



KOTORI

K O T O R I W W W . K O T O R I M A G . C O M

UNKLE 06

LEIMART PARK: THE CHORUS OF COMMUNITY 09



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power pellets



You still have a chance to enter your hit track into the 2007 International Songwriting Competition. Not only will thousands and thousands of people hear the sucka, but you could win up to \$25,000 in cash as well as \$20,000 in merchandise and services. Judges include Tom Waits, Kenny Wayne Shepherd, and Tiesto, as well as the Presidents of Epic and Universal records. Enter by October 15 at www.SongWritingCompetition.com

To support the August 28 release of his new album, None Shall Pass, Def Jukie Aesop Rock will embark on a very extensive 40 city North American tour which will include Rob Sonic, DJ Big Wiz, and Cage, as well as Black Moth Super Rainbow, The Octopus Project, and plenty others. The tour will begin in Seattle on the 28th of July and will

end in Atlanta on the 20th of November. For more info, check out www.definitivejux.net



Acclaimed DJ, producer, and Mad Decent Records impresario Diplo (oh...he's also M.I.A.'s man), launches Heaps Decent, a non-profit organization that aims to connect current popular recording artists with students from underprivileged communities around the world and reinforce the positive influence of music education through technical skill development and public performance. Diplo explains that Heaps Decent aims at "setting a precedent to raise awareness

of regional music culture in disadvantaged areas and giving new artists that wouldn't usually have the privilege to create the work they dream about." They've already received contributions from Apple, Obey, Serrato/Rane, Ableton, among others. For more info, visit myspace.com/heaps-decent



Supported by a grant from the U.S. State Department, L.A. multiethnic multicultural rock-hopper party crew Ozomatli recently travelled to India and Nepal to spread a 'global message of peace and understanding through diversity in music.' The trip was so successful that they have been invited to visit and perform Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and Tunisia on a similar mission. This trip will include an array of outreach activities in all of the Middle Eastern posts; visits to orphanages,

schools and community centers. They will also be hosting master classes and music workshops, as well as interactions with local master musicians. www.ozomatli.com

The long awaited public demonstration of free energy creating perpetual motion machine Orbo has been delayed due to technical difficulties. Goddamnit, please oh please let this thing not be a hoax!!!
www.steorn.com/orbo



Punk and alt-rock label and braintrust of the wildly successful Take Action Tour, Hopeless/Subcity Records (home to The Red Jumpsuit Apparatus, Avenged Sevenfold, Mike Park, and Kadisfly) have donated over \$1 million dollars to Project MuszEd, a charity that supports inner-city

kids, with a talent and passion for music, by giving them access to post high school education and training which they could not afford on their own. "Our goal with Sub City is not to celebrate, but to continue to find ways to make a bigger impact," says label President Louis Posen. "We hope to continue growing as people, as a company, and as a community, and we want to play as big of a role as we can in making a difference." For more information, click on Hopelessrecords.com, Subcity.net, and Takeactiontour.com

Green It Like They Mean It! The second annual Virgin Festival By Virgin Mobile GOES GREEN. The two-day music event (August 4-5) will incorporate the highest standards of sustainability to help reduce impact on the environment with a goal of Near Zero Waste. Some of the Eco-Friendly Green initiatives being implemented include:

Items that usually become trash at concerts are being replaced with compostable products made from renewable sources such as plates made of sugarcane (called Bagasse), cups and trash bags made of corn, trash bags made from corn, utensils made of wheat and potato, and straws made from plants instead of petroleum.

Recycled paper: Nearly all paper items are being replaced with 100% recycled paper prod-

ucts including posters, toilet paper and more.

Clean energy: Where possible, clean energy such as biodiesel and solar power is being used. All on-site power, generators and light towers will run on B99 biodiesel [B99 is 99% biodiesel, 1% diesel; the 1% diesel eliminates a tax on the fuel].

Eco-friendly materials: Virgin Festival props and buildings will be constructed from sustainable materials wherever possible.

Check it at: www.virginfestival.com.



From the streets to the studio...The Hip Hop Leaders program is an educational program that uses hip-hop, international exposures, and college prep mentoring programs to enable and motivate at-risk youth to pursue higher education and technology careers. With guests including Aloe Blacc, DJ Lethal, DJ Muggs, JRocc, and Shepherd Fairy as part of the curriculum, the students are offered a way out through workshops where they will do everything from create their own record labels, book and use studio time, create music, and market it.
The latest session of the The Hip Hop Leaders

camp will take place at UCLA from August 8 through the 12th. Click at www.HipHopLeader-shipCamp.com

A trio of Welsh fishing buddies have developed a device that is fitted to a cars exhaust system trapping carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide, feeds them through an algae, and crushes it into a bio-oil extract which then is converted to biodiesel fuel. Drive your car and produce fuel...huh? Yah.



On July 10th Rabbit In The Moon released Decade, 10 years in the making, their first full-length CD/DVD combination project from Contagious Musiq that showcases previously unreleased

tracks, re-mastered songs and whimsical music videos. R.I.T.M. has synthesized all electronic dance genres into transcendent live electronic visual performances as an independently produced band without ever gracing the screens of music television. The combination of innovative technology and music leads to the world's first full body video suit. With over five years of creation put into this outfit, Bunny designed a custom leather suit to house the LED lights and constructed a piece of wearable art. Performed against a video backdrop, VJ Tek plays custom video content that is mapped to Bunny's suit. Hit 'em up at www.rabbitinthemoon.com

White House bids farewell to 5th Amendment. A recent executive order allows the taking away of property from anyone who is deemed to be 'undermining efforts to promote economic reconstruction and political reform in Iraq or to provide humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people.' So yes...you dissent...you go bye bye. Yay...wonder what took them so long!!! Bushie must be slipping in his old age!



Researchers in Montreal are working on an amnesia drug that blocks or deletes bad memories. It seems huffing computer cleaner wasn't working fast enough, so the crafty scientists took the practice of "dampening" memories of trauma victims one step further, and induced specific amnesia in a rat while leaving the rest of the memory intact. The rat quickly pulled the shotgun out of his mouth, and declared, "My heart is still broken, but I can't even remember the bitch's name! Let's get some tacos!"



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the
world
is
listening



UNKLE

By Joe Sachs

I'm sitting in my studio, getting ready to listen to *War Stories*, the new UNKLE record...and I'm not quite sure what to expect. I know UNKLE is led by James Lavelle, best known for starting the influential Mo'Wax records at age 19 and breaking buckets of trip-hop and breakbeat music into the electronic music scene. That led to his work with DJ Shadow and ultimately UNKLE, an entity well-known for working with guests in the studio: among them artists like Jason Newstead (Metallica), Mike D (Beastie Boys), and Thom Yorke (Radiohead). With their 3rd studio release, UNKLE brings in players as diverse as Josh Homme (Queens of the Stone Age), Ian Astbury (The Cult), Gavin Clark (Clayhill), Autolux, Duke Spirit, and 3D. Needless to say, I was excited to hear *War Stories* before everyone else.

UNKLE dances the line between "popular" and "underground hip" as good as anyone. It's the first time UNKLE has gone into the studio with no demos, a feeling you sense in the sometimes raw abandon of certain parts of *War Stories*. The multi-dimensional aspect of this record is noticeable when the abandon gets countered by a sophistication that hips everything up with pure artistry.

KOTORI caught up with Lavelle just as he was getting ready to depart NYC back home to the U.K. to begin rehearsing for the upcoming UNKLE tour. This was our chance to chat him up about *War Stories*.

"A lot of the records I've liked over the last few years have been rock records. My palette has changed," Lavelle proclaims.

"It's not really a new thing, maybe it's just taken a little bit more of that shape. That sort of 'L.A. desert' kind of sound has been very influential for me."

Hence, it came as no surprise that Lavelle enlist both Josh Homme, lead singer of Queens of the Stone Age and producer Chris Goss' (QOTSA, Masters of Reality) to man the helm.

Goss and Lavelle went into the studio without any material at all. "Basically, we started from scratch," Lavelle tells us. "Some of it we wrote in the studio together and in other situations people would send us ideas." When it came down to record, "the majority of what ended up on the record, we did in the studio in L.A. with most of the artists. That was really liberating to have Josh come in, hear it and go, 'What the fuck's this? I'm playing on this?!'"

"'War Stories' was the first piece of the puzzle that I had," he admits. "Before recording the record, I already had the title," a title that makes no attempt to hide its politically charged persona. "There's a lot of normal people out there, people on the street, that have had their lives fucked up by the decisions that are made on a political basis."

"Obviously, our countries have a massive part to play in that. It's about life, it's about the stories and the situations you ended up in...and the madness...sitting

there and talking to your best friends about all that sort of stuff. That is what 'War Stories' are really."

While Lavelle admits that he didn't "really look massively to the past on this record," he immediately cites "Turkish psychedelic records and unusual, sort of 70's glam tracks" as major influences on the record. Something that he plans to try to translate on tour throughout the summer, where he'll be taking to the road with guests as well as a full band for the first time, and, "obviously, there's going to be quite a visual side to what were doing."

In addition to DJing, scoring for films, and remixing for acts like Depeche Mode, Metallica, QOTSA, and Robert Plant, DIY-savvy Lavelle plans to launch a clothing line and has set up Surrender All records as an avenue to release UNKLE's music unhindered by the archaic music business model of old. "The opportunity is so much greater now and the avenues to get music out are so much easier," he explains. "It's all about believing in what you do while trying to find some way to be unique. You just got to do what you believe and either you're going to make it or you won't...it's just not giving a fuck."

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Leimert Park

The chorus of community tells the story in painting, poetry and Black music

By: Mike the Poet

“I never had faith until I found my art. I found my art in Leimert Park,” says A.K. Toney. For over two decades these sentiments have echoed in a thriving community of artists based in this village in the western area of what they used to call South Central Los Angeles. The community of Leimert Park is perhaps the best kept secret in the City of Angels. No other district in L.A. has such strong connections in blues, hip-hop, jazz & poetry. Leimert Park is home to internationally known venues like Babe & Ricky’s Inn, the World Stage & Project Blowed.

“Leimert Park is a sacred place, a heart pumping cultural life into its surroundings,” says Leimert Park’s patriarch of the word Kamau Daaood, Co-Founder of the World Stage.

Following in the tradition of 1940s Central Avenue & Watts, Leimert Park has been the home of the African-American art community for at least two decades with roots that began after the 1965 Riots. Following the 1992 Rodney



King Uprising, Leimert Park emerged into the “Black Greenwich Village,” like award winning filmmaker resident John Singleton says. Two new projects, a documentary film LEIMERT PARK: THE STORY OF A VILLAGE IN SOUTH CENTRAL & a poetry anthology book VOICES FROM LEIMERT PARK, brilliantly capture the vitality of the village. With

these two projects being released around the same time, the significance of the community is finally being placed in its proper historical context. The incubator for an amazing movement. Generations of poets, generations of musicians.

The two projects were created

seperately, but they work very well together. Anyone that wants to know about Leimert Park can use the documentary as a starting point. The comprehensive history offered in the film is thorough and fascinating.

Hundreds of poets, musicians & artists have been a part of the Leimert Park

community experience. Several of the poets published in the book also perform in the film. Up until now many of these figures had remained below the radar from mainstream attention. Nonetheless, figures like pianist Horace Tapscott, drummer Billy Higgins & poet Kamau Daaood are in the same league as John Coltrane, Miles Davis & Amiri



PHOTO / A.K. Toney

Baraka. These Leimert Park giants have been so engaged in their community that the healing nature of their work took precedence over fame. They stayed in the neighborhood and watered their local garden. As time goes on their legend will grow. The folklore will be told by the hundreds of young poets and musicians that were mentored by these leviathans @ the World Stage - the main ingredient - over the last two decades.

PASSING THE MAGIC

In the days of the breakdown of marriage, Leimert Park remains a community. A community honoring its elders. Handing down tradition. Horace Tapscott phrased it "Passing the Magic." His music teacher the legendary Samuel Brown @ Jefferson High School in the mid 1950s instilled this in Horace at an early age. He told Horace that he would pass the magic down if Horace promised to pass it on later. The community artist fosters his community like a farmer does his field. Leimert Park is built on this principle. Generations of poets, generations of musicians. LEIMERT PARK: THE STORY OF A VILLAGE IN SOUTH CENTRAL traces the lineage of community artists in venues like the World Stage & 5th Street Dicks.

Long time Leimert Park denizen I Timothy says, "When I met Kamau Daaood way back in the 80s, he was in a room full of gangbangers telling them to write poetry and keep a journal. He was always in the community. The same is true with Billy Higgins & Horace Tapscott. They were always around Leimert Park showing

the youth what they thought was the meaning of life.” These men epitomize community ideals and activism. Daaood writes in the liner notes of his CD *Leimert Park*, “the concept of the local artist is a noble one. That to live and work in a community and be known for that work is very dignified.”

Kamau Daaood wrote a tribute poem to his mentor Horace Tapscott. The closing lines capture the ethos..

I am Horace Tapscott
my fingers are dancing grassroots
I do not fit in form, I create form
my ears are radar
charting the whispers of my ancestors
I seek the divinity in outcasts, the
richness of rebels
I walk these sacred streets remembering
kola nuts and cowrie shells
and how well our uncles wore their
trousers
I am Horace Tapscott
and I am not for sale..

Tapscott is a Los Angeles legend. His Pan Afrikan Peoples Ark were the Oakland Raiders of the jazz world. Similar to Sun Ra's Orchestra both of these leaders called their collective of musicians “Arkestra”, like Noah's Ark. Tapscott's Ark had as many as 30 players or could be as tight as 7 or 8 musicians. Horace started the Ark after he quit Lionel Hampton's band in the early 1960s. He

decided to stay home to raise his kids and be a community musician. His earlier experiences on the road made him feel it was more important to work in the local community. Give praises, Los Angeles! We're the lucky ones

Hundreds of local musicians were a part of the Ark for the 40 or so years they rocked shows. They started all around the South Central Community and eventually played the world as their reputation grew. They did a weekly residency @ South Park Recreation Center for much of the 60s & 70s. (The small amphitheater @ South Park was designed by the great African-American architect Paul Williams. For more info on Williams check the Foot Notes.) Tapscott's Ark played the South Park stage with a frenzy. Richard Dedeaux of the Watts Prophets performed there often with the Ark. He told historian Steven Isoardi in the great book about the Ark, *THE DARK TREE*, “South Park seemed like Horace's place.... That's where they should have buried Horace. South Park. I know his spirit is sure there.”

Father Amde, also of the Watts Prophets told Isoardi, “The Watts Prophets have been with some of the greatest musicians in the world. We were making an album with Bob Marley when he died...Quincy Jones, we did things with him—but I've never been to heaven except with



Horace. I would take off and be in the music...There was nothing like it. Believe me, nothing like Horace Tapscott..It was very different, never, never ever have I got that feeling elsewhere."

Tapscott was a musical genius that knew how to get the best from everybody. A brilliant conductor. The 1977 film *Passing Through* showcases several songs of vintage Ark. Kamau Daaood was the house poet for 30 plus years. The first poets with the Ark during the mid 1960s were giants like Ojenke, Jayne Cortez, Watts Prophets, Quincy

Troupe. Horace wanted a multimedia show before they came up with the word. A visionary. Over the years giants like Marla Gibbs from the Jeffersons and the great actor William Marshall performed in the Ark. Long term members were Linda Hill, Jesse Sharps, Michael Session, Michael Dett Wilcots, Nate Morgan, Roberto Miranda, dozens more. The Ark had it all. Though Horace died in 1999, his spirit looms large and everpresent. The Ark still play a sunday a month @ the World Stage.

Equally large as Horace Tapscott is Billy

Higgins. One of the greatest drummers of all time. Billy Higgins played drums on more recordings than any drummer in jazz history. Well over 700 recordings. Give the drummer some. He played with all the heavyweights including John Coltrane. His days with Ornette Coleman were a hallmark. Higgins is the co-founder of the World Stage. He taught drum classes to local youth until he passed in 2001. These giants are Leimert Park's gold standard.

**THE LANGUAGE OF SAXOPHONES
PLAYS @ THE WORLD STAGE...**

When the World Stage opened its doors in 1989 Kamau Daaood had three keys made. One for Billy Higgins, one for Horace Tapscott & one for himself. Since this time the World Stage has hosted jazz, poetry, jam sessions, workshops. Every night of the week they host a different program geared to the community. Its a place where you might see a young musician not even out of high school jamming with a jazz legend. One of their mottos is "Seeking Light Through Sound."



PHOTO / A.K. Toney





PHOTO / A.K. Toney



PHOTO / A.K. Toney

Most of all, The World Stage is an educational and performance arts gallery. Numerous giants have passed through the doors like Elvin Jones, Nina Simone, Max Roach, the list goes on.

Kamau Daaood is a giant. Literally and figuratively. He stands close to six feet five inches. The impact of his great words is only multiplied by his size. A major pioneer in the spoken word scene. He's shared the stage with legends like Gil Scott Heron and Amiri Baraka. To many he was better known as the "Word Musician."

A legendary movie was made about him with the title *Word Musician* in 1985. Back in the late 60s when he was 18, he was asked to move to New York and join the Last Poets. Following in the footsteps of his mentor Horace Tapscott, he chose to stay in Los Angeles and act locally. Daaood performed for over three decades with the Ark and around the community in churches, schools, prisons, wherever duty called him.

After over 35 years of bringing the word, he explains why he never pursued the limelight. Daaood told Erin Aubry Kaplan in the LA Weekly, "My poetry is more aligned with African tradition, and African tradition has an artist who has a role in the community — a djali — who has a purpose," he explains. "It's not to get rich and make records, but to heal situations for some greater purpose.

Djalis are kind of like secular priests. When people run to open mikes these days, it's mostly about ego — getting 15 minutes, and maybe 15 million. I saw it as a jam session, swapping ideas, getting inspiration from other people." It's no coincidence Daaood's musical group is called "An Army of Healers."

In 2005, Kamau Daaood's book *The Language of Saxophones* was published by City Lights. The collection contains his greatest poems from four decades. It includes several tribute poems to people like Higgins, Tapscott, Bob Kaufman, Hendrix, Bird Parker, his children. He is a master of Imagery and emotion. He's political without being obvious. Skilled with metaphor, rhythm & pure language. Work that flows on the page or the stage. His CD is titled Leimert Park. It is a brilliant album. 12 poems over just the right music. Pieces for Coltrane, Art Blakey, Billie Holiday, his wife & family. Recorded in 1997 he has legendary Leimert Park musicians like Higgins, Tapscott, pianist Nate Morgan and superstar vocalist Dwight Trible on the recording.

Daaood crushes poetry with precision. His delivery is impeccable. The production on his disc is timeless like the poems. Postmodern Jazz. Laid back hard bop. Recently he has done work with Carlos Nino's project Ammon Contact. The man also has

an encyclopediac knowledge of vinyl records, especially jazz, funk & soul.

LEIMERT'S LANDSCAPE

Located in the Crenshaw District, Leimert Park is one and a half square miles. A fountain sits in the middle of the Leimert Park plaza facing Crenshaw at a graceful diagonal. The angles of the village are perfect. Feng shui for sure. Degnan Blvd forms a "T" intersection with 43rd. Trees line the boulevard, the schools around Leimert all have greenspace & remain away from traffic.

Leimert Park's street culture is organic. Afrocentric flavor. Street vendors like Finesse are always charismatic. Daaood describes the village: "The merchants open their shops full of handcrafted, thoughtful items, gifts and bits of heritage, mud cloth and kente, sage, and nag champa, Djembes and shekares. Coffee beans and Chai Tea. Chess masters and domino divas. Scholars and panhandlers. People come, people stay, people go. The saints and the sinners. The givers and the takers. All to the back drop of an eternal drum circle. Blues on the corner, jazz at the curb and the hip-hop don't stop."

The built environment is well kept, mostly Mediterranean buildings with a bit of art deco. This is most evident in the former Leimert Park Movie Palace

located across from the plaza. Zig-zag art deco design from 1939. The theater was originally designed by the famed architectural firm Morgan, Walls & Clements. It is now the Vision Church & Theater. For close to a decade it was owned by Marla Gibbs from the Jeffersons. Kamau Daaood's words from his "Leimert Park" poem are on the large mural behind the movie palace on the back wall above the alley...

"My heart is a djembe drum played upon the dark hands of a fifth street cappuccino."

The mural is a great mosaic of Leimert Park history. Besides Daaood's words, it shows painted images of Billy Higgins, Marla Gibbs, Richard Fulton, Ben Caldwell. Words appear like Museum in Black, Freestyle Fellowship, Ramses, Brockman Gallery. Each of these figures are Leimert Park legends. Ramses is one of Leimert's founding artists known for his stainglassed mosaics, Daaood called him "a stainglassed musician." Richard Fulton founded 5th Street Dicks Coffee Company. Early in the film Fulton states, "Music is the heartbeat of the community." When he appeared on screen during the screening of the film @ the Pan African Film Festival the auditorium applauded loudly. His energy contributed greatly to the area for over a decade before he passed in 2001.



PHOTO / A.K. Toney

Kamau Daaood appears frequently in the film explaining the history of the village. Like Billy Higgins, he's been there since the beginning. Early in the film Daaood explains the history of the Brockman Gallery, the first community arts venue in Leimert Park. Sometime in the late 60s visionary brothers & artists Alonzo & Dale Davis opened up the Brockman Gallery in Leimert Park on Degnan Blvd. They were in their early 20s. They founded the first gallery in L.A. devoted to African American artists. By most accounts this was the beginning of the art community. They featured artists like John Outerbridge & Elizabeth Catlett.

By the 70s, Black Hollywood like Bill Cosby, Quincy Jones & William Marshall had been to the Brockman Gallery. Through the 70s & 80s the Brockman Gallery continued until 1989. About the time they closed, the World Stage was erected. When one door was shut another swung wide open and all were welcomed inside.

END OF PART ONE

Mike the Poet, is a 3rd generation Los Angeles native. Mike is widely acclaimed for his live performances, contributions to international publications & legendary city tours. Mike The Poet's book "I Am Alive in Los Angeles!" has been added to the curriculum in several high schools & universities. To hear Mike's take on Leimert Park over a beat by DJ Dave, click his pic...



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It's probably happened to you 1,000 times: you're looking for shows in the weekly or online, you stumble across a band name that catches your eye and you briefly wonder... only to become distracted by something you actually know, so you move on proudly. After repeated sightings you become vaguely familiar and even think you know them, or have been meaning to check them out simply due to their handle.

A name like Melt Banana, or MxBx, does that to you. You want to know. You might be missing something. Go ahead. Be brave. If it sucks, your friends will throw cigarette butts at you, but if it's *good* you will win the love and respect of your audiophile peers and deservedly take your position as the God of Taste. They will look to you for advice and guidance, and covet every mixed tape you make them. You don't even have to tell anybody that you read this Beginners Guide to Melt Banana.

Melt Banana are a noise-punk band founded in 1992 by Onuki Yasuko, aka Yako (vocals), Agata

MxBx:

The Beginners' Guide to Melt Banana

By: Keri Q



Ichirou (guitar), Rika Hamamoto' (bass), and later on Toshiaki Sudoh (drums). Given that they have released 8 full lengths and 23 EPs, you have a bit of catching up to do, including *13 Hedgehogs*, a 56 track compilation of most of their EPs released on their own label A-Zap in 2005. Since they've done most of the gathering for you, you have no excuse.

This year's *Bambi's Dilemma* smacks of straight-for-the-jugular, instinctual music making. Unlike their former full-length releases, they've really gotten in touch with their rock side. Not to say that this is a rock album, but for MxBx, this is the closest they've ever got. These two discs are a great place to start your journey to becoming an MxBx superfan, and the God of Taste alluded to earlier.

The right way to go about things is to catch MxBx live, where the assault to your eyes and ears are much more enjoyable and cohesive. This band is at home on stage. You can feel it, if not check your pulse.

For the benefit of your MxBx edification, I sat down with Yako for a bit of good ol' Q & A, in an attempt to straighten a few things out.

Kotori: How come "banana?" What does it mean?

Yako: It came from pop art, like Andy Warhol. We wanted to have a kind of catchy pop name and Agata said, "how about banana?" and I said, "melt." I don't know why we put melt with banana, but I came from pop art.

K: I've read some colorful descriptions of your vocal stylings, and one that stands out was that your delivery is like a "rabid poodle on speed." What do you think about that?

Y: Oh, that's nice. It's really hard to hear what people think about the music.

K: So what compels you to make the sounds that you make?

Y: Umm... musically, I always get many influences from bands with whom we play with. Also we play LOTS of video games.

K: What bands? Like top 3? Just the first ones that pop into your head?

Y: Oh, it's hard to pick 3, mostly Japanese rappers.

K: You are often described as a noise band; what does the word noise mean to you?

Y: I don't think that we are doing noise. For me, noise music is much more



Shield
2-57

3 Noyes-

4 7-14

5 17-

6 27-70 ⑤10

7 7-29-

8 11-9- ⑤

9 1-11

10 2-21-11

11 2-7

12 2-21-11

13 1-7-21-11

14 1st Day ⑤

15 2-11-2-

16 2-7-1-

17 7-21-7 ①

18 2-21-7 ⑤①

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extreme thing like what Merzbow does, or Mesonna. And when I listen to their music I feel like I am taking a shower of the noise.

K: *How have you prepared for tour this time around? Do you have any survival tactics you would like to share with Kotori's readers?*

Y: We have prepared some more.... songs. We just put out a new album, so we (will) play a lot of songs from the new album.

Yako's tour survival kit of new songs certainly came in handy during the set that night at the Troubadour in West Hollywood, May 18th, 2007. They made sure to indulge us old-skool types by kicking things off with "Rragg" from *Speak Squeak Creak*, and then back to *Bambi* for "Spider Snipe," "Cracked Plaster Cast," and "Blank Page of the Blind." The regular set finished off the last working cells in my ears with "Key is a Fact That a Cat Brings" from the *Cell-Scape* full length.

That said, unless you are still young and stupid, you should certainly bring earplugs to an MxBx show. It's loud and may reach frequencies reserved for canines and small vermin. This in and of itself is not a negative, but if you want to hear the fire engine behind you rushing to the orphanage as you

sloppily drive home, consider earplugs. If you are willing to mosh, and you *will* be moshing if you are anywhere close to the stage, you should consider hydrating prior and during the set. Sweat happens, and it will happen to you. Pogoing shoes are a must.

The Troub's "No Crowd Surfing" regulations were battered and bruised by the teeny bopper crowd who stage dove and bravely scaled the light scaffold to leap into the oblivious sea of hands. It's hard not to feel 15 again. Scared, excited, aggressive, happy, and not giving a rat's ass about people sweating on me. Go ahead, boot me in the head as you crowd surf over me! The scar will tell the story!

Everybody's favorite masked guitarist Agata, who never appears without his trusty surgical mask sometimes taped in place, has the most unbelievable effects peddle set up on the planet, nay, the galaxy. 13 was my count, not including a foam insulated iPod, and connectors supported by Band-Aids. He stomped all over them like cartoon crabs snapping at his ankles. Meanwhile, teeny Rika mm' bounced around on her teeny feet, armed with a bass taller than her. Yako belted, rapped, yelled, barked, screamed, and even sang in what is seemingly English.





The encore that night included a guest appearance by Mike Watt (The Minutemen, Iggy and the Stooges), which was cool in a historical sense, but I think the kiddies would agree when I say, it was too much Mike and not enough Yako. She's the one they want. Yako, the girl with the fragility of a flower petal, and the power of a bulldozer.

Not wanting to speculate about the origin of the song title "Green Eyed Devil" (obvious connections drawn to the blue-eyed Caucasian invaders of pretty much everywhere), I asked Yako exactly who is the Green Eyed Devil?

Y: Ummm, it's (a song) about a thing that I want to have.

K: A thing? Like a child?

Y: Um, not child, well ...it came from a fish. Right now I have a really small puff fish at home. And someday I hope to have the spikey puffer fish, like the kind that's in the sea.

K: You want to have one as a pet?

Y: Um.... no, but I hope to *have* it.... it's about that.

Okaay... some questions just can't be answered in any language. With that Yako gave me a shy, confident, fragile and devilish smile.



(click to play video)



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The Imagination Station

A LOFT ABOVE THE GUTTER

This is the Imagination Station and it is an old one. It has shames and buckets of blood and laughter and even many regrets, threads of torn clothing and beads of sweat sweeter than chamomile. The Imagination Station is a Loft on a block with a dichotomy all its own, sandwiched between high-end shipping docks, homes of the upper-Middle Class and, anachronistically, a row of Section 8 housing.

The sounds are sirens, either from squad cars or from teenage Harpies who can't put summer to respite until their nuts freeze to guard rails and their girlfriends find warmth in the hands of older men with fireplaces and cognac. Even then the drum rolls remain, loud upheaval attempting to drown out the vacuum of stark winter emptiness.

That is the exterior. The interior is a bubble, one mostly cut off and protected from the bleating and the bullshit. In here the magic funnels out and stains pulp that is horny for conception. This is the workshop of Bob The Belletrist and Violet Fewes—Daughter of Art.

My brother used to live here with walls adorned in half-naked pictures of juiced-up muscle builders and Pamela Anderson centerfolds. The floors were covered in dirty clothes and empty condom wrappers back then. Now the floor is stained with cigarette ash and lit-



tered in loose-leaf paper...and blunt wrappers. Beer has seeped into the floor panels, giving them an unwanted elasticity.

My brother had turned the place over to me when he found a better basement apartment on the other side of town. But memories of his life here are strangely entwined with ours. This is where he punched holes in the walls when he was only slightly older than me. This is also where I have punched *my* holes, in fits of bottomless rage that have left my writing hands swollen and stagnant.

Shortly after my brother moved into his new place he was bouncing at a club where a then-pornstar was guest dancer. That pornstar ended up sleeping with my brother and even spending a weekend with him. He regaled myself and my other brother with this story repeatedly and I must have held on to it, spiteful on some subconscious level.

Years later an assignment found me, in the form of a real estate page that featured a realtor that looked all too familiar. It was the pornstar who shacked up with my older brother and now she was bent on spitting out children from the same womb that had been gnarled by ungodly phalluses too large for average comprehension.

It was in the pages of *Kotori* that I publicly

judged this woman, presumably for justifiable reasons but really to fuck with my brother. Of course, he laughed when I told him about it and was hardly bothered by my railing on her moral character. After all, he had already railed on the more valued parts of her anatomy.

Then a colleague sent me a picture of the pornstar posing with her baby in a smut-free MySpace page and I felt like that much more of a sanctimonious Jabberwocky. Regrets are but one of the multitude of things the Loft has housed.

Its primary function is to serve as a bubble, some precarious box in which we can set off our bombs and see the results in the immediate, a place where high Art and low bullshit can bounce off each other in one supreme force field, one swirling abyss of sound, silence, fury and laughter.

Violet made the Loft our studio as well as our home with her insane *prolifíca*, her inscrutable output of drawings, each dripping with an intense humanism and vulnerability that is lost in all modern Art, if not in all the Art the world has ever offered. Her eyes pierce through the page like a rapier aimed straight at the cerebral cortex. And sometimes they make me weep and punch holes in my soul.

She swirls around the page with Samurai pre-



cision as I chain-smoke and search for written understanding in a room overlooking a world that defies logic. And every once in a while something awful and eerily beautiful leaks out of my insides and finds its way on to a pizza box or a brown paper bag.

The Loft is what contains our creative protuberances, our aesthetic grandiosities. It also attracts uninvited friends. Manging bitch felines sneak up here in the heat to occlude or avoid rape and pigeons coo cunt soliloquys above the skylight and scratch at the gutters in a most cacophonous fashion on too-bright mornings after. The summers are stiflingly hot and the thin walls and unpadded vents mean you'd be better off laying naked on ice when the winter breaks.

We are up here now, eyes fixed on a porous purple heart springing a leak of black and lavender resplendence. My reckless eyeballs zoom in on what I think to be another one of those godforsaken silver fish that fall from the ceiling beams on to our sleeves and spoil a grind session by slithering across our pads. I snatch it up between forefinger and thumb and, realizing it to be a marijuana stem, toss it into the 7-Eleven mini-bag full of blunt guts and cigarette cellophane.

It would be easy to jump from disgust to violence with the silver fish, were it not for the





natural fact that this was their home long before it was ours. After all, we have usually afforded intruders the same amount of fair treatment. Like the time we got a horse fly stoned and watched him buzz around in hell-for-leather circles like a helio-hat caught on a power line in some whirlwind twister. The Loft is an exercise in entropy.

4 AM sitting swollen and cross-legged, strung out from sex too strong for simple humans. Strung out but wired, nearly paralyzed but immortal in mind and insomniac in spirit. The melting clock is frozen in wax, rendered stupid and moot. Thanatos rules, tugging on what's left of the reins and telling my love-drunk ass that all possibilities lie in wait. The offer's on the table in the Shrodinger-esque sense. Sling shot the morning sparrow. He's breaking my bullet train. It's time to go to work.

For more information on Bob Freville and Violet Fewes or to order prints email bob@kotorimag.com
www.myspace.com/bobfreville
www.myspace.com/violetfewes

The Lost Angeles Times

VOL 7, ISSUE 7

Lost Angeles, Someday, February 29, 2007

BY SCOTT SHAPIRO



Too Richie for His Blood

Nicole Richie's Unborn Fetus Wants Out

BY FONDUE BONZAI

Two months ago, the simple life got a little more complicated for TV reality star/socialite Nicole Richie and at a press conference today, she shared with the world the reason why as she exclaimed

into the microphone, "I'm pregnant!" In between a drag of a cigarette dangling from her lip, she continued, "Now, he's still just a tiny little thing, but he's got power in those legs. I feel him kicking all the time."

"That's cause I want out bitch!" Nicole's Fetus responded when reached for comment. As a fresh

puff of smoke blew into the womb, in between coughs, he continued, "I feel like a caged animal down here. It's torture." Fetus went on to say that he hopes his mother suffers the same fate as her *Simple Life* colleague did. "If she has to experience what Paris went through, hopefully it'll open her eyes up to what I'm going through in here and she'll actually take care of my ass," he said, shaking his head.

However, when notified that a Los Angeles court had delayed the start of Richie's DUI trial for at least a month, Fetus cried, "Oh man, we all know she's guilty... and even if she isn't, for the love of God, send her bony ass to jail anyways. At least then I'll be getting three meals a day. Seriously, I'm starving over here. I mean, aren't woman supposed to gain weight during pregnancy? Where's the trickle down effect into the womb? The only nourishment I get is from Mom's diet Coke, and I don't mean the freaking soda."

But Fetus knows even if his mother does have to serve jail time, it won't nearly be enough. "What happens when she gets out after a week?" he questioned. "I'm still stuck in here for another six months and then it's really gonna get ugly because there's no way she's gonna be prepared for my birth process? Will she do lamas? Breathing exercises? Give me a break. We all know the only time she'll be bent over or taking deep breaths before then is if some douchebag with his pants around his ankles is behind her or a bong's stuck in front of her."

Thinking even further ahead is even scarier for Fetus. "If I'm treated this badly while I actually have a direct effect on Mom's physical condition, how's she gonna treat me when I get out? I mean, if it gets worse from here, just abort my ass and call it a day. I hear Hell's nice this time of year anyway."

WHY DOES TONY HAWK WEAR THE BRACELET?

He wears it to raise desperately needed funds for HIV/AIDS care services, education and vaccine development. Over half a million people have chosen to wear The Bracelet. What about you? Available at: The Body Shop; Kenneth Cole; Virgin Megastore; Ben Bridge Jewelers and other fine retailers. Or to order call 1-800-88-UNTIL or visit us at WWW.UNTIL.ORG. **until** THERE'S A CURE

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obeygiant.com
obeyclothing.com



MARK MASKY'S GREATEST HITS

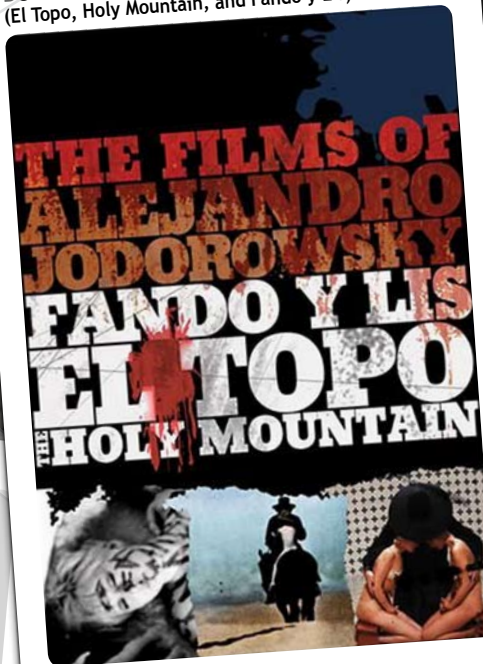
> markmasky.imeem.com

VAN'S — ROBERT WILLIAMS



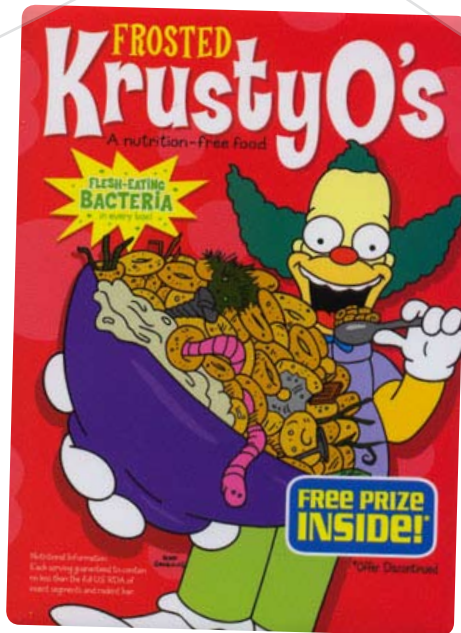
Robert Williams, famous for several reasons, including founding Juxtapoz magazine, and several recognizable art pieces, including the art work for Guns N' Roses "Appetite For Destruction" CD. Now this crazy artist made some crazy Van's. Limited series of 4 shoe designs.

BOX SET - ALEJANDRO JODOROWSKY (El Topo, Holy Mountain, and Fando y Lis)



I have been craving a bowl of Krusty O's since the first time I watched the Simpsons. With the upcoming release of the Simpson's Movie, some 7-Eleven's have been converted into Kwik-E Marts, and as a result I get to enjoy Krusty O's, delicious pink frosted sprinkled donuts, and Buzz Cola. No Duff Beer! D'oh!

KRUSTY O'S



I have been craving a bowl of Krusty O's since the first time I watched the Simpsons. With the upcoming release of the Simpson's Movie, some 7-Eleven's have been converted into Kwik-E Marts, and as a result I get to enjoy Krusty O's, delicious pink frosted sprinkled donuts, and Buzz Cola. No Duff Beer! D'oh!

TRUE LOVE & FALSE IDOLS



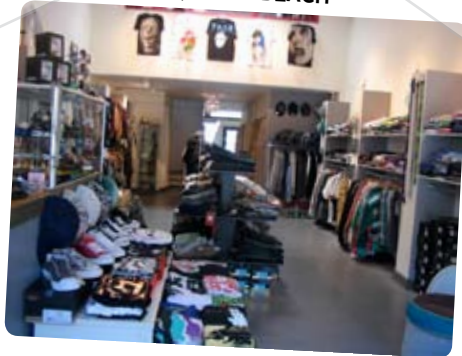
Lately, I have been seeing LA brand True Love and False Idols' shit everywhere. They even have a Mark Masky look alike on one of their shirts. I love it. They have a lot of fresh gear that caters to the artistically savvy, with shirts that redefine the oh-so common all-over print. Be advised.

RONNIE FAISST - SHUI CLOTHING



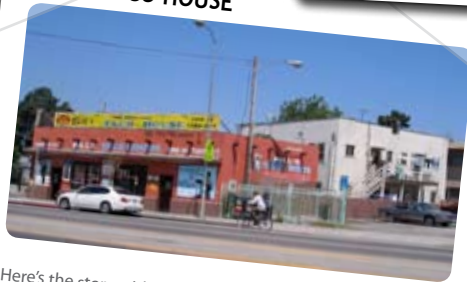
My boy Ronnie Faisst has his new line of clothing up called Shui Clothing. He said "Shui means 'water' in Chinese. When you think water you think flow. Whether you are bmx'r, a moto-x'r, skater, surfer, MC, DJ, or a fighter you want a flow. Your flow is gonna define your style, and your style defines you as an individual." Nuff said. Check it out.

BLACK MARKET, LONG BEACH



In the Arts District in Long Beach there is a nice little strip of clothing shops, sure to get you fitted from head to toe. Black Market is an essential piece in this collection of stores. Although the same store, Black Market LB's got a style separate from their LA store, making LB a worthy trip. Pay cash and they'll hook it up.

BILL'S TACO HOUSE



Here's the story with Bill's: Near MLK and Main St. in Los Angeles, covered with murals of Martin Luther King Jr. on the outside, covered with pictures of Barry White on the inside, and tacos that have hamburger patties cut in half for the meat. One word ... delicious.

VIDEOS



COWBOY IN CARACAS

*A North American's Memoir of
Venezuela's Democratic Revolution*

Charles Hardy



Cowboy in Caracas : A North
American's Memoir of Venezuela's
Democratic Revolution
by Charles Hardy
[Curbstone Press]

It's a blistering first-person narrative of a brave and selfless former American Catholic priest and his experiences in one of the world's most revolutionary countries during one of its most revolutionary periods. Charles Hardy spent 8 years living in a cardboard shack in one of Venezuela's

many barrios, affording him the moxy to speak and be heard, and in this case, Hardy is singing the praises of the 'Bolivarian Revolution' that Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has ignited in the oil-rich South American country.

Hardy takes us through testimonials of why the U.S. government and media as well as the established right-wing media in Venezuela love to hate Chavez. After all, there is much reason for those with influence, money, and power to hate the man... for he has made it his sole platform to give much of that influence back to those that need it most...the common men and women.

Whether Chavez's eccentricities and actions irk you or amuse you, "Cowboys in Caracas," supported by words from people in the streets and the barrios, fills the reader with both facts and details they may not want to believe as well as hope that maybe, just maybe, our voice as a people can still be heard.



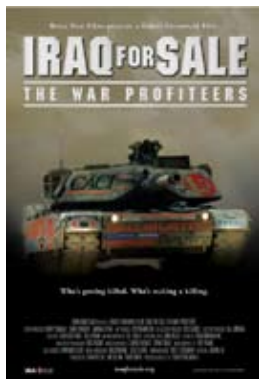
Reggae Nashville
*Deep Roots Music 1 : The Definitive
Story of Reggae and Jamaica's Musical
Culture*
[Screen Edge]

This dvd contains the first 2 parts of a 6 part series chronocling the birth, rise and revival of Jamaican roots and reggae music. It takes us all the way back to the origin of African drum and percussion music before the slave trade began in the 18th century, then steers us through the murky days when Great Britain had a hold on Jamaica and its slave trade all over the new world, continuing all the way

through the revivalist period and into the dawn of ska, modern dub and dancehall.

One of the most fascinating elements of this particular disc is the extensive introduction and evolution of the original travelling Jamaican sound system. Those who held such a sound system were the undeniable rockstars of the island in the 70's and early 80's. We're also treated to a special gift from the dvd gods: Jack Ruby's Hi-Power sound system playing a saturday night in Ocho Rios - primitive flying saucer sound effects and all.

Spattered by exclusive never-before-seen footage and entrancing performances by a who's-who of reggae heads from The Skatalites, Toots & The Maytals, Jimmie Cliff, Count Ossie, Byron Lee, and many more. "Deep Roots Music 1" is a tough one to say anything negative about. A solid package, can't wait to see parts 3 thru 6.
[WAM]



Iraq for Sale : The War Profiteers
(Starz Cinema)

You need to see this. And you. And you too. And also you. Shit, everyone needs to see this!!!

Director Robert Greenwald is back and this time he's tackling the subject of the not-nearly-publicized-enough dirty story behind private contractors and Iraq. The fact alone that there are more private contractors in Iraq than troops, coupled with the fact that some of these troops are being forced to train these unqualified private personnel to do the jobs they've trained under proper military guidance to do, is enough to make me puke a logo... and another logo...and a marketing

plan...and a severance package... and a logo. He runs through all the biggest contractors, how much their making, and how unqualified those that they're hiring are for the jobs really are. Sending drivers driving empty trucks into the path of deadly crossfire, simply because they get paid for every day the trucks are in action. The best thing that the U.S. government and the military are getting out of this is...no accountability. Oh...well, that and a few BILLION dollars in their pockets. Oh...and just wait til' you see who the boardmembers of these private contractors are...See this disgusting film!!!! It began running on Starz this week...

BOOKS



ARANZI MACHINE GUN VOL. 1 & 2

The make believe world of Japanese duo Aranzi Aranzo is making its way westward with the *Aranzi Machine*

Gun Series Vol. 1, 2, (and 3, which is due out later this year). Originally published as *Aranji Mashingan*, this lighthearted hodgepodge of comic vignettes is translated into English by Anne Ishii and is ready for its American fan base. Including White Rabbit and Brown Bunny of the *Cute Book*, the *Voyages of Mr. Sprite*, and the mischievous mishaps of the *Bad Guy*, this series is a must have for anyone with a love for all that is cute, and an inner child that is thirsting for some love.

[Melissa Rae Pincus]

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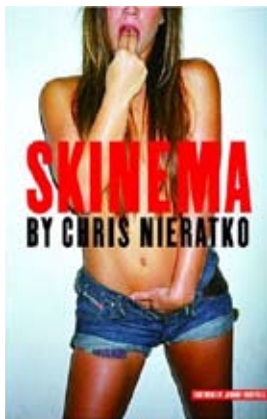


Burning Man: Art in the Desert
Photographs and text by A. Leo Nash
Introduction by Daniel Pinchbeck
Abrams Publishing

It began on a beach in San Francisco back in 86' with a modest 8-foot structure, the virgin "Burning Man" effigy that would later be responsible for transforming the Black Rock Desert outside Reno, NV, into a

virtual city for a week long festival every year. Nash's black and white photos help recognize the vastness and enormity of the event, from aerial views to eclectic modes of transportation, portraying the calm in the eye of a routinely hedonistic storm. Nash has been documenting Burning Man for the last 13 years, capturing in picture the evolution of the art and the crony crusaders whom make it burn. Imagination and creativity are essential, however the *balls* to go for it is what this book really captures. Someday, someone or something will reach for this collective and be moved by what they saw in the pages. At which point the karmic circle will be completed and we can all pass into the next level of enlightenment.

[Dirty J]



"Skinema" is the perfect bathroom read, not only because it is a steaming pile of debauched slimeball shit, but also because it is something so dirty, so foul and so disarmingly private there's only one place it can legitimately reside... on top of your Porcelain God. And it's pure genius. After flying the coupe from his Jackass brethren (Johnny Knoxville writes the foreword), Chris Nieratko's spent the last decade cataloging "porn reviews" for Vice Magazine and others. However, the placement of the porno movie pic and title credits above his rants merely act as a smokescreen for his main focus, using this avenue as a means to vent his personal trials and tribs, lurid epiphanies, pornstar sexcapades

and umpteen forms of abuse. If he's not ordering one-night's worth of service from his favorite pornstar on Hustler's tab (*Wicked Ways* p.54), or telling everyone he has AIDS when he really didn't (*Double Or Nothing* p.20), you can rest assured that Chris is hating on MySpace (*Whores Don't Wear Panties* p.145) or packing for peace in the ghetto (*Bangin in Da Hood Vol. 5* p.108). In addition to the above, Nieratko has been gracious enough to include a guide to getting a stripper to leave the club with you, a must have for the despondent thrill seeker in all of us.

MUSIC



Child Abuse
Child Abuse
Lovepump United

Child Abuse is awesome.

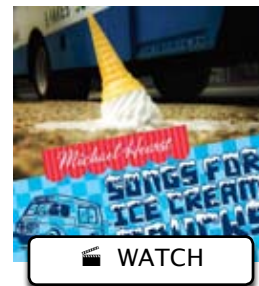
This kind of wonderful insanity, this

grinding madness that makes your teeth clench immediately upon exposure is something I can never get enough of. Sure, I have little clue what they're talking about, but I'm sure it's killer.

This, their debut album, is a maniacal collection of tracks that most closely resemble The Locust, sans the dynamic vocals and a little less hyper. What they do share is an astute precision hidden beneath the facade of chaos.

Tracks like "Wrong Hole" and "I Hate Me" remind me of a complete psychotic breakdown I had a while back. It was like I snapped, and everything became clearer to me than ever before...so I tore through my apartment like a cyclone, for no reason at all, and completely trashed the place much to my roommates' chagrin. And "Penal Jihad," my favorite track on the album, makes me want to do it again.

Full of frenzied perfection, blasting drums and shrieking guitars, all sewn together with deep and angry vocals, *Child Abuse* is the perfect album for a summer rampage.
[Tommy Digital]



Michael Hearst
Songs For Ice Cream Trucks
(Urban Geek Records)

Teetering on psychotic carnie music, **Songs For Ice Cream Trucks** is the ultimate intro to what will be the hottest summer ever. Michael Hearst had enough of "Pop Goes The Weasel" and the rest of those standards you've had a Pavlovian response to all your life, instead of bumpin' gangster rap out the truck, he re-invented the ice cream song not once, but for 13 tracks of delectable ear candy. Utilizing a myriad of instrumental oddities, a glockenspiel, theremin, melodica, claviola, casiotone and some 'space crickets', Mike and friends have infiltrated the Ice Cream Truck soundtrack forever. They even *keeps it real* by bringing up those hard to ask questions, like "Where Do All The Ice Cream Trucks Go In The Winter?". Scream for it now!

[Mooky]

Check out this vid of Mr. Hearst in his best Good Humor get up taking his homemade ice cream cart to his first gig.

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◀ LISTEN

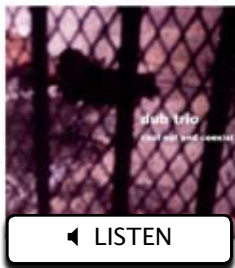
Ojos de Brujo
Techari Remixes
[Six Degrees Records]

How do you handle this one? This thing touches on everything from house to downbeat to flamenco and rumba and hip-hop. Bringing together an eccentric lineup of remixers that includes Nitin Sawhney, London Elektricity, The Nasha Experience, as well as Ojos' own Panko must have been a decision fueled by psychotropic substances in the midst of a night fueled by psychosemantic occurrences, especially considering Ojos' style,

even before the remixes, jaywalks across every one of those avenues as well. It's an emotionally turbulent stroll, but no one ever said that was a bad thing. Ojo De Brujo one-ups themselves.

[WAM]

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◀ LISTEN

Dub Trio
Cool Out And Coexist
(ROIR)

Metal meets Dub - its the album I always wanted to hear but was afraid to ask. Or never thought it would work, to be honest. Dub Trio brings it rough and blunted on their 3rd album of instrumentals titled **Cool Out And Coexist**, all recorded live to display the bands tightness and "how'd they do that?" transitions from hardcore riffage to smooth skankin' and beyond. These cats have provided rhythm for Peeping Tom, as well as live and session work for G-Unit, Fugees and Mobb Deep

among others, proving their musical prowess and unfurling it here in their own unabashed mashup creativity. Stand outs include "Who Wants To Die?", "Jack Bauer", and "Screaming At The Sea" - if you've never banged your head or smoked sensi, this is your one stop shopping cd.

[Cornelius Hangnail]

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◀ LISTEN

Billie Holiday
Remixed & Reimagined
[Columbia/Legacy]

I'd consider it pretty much a sin to take perfection and alter it...an act of vanity. With that line of thinking, you'd figure it would be sacrilegious to even touch Billie Holiday's work and attempt to make it your own. But dammmnit...the latest installment in the *Remixed & Reimagined* series has me skipping from track 2 to 5 to 7 to 8 and back and forth in

between. Jazzeem reworks "More Than You Know" into a seductive downbeat, Madison Park takes "I'm Gonna Lock My Heart" and emphasizes the heartbreak in Billie's sultry brood with a lush and distant minimal-tempo beat, Nickodemus and Zeb shuffle "Tray'lin' All Alone" into a packed swingin' jazz lounge number. Even Ladybug Mecca (of Diggable Planets fame) drops her personally touching flow on top of "Spreadin' Rhythm Around" all whilst maintaining the original melodies and instrumentation so rightfully belonging to Holiday's legacy. There's alos DJ Logic, Organica, Tony Humphries, and many more that lend their critical ears to one of the smoothest emotionally touching projects in decades. As much as I *think* it should pain me to say, these are very tasteful reworkings of one of jazz's most recognizable icons.

[WAM]



Andre "3000" Benjamin
Class of 3000: Music Volume 1
[Sony BMG]

Andre 3000 once again proves that he's still as cool as a polar bear's toenail. His *Class of 3000: Music Volume 1* is music made for kids, taken from his cartoon show that debuted on Cartoon Network in November 2006. But unlike other music that kids force their parents to suffer through, this record is almost as dope as some of Andre's material from Outkast. This provides a means for parents who may be fans of Outkast to introduce their kids to this groundbreaking artist in a way that makes sense all around. I guess this could be an exciting thing to those folks crazy enough to have young children. (Yes, I just called those parents who are reading this crazy. It was either that or retarded, but I went with crazy because it's less abrasive

yet nevertheless honest. Besides, in the end I guess retarded wouldn't work. It might be retarded for me to have children, but by God there are some very good parents out there, raising some mighty fine children)

So, for those parents who want to have something relatively cool to listen to when hanging out with the youngsters, but don't want to feel awkward about your kids singing along, this album is the perfect fit. It's some groovy funk, without all the shit about fuckin' niggas up or carving out your neighbor's lungs and feeding them to the dog. This is decent, wholesome fun for the whole family.

[Tommy Digital]



Us3
Say What!?
Us3.com

Around since '91, you may remember Us3 for their big 90's hit "Cantaloup (Flip Fantasia)", a carousel of band members has followed with Geoff Wilkinson steady at the helm of this London based jazz-rap anomaly. 2007 sees the release of **Say What!?**, and a healthy dose of R&B sweeps through the tracklisting beautifully thanks to 21 year-old sultry vixen Adeline, most notably on opener "Say You Belong To Me". MC's Akil Dasan and Gaston make a rare re-appearance for rappers in the Us3 outfit, listen to Akil go off on "ABC", which is your typical rhyme by numbers dig but from an atypical rapper - "Akil Boldy Calculates Dope Elegant Flows..." - and back again! Mostly, it's the instrumentals that struck me most, smooV with a capital V sucka, loungin' for fat cats, and a bigger palette of drums, horns and keys than you can wrap your tuba lips around. Mozy.

[Frankness]

EDITOR QUICKPICKS



NewMerika
She's On Fire

Multi-cultural, multi-instrumental, multi-genre, and out to save the world one coexistent beat at a time...
newmerika.com



Clown Vomit
Regurgitation

They had us with the logo alone...and not to mention the deep and goofy lyrics...and the theramin and 'squeezebox'...and the Ritalin-laden aural madness. When's this circus come to town?
clownvomitmusic.com



Yung Mars
The Yung Mars Album

Wild West frontier hip hop? Latin American ghetto flow? Down tempo dirty booty bass freestyle? Think Everlast, Ozo, Roni Size, a Korg and a harmonica. yungmars.com



Sir Splendid

Sir Splendid's melancholically haunting emotionally rhythmic instrumentation is a beautifully modern take on the magic of classic rock...Wurlitzer and all!
SirSplendid.com

Vision *Sonic Explorations*

It sounds like someone gave the Beach Boys quaaludes.
myspace.com/visionrocks



getunderground .COM