

Connecting the Dots Between Jazz and Hip-Hop

Written by John M. James

Wednesday, 06 February 2008 02:00

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The hip-hop sound of the 1980's and 1990's gets peeled back like an onion this Tuesday, with **Blue Note Records'**

release of

Droppin' Science

. Surveying the history of the label's catalog of funky vintage jazz breakbeats, broken down for use as the foundation of a whole new genre, the iconic label presents the original tracks and a look at the hip-hop gold each song inspired. From the "sampleography" of the

Beastie Boys

pulling from Jeremy Steig's "Howling For Judy" from 1970 into their 1994 hit "Get It Together," to

A Tribe Called Quest

,

Main Source

,

De La Soul

,

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DJ Krush

, and

J Dilla

each copping a piece of 1974's "Think Twice" by Donald Byrd, the connect-the-dots history of sticky finger beat-making is a fascinating ride. Thirteen original classics fill the CD release, also available on old-school slipmat-scratching LP vinyl and stylish individual ring-tones of the original sampled loops. Other highlights include Lou Donaldson "Who's Makin' Love (To Your Old Lady)" from 1969, lifted by

Marley Marl

,

Mary J. Blige

and

Biggie Smalls

, and Joe Williams' "Get Out Of My Life Woman" from 1966, nicked by

Biz Markie

,

Kool G Rap

and

Jill Scott

.

A quarter century ago, the biggest selling album in history was released and started its climb to 104 million copies, and **Michael Jackson's** *Thriller* gets an anniversary upgrade next week, expanded with remixes of "The Girl Is Mine" by

will.i.am

and "Billie Jean" by

Kayne West

; guests

Fergie

and

Akon

on updated moonwalks through "Beat It" and "Wanna Be Starting Something," respectively; and the previously unreleased "For All Time," from the original album's recoding sessions. A bonus DVD presents three mini-movies and Jackson's groundbreaking performance on 1983's Motown television special. More sweet memories of when Michael was, well, sane, are also due Tuesday with the 30th Anniversary DVD Edition of

The Wiz

. Remastered in new 5.1 sound with a bonus CD, this soul take on

The Wizard of Oz

"eases on down" the yellow brick road with stars Diana Ross, Richard Pryor, Lena Horne, Ted Ross, and Nipsey Russell.

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Television Alert

The Late Show with David Letterman hosts **A Fine Frenzy** tonight, **Lenny Kravitz** on Friday, and **OK Go** on Monday;

The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson

presents Shelby Lynne on Thursday and the North Mississippi Allstars on Tuesday overnight; and

The Ellen DeGeneres Show

gets her groove on with

Lupe Fiasco

on Friday.

New Releases Coming Tuesday, February 12:

The Acorn - *Glory Hope Mountain* (Paper Bag) bright, intimate album inspired by the Honduras-to-Canada immigrant tale of the mother of lead singer Rolf Klausener

Antietam - *Opus Mixtum* (Carrot Top) two-CD or three-LP vinyl set

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Marco Benevento - *Invisible Baby* (Hyena) with Jacob Fred Jazz Odyssey bassist Reed Mathis and Tori Amos drummer Matt Chamberlain; stroked by a myriad of instruments that range from a Farfisa Fast 2 keyboard, Mellotron, pump organ and, dig this, a Speak 'N' Spell

British Sea Power - *Do You Like Rock Music?* (Rough Trade) highly anticipated release recorded in locales ranging from the Czech forest to a 200-year old fort; touring stateside later this month

Rufus Cappadocia - *Songs for Cello* (Velour Music) avant-garde globe-hopping adventures featuring his unique five-string cello that bends sound really, really low

Colossus - *Colossos and the Rift of the Pan-Dimensional Underdogs* (Lucid) Chapel Hill metal with temporary guitarist Bill Fischer

The Cops - *Free Electricity* (Mt. Fuji/Sonic Boom Records)

Deaf Pedestrians - *... And Other Distractions* (Virgin) featuring the catchy single "Hail To the Geek"

Dengue Fever - *Venus On Earth* (M80 Records) Californian band led by Cambodian-born Chhom Nimol

DJ Dolores - *I Real* (Crammed Discs) cool Brazilian beats with a socially political underbelly, inspired by the slums of Recife's Brasilia Teimosa

Dread Zeppelin - *Bar Coda* (Cash Cow Records) more inner-Elvis unleashed in must-hear covers of Bob Marley's "No Woman No Cry" and Led Zeppelin's "Thank You," "The Lemon Song," and "Celebration Day"

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Goldfrapp - "A&E" (Mute) new single from their upcoming *Seventh Tree* album

The Heavy Circles - *The Heavy Circles* (Dynamite Child) featuring Edie Brickell and her stepson, Harper Simon, with guests Sean Lennon and Money Mark

I Was a Cub Scout - *I Want You To Know There Is Always Hope* (Abeano) anticipated debut

Idiot Pilot - *Wolves* (Reprise) with Blink 182's Travis Barker

Mahjongg - *Kontpab* (K Records) robot beats with a spine built on Talking Heads' contortions and art school aloofness

Kylie Minogue - *X* (Capitol) with the Scissor Sisters, Boy George, Teddy Riley, and Groove Armada

The Mumlers - *Thickets & Stitches* (Galaxia) cinematic easy-beat pop collective from the Bay Area, fused with sneaky horns and stoned abandon

Maceo Parker - *Roots & Grooves: Live* (Heads Up International) funk goes big band in this two-CD salute to Ray Charles, featuring Frank Chastenier on his monster Hammond B3

Ringfinger - *Decimal* (Magic Bullet Records) new from Tracy Wilson of Dahlia Seed, co-produced by J Robbins and Dalek's Oktopus

The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards - *Spirit of the Glen* (Fontana) full-time soldiers all, these 24 pipers and drummers interpret the theme songs to
Dances with Wolves
and

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The Last of the Mohicans

, as well as wild covers of "Amazing Grace," Paul McCartney's "Mull of Kintyre," and Rod Stewart's "Sailing"

Catherine Russell - *Sentimental Streak* (World Village) lovely retro-vintage Jazz romp through Hoagy Carmichael's "New Orleans," Willie Dixon's "I Don't Care Who Knows," and Bessie Smith's "Kitchen Man"

Ryuichi Sakamoto and **Christopher Willits** - *Ocean Fire* (12K Recordings) new from the Yellow Magic Orchestra founder and experimental guitarist

Say Hi's - *The Wishes and the Glitch* (Euphobia Records) recently auctioning themselves off in a charity-cover song event with Seattle's weekly newspaper, *The Stranger*

Simple Plan - *Simple Plan* (Lava / Atlantic) featuring the single "When I'm Gone"

Supersuckers - *Live at Helldorado* (Cobraside) DVD filmed in Spain

Supreme Beings of Leisure - *11i* (Rykodisc) featuring guest Lili Haydn on "Angelhead"

The Takeovers - "Little Green Onion Man" (Off Records) seven-inch single release from the über-prolific Robert Pollard, with Sam Coomes of Quasi and John Moen of the Decemberists

Tuxedomoon - *Vapour Trails* (Crammed Discs / Ryko) all new and celebrating their 30th anniversary, the songs are sung in English, Spanish, Greek, and an original language of their own design

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Chris Vallillo - *Abraham Lincoln in Song* (Gin Ridge Music) bottleneck slide guitar fantasy telling Lincoln's life through traditionals and covers of songs by Stephen Foster and Norman Blake

Sal Valentino - *Every Now and Then* (Dig Music) solo album from The Beau Brummels' front man

Rupert Wates - *Coast To Coast: Postcards from America* (Bite Music) songs written by the British singer/songwriter as he traveled the States coast to coast

Widespread Panic - *Free Somehow* (Widespread Records) debuting their artist-owned label with the band's tenth studio album, with The Allman Brothers' and The Other Ones' guitarist Jimmy Herring

Wu-Tang Clan - *Wu XM Radio: Wu-Tang Live on XM Satellite Radio* (Think Differently / Phantom Sound) backed by Raekwon's funky tour mates straight outta Brooklyn, the El Michaels Affair

Ya Mos Def - *Excuse Me, This Is the Yah Mos Def* (My Pal God) the hip-hop MC duo rock out in songs crafted with samples from Minor Threat, Cap'n Jazz and Bikini Kill

various artists - *B.I.P.P.: French Synthwave 1979-1985* (EverLoving) domestic release of this Born Bad Records compilation, featuring influential rarities only found on self-produced, limited-edition seven-inch singles