

DJ Smash Finds the Recipe for Jazzy Hip Hop

Written by John James
Tuesday, 03 April 2001 18:00

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• This Tuesday the Blue Note label furthers its commitment to jazz-flavored hip hop with the new DJ Smash album *Phonography: A Blue Note Mix*. This fantastic new collaborative puts Smash Hunter in the chef's seat, concocting a groovy streetwise cake in 14 intriguing slices. The recipe? Take music from Medeski Martin, & Wood, US3, and the Bob Belden Project; add a slow-burning version of The Beatles' "Hey Jude" lyrics; stir them up under the direction of remix soldiers of fortune like Nitin Sawney, Guru, and Todd Terry; add guests such as Guru, Mos Def, Angelique Kidjo, Cassandra Wilson, and Dianne Reeves; and give it a good scratchin' and let it all roll out.

• Also on the list of highly anticipated releases for this Tuesday is the retail debut of Les Claypool's *The Fearless Flying Frog Brigade* and their *Live Frogs: Set One*. The Primus founder's new project on his Prawn Song imprint features members of Ratdog, Sausage, and the Holy Mackerel tackling Pink Floyd's "Shine On You Crazy Diamond" and King Crimson's cubist "Thela Hun Ginjeet." Their *Live Frogs: Set Two* is due later this year and promises to be a complete recreation of Pink Floyd's *Animals* album. Also on the horizon for Claypool is the new CD from his Oysterhead persona, featuring Stewart Copeland of The Police and Trey Anastasio of Phish.

• Keep an eye peeled for the new Fatboy Slim video for "Weapon of Choice" featuring Matrix/Crouching Tiger-like special effects and, making his dancing debut, "Creepy" Christopher Walken.

• Have you seen the CD packaging on the new Guided by Voices album *Isolation Drills*? While low-key in its paperboard fold-out Digipak case, the effect is rather clever as these Dayton, Ohio, smart-rock legends invite you to come and take flight with them. The 16-track payday of apt alienated anthems, fabulous as ever, features contributions of organ and piano by Elliott Smith and former GBV-er Tobin Sprout.

• This Tuesday brings the Joe Dirt motion-picture soundtrack from Sony Legacy, a retro collection of FM staples of the 1970s, standing proud in the glow of a young white man's

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affection for the mullet. You can almost smell the stale beer as heavy hittin' classics like Argent's "Hold Your Head Up," April Wine's "Roller," Blue Oyster Cult's "Burnin' For You," and Bachman-Turner Overdrive's "You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet" rattle the basement rec room.

• Also seminal to 1970's rock was Jeff Beck, whose *Blow by Blow* from 1975 and *Wired* from 1976 defined state-of-the-art jazz-fusion guitar theatrics. The Epic Records label has just reissued these radical explorations with loving care, digitally remastered and restored to the original LP cover art and packaging. Compared to the CDs that were originally pressed in the "grab the first tapes you find, spool 'em up, and move 'em out" days of yore, these new issues sound incredible, and perfect for a little time-machine chill out.

Television Alert:

The Tonight Show with Jay Leno hosts Melanie C of the Spice Girls on Friday; The Late Show with David Letterman welcomes the return of Run-DMC on Thursday and Semisonic on Monday; Late Night with Conan O'Brien features British sensation Eliza Carthy on Friday overnight and Ice-T on Monday overnight; and Saturday Night Live's musical guest this weekend is Coldplay. On Tuesday, ESPN will broadcast its first Action Sports & Music Awards with performances by Ben Harper, Black Sabbath, De La Soul, and the Fun Loving Criminals.

New Releases Coming Tuesday, April 10:

... and like the winds, young grasshopper, are subject to change.

Bardo Pond – Dilate (Matador) CD or two-LP set

Ann Beretta – New Union Old Glory (Lookout)

Big Pun – Endangered Species (Loud) hits and rarities compilation released on the anniversary of his death, featuring his rare remix of Ricky Martin's "Livin' la Vida Loca"

Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds – No More Shall We Part (Reprise/Mute) with guests Anna and Kate McGarrigle

Couch – Profane (Matador)

Ani DiFranco – Revelling/Reckoning (Righteous Babe) two-CD set with guest saxophonist Maceo Parker

Frog Holler – Idiots (Record Cellar)

Guttermouth – Covered with Ants (Epitaph)

John Hermann – The Smiling Assassin (Fat Possum) solo album from the Widespread Panic singer featuring Cody and Luther Dickinson of the North Mississippi All-Stars

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Garry Judd – Ambience (Water Music/Varese Sarabande) new from the UK electronic composer and producer featuring an instrumental ambient-hypnotic cover of “Weather With You” by Crowded House

Leftover Salmon – Ask the Fish (Bert Records) collection of live tracks

Lemon Jelly – lemonjelly.ky (XL/Beggars Banquet)

Liaka – Sounds of the Satellites (Beggars Banquet)

Mad Caddies – Rock the Plank (Fat Wreck) punk music for pirate people

Stephen Malkmus – “Jenny & the Ess-Dog” (Matador) CD single

Minibar – Road Movies (Universal) British band with Americana roots influences

Mogwai – Rock Action (Matador)

Mojave 3 – Out of Tune (Beggars Banquet)

Monster Magnet – God Says No (A&M)

Mudvayne – “Dig” (Epic) DVD single with 33 minutes of footage featuring eight angles of the video and an interactive menu

Nebula – Charged (SubPop)

Rodney O & Joe Cooley – Greatest Hits (Thump) Los Angeles rap duo featuring their early 1990s hits like “This Is For the Homies”

Glen Phillips – Abulm (Brick Red) debut solo album from the Toad the Wet Sprocket founder

Red House Painters – Old Ramon (SubPop) the band’s first since 1996

The Samples – Return to Earth (Apache) featuring guest Boyd Tinsley, violinist for the Dave Matthews Band

Shaver – The Earth Rolls On (New West) new from Billy Joe Shaver

The Silos – Laser Beam Next Door (Checkered Past)

Paul Simon – The Paul Simon Special (Rhino) DVD and VHS video release of his 1978 music and comedy TV special that features a special appearance by Art Garfunkel

Spacehog – The Hogyssey (Artemis)

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Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band – Live in New York City (Columbia) two-LP vinyl format

David Steinhart – Clean (Stone Garden) third solo album from the founder of Smart Brown Handbag

The Tender Idols – Distressor (E-Magine) from Atlanta

Thursday – Full Collapse (Victory) Garden State hardcore

Greg Trooper – Straight Down Rain (Eminent)

Andy Votel – Styles of the Unexpected (XL/Beggars Banquet)