kinda got drafted by Keith and he had me come out to Cali and I had done a promo with **Ras Kass** and **Gift of Gab**, and I battled with Ras Kass up on **Sway and Tech's** show, you know just real crazy stuff. After that we did the *Sex Style* stuff, worked on that for Capitol. I did a couple of cuts on that album rhyming on his joints and then after the Capitol deal went down I got an offer from him and **Automator** to come out to San Francisco.

To do the Octagon stuff?

Actually that started with **Kut Masta Kurt** and I was telling Keith he needed to come with a whole new style, come with that next shit, you know what I'm saying, kinda like **Hurricane G** and **Redman** (uhhh, ok??—dl). Forget all that sex shit, some with that crazy off the wall space shit. And I was like, something like Octagon, and Keith was like, "Yeah, you mean like **Dr. Octagon?**" and I was like, "Yeah, like Dr. Octagon." And then he just blew up from there, and look at him now, that just blew him up.

How about El-P, how did you hook up with him, through the label?

Well I had first seen that single (**Company Flow**) at **Fat Beats** in LA and it was mad hot and I was feeling it. I was like, "Yo these are some kids from my own background that I don't even know about??" So the great thing for me is when I get home and **T-Love**, she had printed this thing in **URB** about all the independents and how come I'm not signed yet. You know I've been trying to

get signed for hundreds of years now, it's just hard to get on, everybody is trying to get a deal, so when she printed that article I had got a deal out of that. So I stepped to **Rawkus** and **Company Flow** is on the label, so I was like yo, that's dope. And everybody is telling me, "Do something with **El-P**." I let that ride out and me and El-P went into the studio and we put the "Nightwork" track down and that's blowing up. Right out here they're calling that a new classic already, for this day and age. That was real fat, El-P—we definitely did it together.

He's got some crazy shit production-wise.

Oh yeah, yeah. I told him I wasn't going to come so elevated this time, I'm going to let out my **Scarramanga** character who **James (Tai from URB)** knows about because he had gave me number one on his hitlist in **URB** last year for a demo I sent him.

I remember seeing that about your demo.

That I had done with **Godfather Don** and you know I was working on Don's album last year, it's not out yet but **Hydra** is putting out a single with me on the A-Side with Don called "Life Ain't the Same," and that's also with this kid from **Crown Jewels**, **Mike-L**. So you know we are just trying to put it down with our boys you know, get something going.

I want to ask you about your Scarramanga Shallah character—my brother actually told me it is a James Bond film reference?

Yeah, the guy with three nipples. (Laughs.)

So that's one of your aliases?

Exactly, in accordance with **Chewbacca Uncircumcised**, **Juan Excelsior**, you got a lot of different guys, **Emperor General Beta**, it just goes on and on and on, it's crazy.

I also saw the "Star Wars" kind of cover for your record. You're a big movie fan then?

Oh, of course. I just saw "Event Horizon" and it completely f*cked my head up, that was a dope flick. Just the core of that shit, but speaking of movies are you up on how "Contact" is all up on my steelo?

I did not see the movie, so, no.

It's about extraterrestrial analog being detected by earth monitors and I said the same thing on the "On Production" track.

On the Dr. Octagon record.

Yeah, they could have at least threw me on the soundtrack or something, you know? Look out for a brother. (Laughs.)

(Laughs.) Yeah, no doubt.

The funniest thing happened to me right? I was with **KRS** this weekend, I did some shows with **BDP**. They took me on the road to **Elizabeth St.** in **Virginia** and this kid came up to me and said, "You're Sir Menelik? I thought you were white?" (Laughs all over.) Oh, it was funny dude, that was definitely hilarious. So that's how much promotion I need to do, so heads who don't know who I am, find out.

You know what the funny thing is though? I couldn't really blame them, because the first time I heard **Company Flow** I thought El-P was black.

Yeah, me too. You never know nowadays, it's everybody you know?

That's what I'm saying. And that's good because that is the way we gotta introduce these rap kids to drum n' bass and rock.

Those are things you are into as well?

Yeah, I knew that trip hop wasn't serious enough for our genre, for our culture. People didn't really take to it, but drum n' bass is competitive, it's got a nice little edge, it's serious, it's moody, it's atmospheric, it's got all the pressure of hip-hop without maybe the vocals. So what I'm going to do is bring the vocals to drum n' bass and blow shit out of the water—kids don't know, I'm about to make a killing.

I have been listening to that Portishead record a lot recently.

Oh, that's hot, you know what's hot? "Western Eyes" and "Morning Air." Off the hook, off the hook. I like that **Portishead**, it's slow though.

So what can we expect from your album?

Expect **Portishead**, except I'm a black rapper. But I'm doing the **Portishead** thing.

That kind of feel to it? Beatwise?

Umm, kinda like in between **Portishead** and **Prodigy**. Definitely alternative, not as harsh as **Rage Against the Machine**, like guitar-wise and shit it's like the **Beastie Boys**, but more drum, though. You would think it's some techno drum n' bass, like really ill.

What do you think people's reactions will be?

"What the f*ck is that?" The same way that people reacted to the **Octagon** record, people are going to react to the **Cyclops 4000** album. I'm giving them the follow up album, so it's the next in the series for people that want to hear that. I got Keith on there, I got **Grand Puba** and **Sadat**, El-P, so it's going to be a dope album. This kid **Lukasz**, he did this real ill dope remix for me of "Physical Jewels." They got another remix of "Physical Jewels" that is mega hot in Europe, it's some drum n' bass. It sounds like "Planet Rock" but doper, it's incredible.

Rawkus said early next year for a release date?

Yeah for the **Cyclops**, we're looking at January/February, around there.

Are you going to go out on the road and tour?

Oh yeah, we are just finishing the album. I gotta shoot this video for "Physical Jewels" and then I'm going to give people a new shock. I want to be the shock guy in rap, you know what I'm saying?

Ha, ha, no doubt. That's something definitely needed right now.

Yeah, like what the f*ck is that? We had the chance to do that with the **Octagon** record but people got scared. Too shocking. "Keith is wild, he's ill."

That's very much the perception that people have of Keith. Do you really think he is that crazy or is it a wrong assumption?

They really are scared of him. They think he's wild. Just from the "Poppa Large" video, people are still getting their wits back. Now imagine me and him out there with some

real ill Dr. Octagon shit. The video they shot ("Blue Flowers"), they watered it down. They didn't really let them get ill.

Yeah I thought the same thing as well.

You knew that was Dreamworks. Flowers and all kinds of clips and acid looking footage.

It looked just like any other video that's on MTV's "AMP."

Yeah. Keith is best recorded live, just take a camera and follow the dude and trip (Laughs all over.). You know what I'm saying? He's got so many characters, that's why I was thinking "Octagon." You got eight people in that head of yours. I'm telling you, eight different people and they are all insane. They're all totally, f*cking insane. They all should be committed.

Who's this Jimmy Steele character he talks about on "Space Cadillac"?

Oh yeah, he's crazy too. Did you see the back of the **Ultra** album?

No, I just have the singles.

Dude the back cover, Keith has painted his head green and he got a dead green parrot on his arm. (Laughs all over again.)

That's one thing I like so much about Keith, you never know what you'll get.

Definitely fantastic. He is a fantastic guy to work with, he brings you out. He doesn't concentrate on who you are, he has his own things that he can bring out of you. Stuff that you don't even know that is there inside of you. So it was very fun, I feel very privileged of my age to work with him, somebody so deep into the rap game, not maybe as famous as the **LLs** or but definitely as notorious if not more.

Oh yeah, he has influenced hip-hop today more than anyone I think.

Yeah, Look at **Digable Planets**, "I'm cool like that, I'm fat like that, I got it like that," that's his shit. "I made it like that, I want it like that, I get it like that, I had it like that." That was his shit. I mean the guy is a genius, so I was like, wow. That **Octagon** record was pure genius, perversity colored with brilliance. That's what people wanted. So the **Cyclops** LP is gonna follow up, not as perverse but definitely more brilliant. We took a different crystal to it. The cuts are very ill, I think there's a lot more shock value tracks. The **Octagon** we had good clarity, like there's a few tracks you could flow with. Keith would let you into his little world, this is like "ahhhhhh." It's like monkey green vomit all over your shirt. Like, "Oh my God, what is this?"

Right now we are just preparing the market so **Cyclops 4000** becomes a name in everyone's mouth, like "yo did you hear that? That shit is ill!" "It's ill!! It's crazy, I don't know what the f*ck he's saying." "He's talking about suns and twenty one inch lasers and landscapes?? Why?"

With the high tech words, I think it will really take a while before I start to work on something else after this album, but I will be doing guest appearances on other stuff. I got this kid **Depth Charge** coming in from

England. I'll probably be working with more junglists, drum n' bass artists, more in that vein, more alternative shit.

You seem into that whole Europe scene.

Oh yeah, I think it's more refreshing. Right now America is too corporately rigid. You have to have a certain drum, a certain snare, you have to be from this clique. You gotta be from **DITC**, or **Wu Tang**, or **Westside Connection**, and it's like, "Damn, where's the new shit?" This shit ain't new. "Yo, my side of the town is dope." What? People want to hear new shit where they're at.

Exactly.

I don't want you to feel like I'm making a record your whole block knows about. You might have the album and people are like "I don't know man I was scared of it." And you have to explain it to them, that's how I made it. It's a lesson to pass on, to let people know, hey, somebody is trying. See because these hip-hop kids, they only got R&B. When rap had rock, we had dope music, like **Run-DMC** "King of Rock." You couldn't f*ck with them.

Yeah, I agree.

So I'm going in the same direction, definitely. That was my record back then, "King of Rock." I love that shit, I like tracks like that (with crazy guitar sounds).

What other kinds of rock are you into?

Damn, there's so many that I feel and have been exposed to over the years. **Metallica**, I like the new dark metal, Godfather Don keeps me up on all the new Norwegian metal coming out. So I'm into a lot of stuff.

It seems the more eclectic a person, the more kinds of different music he listens to, you know? Not just listening to hip-hop.

That's just what hip-hop needs. When we had **Kraftwerk**, we had more sounds. R&B doesn't have a sound. I'm tired of...the light little jazz, the weak basses. I want to shock the shit out of you. Something to make me happen, make me alive again, something to wake these kids up. Like, "Yo, this is some new shit that I never thought could be made!" That's what made me want to rap but I thought it was damn near impossible. But now it's like everybody can do it, but I want to do the rap that nobody else can do. So people are like, "OK, we gotta go back to the lab."

It seems like there are a few out of all these independent groups popping up, like yourself and Company Flow, Godfather Don, 7L and Esoteric, etc., that are doing different things, but we need more of them.

You know what the shame is? Myself and Company Flow and all them need more venues. We need to put it down, guys like Keith just really being able to have our business because that's really what starts a good show, business. When the business ain't straight and everyone isn't coming to the table, it's the audience that suffers.

I'm going on doing some crazy stuff. This record called "Terminator of Criticism," it's like the epitome of new wave, jungle and

drum n' bass flavors. It's like the illest shit ever—to me it's the illest track on the album. It's like my brainchild. And another one called "Solar Physics," really ill.

So it's all recorded?

Yeah we just gotta master it. It's got big sounds to it. I can't wait to do it at a stadium and have just as much energy as one of the rock bands. They're all high energy.

Cool, that's definitely lacking in live hip-hop shows.

Yeah, there's no pussy jazz shit. You're not going to hear any **Pete Rock** horns or little flutes. You ain't gonna hear any of that shit, I'm going to tell you that right now. If you're looking for that shit...

You're looking in the wrong place.

The only track that is commercial that people might understand is the cut with Puba and Sadat (called "7XL"). And I got one with Godfather Don, "Star of the Empire." That's cool but I'm probably going to remix it. You know I got a commercial track on there for the radio, because they will be like, "Hey, you got everybody else but us?" So I'll probably drop that, then drop a remix on it that's real ill, like a rock remix or something. Everything I do is going to be hard rock live.

What's your video going to be like?

Oh! Off the hook man, definitely alternative. We are going after "AMP." I don't even want to think about "Rap City" anymore. I think rap has to cool off, because to me rap is not even rap anymore, it's R&B.

All the rap I listen to doesn't have videos anyway, Company Flow never did a video.

Nope, or MF Doom.

Cage.

Oh my, it's a shame too because kids won't know that there is actually some great stuff, like that **Alkaholiks** cut, "Killin' It," I love that shit. **Diamond** with **Don Baron**, **Defari**, even **RZA's** shit but he does a video now and then. But until he comes out and I come out harder, you know we gotta suffer the winter of "I'm something like a phenomenon." (Laughs.) "Never seen before, EPMD hardcore!" (Laughs again.)

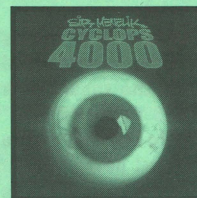
That's why you have to come with crazy innovative shit.

We gotta pull all the plugs out of the sockets and just f*cking go off. It makes all the rappers who died to be different strive to be a confident rapper and articulate and make a crowd respect them lyrically. Now you gotta sound like **Raekwon** or **Rakim** and everyone's trying to get that line for line flow. Everyone wants their words and syllables to sound in certain ways. I'm like, f*ck syllables, f*ck drums!

(Laughs.)

F*ck everything, lets start this shit from the beginning.

—DANIEL LADD



COLORED SECTION

"Bomb MC" (12" RPM) Production: Coke

One of the funnier songs to ever grace colored (green) vinyl, "The Bomb MC" ego trips more than ULTRA, DE LA and the 'zine combined. Among the other claims these cats make: "I sold CHUCK D the '98 and the Uzi," "called up my n*gga K, told him to go SOLO" and "I introduced the breakbeat to KOOL HERC." It's pure comedy, but unlike a parody song, there's actual rhymes and production going on—strictly SHAQ-sized braggadocio.

—O-D.U.B.

DEFARI

"People's Choice"/"The Bottom Line" (ABB) Production: Evidence

He could use some better hooks (no offense), but otherwise, Defari's showing no signs of slowing with his new single. Rockin' beats and rhymes, Defari makes for an interesting study in Alkaholism...he's not as flow-steady as Tash or J-Ro, but it's hard to dismiss this high school teacher's rhyme flow when he gets a' rollin'. Both sides are nice, but I'm digging on the uptempo "Bottom Line" which clocks well-over 100 BPM, smacking ya up with the quickness.

—O-D.U.B.

HI TECH

"All Time Einstein/The Tech's Technique/The Music (Mass Vinyl) Production: DJ Shok

After some lackluster singles, HI TECH sparks up a fat one with "All Time Einstein." While we all might be tiring of the looping of every hit song from the 1980s, I got to give DJ SHOK props for sampling the "Hill St. Blues" theme. Yes, it's an obvious loop, but it sounds so damn good, one has to wonder why no one (like PUFF) didn't think of it earlier. Plus, Hi Tech's got another strong joint in the form of "The Tech's Technique" making this single one of better surprises I've happened upon.

—O-D.U.B.

J-LIVE

"School's In"/"Longevity 2"/"Shiesty" (Raw Shack/Payday) Production: Georges Sulmers

One of these days, I'll be able to adequately describe why I like this guy so much as an MC, but for now, I'll chalk it up to him being just a damn SMART lyricist. Listening to his verbals on "School's In," you realize that J-LIVE's mentals are always turned on—he never lapses into clichés or bullsh*t rhymes just to fill space. It's quality you can trust and depend on, a rare thing in a field of so many clone MCs, you know? The beat's hot as hell too—got the bump meter rocking in the red.

"Longevity 2" doesn't change up the original Ethiopian-flavored beat much, but does remix the vocals with an intro ala JUST-ICE & KRS One on "Goin' Way Back." J's "still kinetic but now supreme alphabetic," whipping out some smoking swagger. "Shiesty" isn't quite as hot...decent, but neither the

beat nor the verbals got my motor humming. No matter, with two out of three banging like piston rods, hey, you'll do more than OK. Ah yes...the live one is back to kick off 1998 to a boombastic beginning.

—O-D.U.B.

L FUDGE

"Show Me Your Gratitude"/"Liquid"/"What If?" (Rawkus) Production: Rich Boogie, Vinyl Reanimators, Spinna

Chalk up another win for everyone's favorite indie label. L FUDGE is the gravy of the month. With production from RICH BOOGIE, VINYL REANIMATORS, SPINNA and cameos from KWELL, SHABAAM SAHDEEQ, MIKE ZOOT and SKAM, this is one of the label's strongest releases to date—not because of the big name producers and the cameos, but because L Fudge is coming with some different shit in a time where hip-hop has ceased to make me smile.

Remember what it was like when MCs weren't always pissed about record labels, weren't concerned with being complex, and didn't say "like" every other word. L Fudge comes with a some head-nodding compositions, creative lyrics and a foolproof delivery. Somehow, somehow, he manages to come through with a real classic/appealing vibe without making any musical sacrifices.

My pick off this record is "Show Me Your Gratitude," where Rich Boogie hooks up a bouncy track with some nice cuts in the loop. (Who is this Rich Boogie character??) Sean G from the caucazoid superhero beat-making crew, Vinyl Reanimators, blesses Fudge on "Liquid" with a superb feast of warm basslines, banjo licks (?) and a well-freaked OC sample in the chorus ("die sucka, I be the coming...") With lines like, "Animated MCs are brought to life by another man's creativity, therefore they're just a cartoon," L proves that his style is "far from similar to yours." Even if you're lactose intolerant, you should buy the L Fudge record for the well done cover.

—DJ ANTI TURNTABLIST

(dj anti turntablist and shorty laruso host "The Tuesday Night Peep Show," a weekly RealAudio broadcast on www.truehiphop.com)

THIRD DEGREE

"Better Days"/"Uprising" (Conception) Production: Mr. Supreme

One of the first 12"s released on Seattle-based Conception Records, THIRD DEGREE is actually from the Big East of New York. His latest single is decent stuff. I like Third Degree as an MC—good rhymes in flow and content—not striking so much as just plain effective. Beats by MR. SUPREME get props too, especially the A-side where he borrows from the same source that PUBA did on one of his "2000" songs. Flipside isn't quite as interesting but comes crunchier on the drum tip, whereas the A is more vibe-y. Worth checking for.

—O-D.U.B.

Trackheads Anonymous

cont'd from page 1

Mic" is an ill duet featuring the incredible lyrical skills of Esoteric and crew member **Virtuoso. Papa Dee** created a nice track with a haunting piano loop for the two to flex upon in a back and forth style. You are probably all familiar with the last cut, "Be Alert," that samples the Transformers. Hooked up lovely by **Beyonder**, who also drops a nice verse as well. Butter cuts on all three tracks by the Devastator Seven L. This is the best record to come out of Boston since Ed OG's "I Got To Have It."

Looking for some of those smooth style beats and rhymes? The "Jurassic 5 EP" is a great place to start that search, and end it there too. While this is old school tinged, it is not as much as their first single. This record is one of the most incredibly produced records I have heard in quite some time. To put it simply, **Cut Chemist** and **Nu-Mark** are the men, period. Very dope (reminding me of older **Tribe Called Quest** in spots) lyrically as well. You want gun talk and scientifics? Look elsewhere, this is an old style party record like they use to do. Dope record all the way around (I love the Prism inspired cover art). This isn't old at all, it's refreshing. An absolute must.

Another great record is the **Jedi Mind Tricks** LP (the title of it is huge and I ain't typing it). After a promising 12" I was interested in seeing what **Ikon the Verbal Hologram** would come with this time. Lyrically this is just sick, just a whole new plane. Ikon and guest **Apathy the Alien Tongue** drop verses which are not easily understood and lack the "keep it real," gun toting, and "I hate wack emcees" phrases that are so prevalent in 1997. The producer, **Stoupe**, has also stepped it up a notch since the first 12" and really shines. This has an atmospheric, dark sound with Stoupe's usage of various string instruments being sampled throughout. It is very encouraging to see kids out there trying new things musically and lyrically, something unique.

The last record I will talk about is another 12", this time on the Makin' Records label out of Brooklyn. First they put out **Natural Resource**, now they have a kid by the name of **Pumpkinhead**. New Yorkers in the know will remember this guy from his **Stretch Armstrong** show promos he did a while back and the open mic sessions he ripped as well. He has a raspy flow, not unlike RA the Rugged Man, one that fits well over the rough, dirty beats provided by **Run Run Shaw** on the A-Side and **Overtime** on the flipside. The A-side is called "Dynamic" and Pumpkinhead flips lyrics over an ill beat where the horn loop is all backwards. It's dope, trust me. The B-side, "Its Over," is a collaboration with the **Bad Seed** and again the track is ill.

Be sure to check out www.truehiphop.com on the web for various jewels and gems (and I'm not talking about O.G. kind of "Jewelz"). Bookmark it, no question.

—DANIEL LADD

CLASSIFIED ADS

VINYL for sale or trade

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Divine Distribution, underground CANADIAN mail-order service, with releases from Saukrates, Frankenstein, Thrust, Choclaire, Concrete Mob, etc. For catalog send \$2 to: *Divine Styler Magazine*, 650 Dupont St. Suite 501, Toronto ON, M6G 1Z2, Canada.

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me for a list. Also selling Wu-Tang mix tapes. E-mail mistapizzo@hiphopsite.com

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SOUL, R&B & jazz LPs, buy, sell trade. Visa, MC, Amex. Dane C. LaBarr, P.O. Box 260834, Tampa, FL 33685. Tel/fax 813.882.3929. DCL House of Records, www.gate.net/~dclabarr/homepage.htm or email dclabarr@gate.net.

VINYL wanted

Seeking a new release ('97): CHILL ROB G "Secret Rhymes." E-mail Djcrown@webtv.net

Looking for any old Gang Starr 12" or LP, especially the 12" "Mass Appeal." Also looking for Main Source *Breaking Atoms* LP and that battle between Saafir and Casual. Raynice80@aol.com

WU-TANG/DJ SHADOW wanted! Looking for: "Protect Ya Neck"/"Tearz" 12" on Wu-Tang Records; Method Man's "Sub-Crazy" (white label promo); Method Man's "Bring The Pain" and "Release Yo Delf" CD singles (U.S. pressings);

DJ Shadow's "Entropy" (Soleides SS-001); "What Does Your Soul Look Like" (Mo' Wax 12" or CD single); "89.9 Megamix" (split 12"/CD single with DJ Krush); and the original cassette for "Radio Sole 1." If you have any of these, write to me at John Book, 2502 W. Opal St., Pasco, WA 99301-3352, or e-mail me at JohnBook@hiphopsite.com

Looking for Wu-Tang vinyl, especially interested in promos, white labels and unreleased material. Also CD-5s. E-mail me if you have any. Rob3@concentric.net; Joe Hulley, 94 Belmont Ave., Apt. 2, Garfield, NJ 07026.

Rare Wu-Tang wanted. I'm looking for Wu-Tang (and Wu-fam) promos and rare 12"/CD singles. I'm also looking for Wu-Tang (and Wu-fam) from the UK. E-mail me, CappaDon36@aol.com

WANTED: Beastie Boys - Beastie Groove 12", Def Jam label; Rock Steady Crew LP w/ "It's Just Begun," DJ FLEA - Hardrock 12". Jeff Purgason, jeff888@ix.netcom.com

Looking for copies of the Craig G. vs. SuperNat battle &/or copies of Craig G's Scotti Bros. LP, SuperNat's LP or Tung

Twista's Resurrection, Cass or vinyl, Trade or buy. Email Intellex@aol.com

Searching for many slabs of vinyl. E-mail j-scurry@nwu.edu for list. Please send lists of what you have to me either via e-mail or to j. scurry, 244 E. Pearson, Chicago, IL 60611.

I'm looking for the Souls' 12" "Never No More," any old De La Soul, Gang Starr, Redman, Public Enemy and any other fat joints pre-'94. I will pay cash. E-mail me at Ameks193@aol.com

Specialize in Wu-Tang Mix tapes & compilations. Incl. freestyles, unreleased, promos, live performances & hard-to-find songs. www.concentric.net/~Rob3/tapes/comps.html. E-mail: rob3@concentric.net; Joe Hulley, 94 Belmont Ave., Apt. 2, Garfield, NJ 07026.

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Mixed tapes, mostly east coast and underground. Custom tapes available. For info contact: DJ SRT, PO Box 163, Mt. View, HI 96771. Also am interested in up and coming artists. 1 Luv.

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Unique 90-min. acid jazz, rare groove, jungle and hip-hop mix tapes by DJ TOM SIMONIAN THUMP. 415.282.7052.

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If anyone has any turntables to sell, e-mail me with price and brand: bour0017@algonquin.on.ca

EVENTS battles, sales

Turntable Showoff, Sun., Jan. 4, Anaheim (Calif.) Convention Center. Call 310.782.0500 to enter, must submit demo.

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Invisibl Skratch Piklz' first DJ world competition! Must use two copies of Dirt-style "Bionic Booger Breaks." Will be judged by videotape submission only, 3-6 minutes. Must be received by ISP by 3/1/98. Send to: *ISP, Box 280092, San Francisco, CA 94128-0092*. Will be broadcast on the Internet. 12 finalists, prizes from Shure and Vestax! www.skratchpiklz.com

RECORD FAIR: KUSF Rock 'n' Swap, Sunday Jan. 18, 1998, 10 to 4, McLaren Hall, Univ. of San Francisco (on Fulton betw. Stanyan and Masonic). Dealer info: 415.386.5873.

Classified ads are FREE up to 35 words (\$5 per every four words after that) and run for at least three issues. Fax, mail or email to the Vinyl Exchange: classifieds@vinylexchange.com

NEW WAX

ASPHODEL

EP "Musica Negra (Black Music)/Wordplay EP" - Rob Swift, Total Eclipse, Roc Raida, Mista Sinista (The X-Men); Gudtyme

BILAWN RECORDS

Single "Killer Instinct" feat. Divine Styler b/w "Survival Tactics" - Styles of Beyond

BOMB HIP HOP RECORDS

Single "Rhyme Bomb" b/w "The Way It Has to Be" & "Born to Rule" - Blade LP *Bomb Int'l Compilation* - feat. J-Live, Defari, Muro, 10BassT

BUBONIC RECORDINGS

Single "The Freshest" - Red-Foo & Dre Kroon feat. Evidence

CONCEPTION RECORDS

Singles "Block Drama" b/w "Block Drama" Remix and Mr. Supreme's Bonus Beat - Diamond Mercenaries "Earth Wind & Fire" b/w "The Science" - Fourfifths (produced by Mr. Supreme and Jake One) "Better Days" b/w "Uprising" - Third Degree

D&D RECORDS

Singles "Jaz-O" b/w "Foundation" Remix- Big Jaz "Gunzis4" b/w "Time Bomb" feat. Evil Dee & "War & Position" feat. Finsta Bundy, Five and Chocolate Tye from Shades of Brooklyn - EZD "Unstoppable" b/w "Styles I Murder" feat. Nikki D. - Mama Mystique

"Rock the Spot" b/w "Live & Let Die" feat. Mama Mystique- Q-Ball & Curt Cazal

DEF JAM

Singles "Hurts My Heart" b/w "Nah Bow" - Capleton "Bassline" b/w "Hittin Every Angle" - DV Alias Khrist "Richter Scale" b/w "Intrigued" (feat. Das EFX) - EPMD "4,3,2,1" - LL Cool J feat. Redman, Method Man, Master P, Cannibus & DMX **LPs** *I Testament* - Capleton feat. DV Alias Khrist, Q-Tip *Back In Business* - EPMD (double vinyl)

DIRTSTYLE

LP *Sqratch Fetishes of the Third Kind!* - The Wax Fondler

DTX RECORDS

Single "Before Mecca" b/w "The One Self Dual" - Divine Styler

EPIC STREET

Single "Hit the Floor" b/w "Heavy Weights" - MC Eiht

GODS WORK

Single "Organized Rime Pt. II" b/w "Street Parables" feat. Lord Jamar - Shabazz the Disciple (Call 718.349.7113.)

GUESSWHYLD

Single "Murder Season" b/w "And One" - Lace Da Booms (www.sandbox.pair.com/guess/)

HARDKISS RECORDS

Single "Vivos en la Muerte" / "Lovebug" - Hawke

NEW WAX

HERATIK PRODUCTIONS

LP *Wild Stylus* - Fanatik feat. Djs Babu & Rhettmatic

HMC RECORDS

Singles "The Game" - Faceman
"I'm In Love" - Sylvia Simone feat. CL Smooth

IGNITION RECORDS

Single "Merry Go Round" - Pfilbryte (remixes by Automator & Hardkiss)

INDUSTRY

Single "Me & My Main" - Kool DJ EQ feat. Aceyalone & Abstract Rude

LP *Beats and Lyrics—Industry Hip-Hop Compilation: Issue One* - Various Artists, incl. Living Legends, Mystik Journeymen (double vinyl, 702.889.4526)

INTERSCOPE

LP *R U Still Down?* - 2Pac

ISLAND

Singles "Love Letters" - ALI
"On My Way" b/w "If You Stay Ready" (remix by DJ Quik) - Suga Free

LOUD

Single "Los Angeles Times" - Xzibit

MAKIN' RECORDS

Single "Dynamic" b/w "It's Over" - Pumpkinhead

MERCURY RECORDS

Singles - "J.D.'s Revenge" - Diamond
"Jerk Baby Jerk" - The Jerky Boys
LP *Hatred, Passions and Infidelity* - Diamond

MIND YOUR RECORDINGS

Single "Hip-Hop Music" (prod. by Mr. Man) - Masterminds

MO' WAX/LONDON

Single "High Noon" b/w "Devil's Advocate" & "Organ Donor" - DJ Shadow (also on ltd. edition 7" vinyl)

MOLEMEN RECORDS

EP "Below the Ground" - All Natural, Juice, Vakill

NEXT PLATEAU

LP *B-Sides Companion* - Ultra-magnetic MCs

NOO TRYBE/VIRGIN

Singles "You Know My Steez" b/w "So Wassup?!" - Gang Starr

NOS PRODUCTIONS

Single "Elektro" (with cuts from Fakts 1) b/w "The Nothing"

(with cuts by Seven L) - Mr Lif (212.358.5927)

OM RECORDS

Singles "Arboleda de Manzanitas" - Eighty Mile Beach
"Fresh Start" - Terra Deva

PAYDAY

Singles "Can't Go Wrong" feat. Changing Faces - O.C.
"Just Clownin'" - W.C.

POLYGRAM

LP *Haze Presents...New York Reality Check—Mixed by DJ Premier* - Various Artists, incl. Natural Elements, Shades of Brooklyn, Godfather Don

PSM RECORDINGS

Single "Jah Everlasting" b/w "True Freedom Fighters" feat. Jamalski - Rocker T

RAIDERMAN ENTERTAINMENT

Single "Top Dollar" - Raidermen

RAW TRACK

Single "Non Fiction" b/w "Lookout" - Rugged Brood

RELATIVITY

Single "Find Out" - Fat Joe
LP *Accept Your Own & Be Yourself (The Black Album)* - No I.D.

SEVEN HEADS

EP "Cosmology EP" - Unspoken Heard (prod. by The Bedroom Wizard, DJ Spinna)

SOLESIDES

EP *The Muzappers Mixes* - Latyrx

STONES THROW

Single "Oblivion" (prod. by Fanatik)/"Small Time In This"/"Armed & Dangerous" (prod. by the Architect) - Persevere

STREET LIFE/DIVINE RECORDS

LP *Blazing Hot* - Nice & Smooth

TAPE KINGS

Single "Don't Really Wanna Stop" - G-Dep

TRU CRIMINAL

EP "Tru Criminal Records EP" - Various Artists

TRULY HYPE RECORDS

Single "Look Out Below" b/w "Higher" - Chill Rob G

UNITED RECORDINGS

Single "Time To Shine" - Brain-sick Enterprize

UNIVERSAL

LP *The 18th Letter* - Rakim

the Vinyl Exchange

a newsletter for deejays and vinyl junkies

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Sir Menelik discusses
drum n' bass, the eight
sides of Dr. Octagon
and his upcoming
album, *Cyclops 4000*

See page 4.

