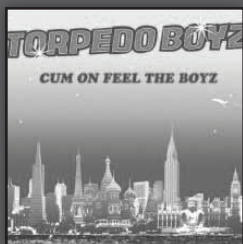


SOUND BITES



THE TORPEDO BOYZ *Cum On Feel The Boyz* SOUNDS FROM THE ROOF

Commendable stolidity would be required to listen to any of these funky fiesta tracks without breaking into cheesy smiles. The Torpedo Boyz are bringing back disco by melding its horns, organic bass lines and lightweight guitar, both electric and acoustic, with the more modern sounds of hip-hop's scratching and rhymes. For example, "Japaneeze Boyz," the lead track on their sophomore album, is a hilarious fusion of styles old and new, even involving a little square dance-style flow. "Cum On..." is also heavy on the Japanese rap, and who's not a sucker for Japanese rappers? It's something about the hard sounds in Japanese — every word sounds so gangsta.

Cum On Feel The Boyz is quite a departure from the Torpedo Boyz' 2006 debut, the charming and unfairly named *Headache Music* — a blend of simplistic and catchy drum and bass tracks, elementary multinational hip-hop, and an occasional kitsch pop song.

Though American fans have not heard much from the Boyz through popular music services, the guys have caught on in movie soundtracks and commercials, both here and abroad. They are easily embraced worldwide for their multicultural influences, with members from Cuba, Germany and Japan, and also for their universal emphasis on drums and silliness. DJs Kentastic and Rolling Hand and friends will continue to funk shop and invite the world along. Check 'em out.

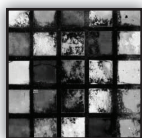
Bill Kelvin



DEL THE FUNKY HOMOSAPIEN *The 11th Hour* DEFINITIVE JUX

After eight years of laying low, Del The Funky Homosapien from the Bay Area group Hieroglyphics has released *The 11th Hour*. Del produced the album almost entirely by himself. He drops a few dope beats on this record, but nothing to the extent of eight years of preparation, though his wordplay is excellent in songs like "Bubble Pop," "Workin' It" and "Foot Down." Usually his tracks tell a story and they are more lyrically in-depth, but this is just a collaboration of him telling the world how great of an MC he is. And yes, Del is great, and has proven that for years, but *The 11th Hour* isn't anywhere near as quality as it could be.

Lynsie Cameron



MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO *Autoimmune* METROPOLIS

Meat Beat Manifesto's 10th album is a tasty 31 flavors of beat-based music. After the radio themed intro "International," "I Hold The Mic!" kicks a drum 'n' bass beat with Daddy Sandy toasting over it. A heaping helping of hip-hop bangs out on "Solid Waste" and "Young Cassius." While the latter features the more nimble rapping of Azeem, "Solid Waste" employs a more experimental sound and does more to expand the boundaries of the genre. Plus, there's scratching! (Why isn't there more scratching in mainstream rap nowadays, anyway?) "Children Of Earth" escalates slowly with a throbbing beat but "62 Dub" stays mellow with its dub beat, of course. Contrary, "Guns N' Lovers" is a chaotic big-beat beast. *Autoimmune* is excellent.

Connell "Whiskey Boy" McDaniel



FUCK BUTTONS *Street Horrsing* ATP

"Fuck Buttons" does not suggest anything near what you hear on *Street Horrsing*. What you get here is the sound of a buzzsaw ripping through your cranium like an electric toothbrush attempting to wipe your mind clean. But have faith, it's actually much better than it sounds. Andrew Hung and Benjamin John Power craft cute little pop songs with synths and samples, producing very primal rhythms. "Sweet Love For Planet Earth" is deathly near entrancing, while its follower, "Ribs Out," is creepier than most anything Liars or Animal Collective have ever done. The aural sensations hit a high point with "Okay, Let's Talk About Magic," releasing endorphins and serotonin by way of keyboard oscillations and heavily effected whisper-screams. Talk about music, you'll never know if this really is.

Paul Albert Harper



ROSEY *Luckiest Girl* QUANGO

With Norah Jones bringing jazz back to the mainstream, Rosey could be poised to make her own mark. She has the requisite physical beauty, and her honeyed voice is equally attractive. There is one person's voice hers is a dead ringer for, but placing the connection is difficult until remembering a woman whose voice the airwaves desperately miss: Fiona Apple. Rosey's debut jazz album, *Luckiest Girl*, is fairly solid, especially in terms of the musicians incorporated. One of the masterpieces on the album is "Now That You're Gone," a slow, deep number. The gentle violin, cymbals and piano evoke a smoky club, as one drowns sorrows in a glass of scotch, wondering how such a lucky dame could have guy troubles.

Bill Kelvin



ABLE BAKER FOX *Voices* SECOND NATURE

Former members of Small Brown Bike and Casket Lottery team up in Able Baker Fox to further develop their post-punk style. Utilizing three accomplished vocalists, the appropriately titled *Voices* favors aggressive vocals and anthemic choruses over the ever-popular whiny pop-punk singing style. With the exception of a sloppy guitar solo on "Faces On Fire," the musicianship is impressive. Overall, the flow of the album is enjoyable, transitioning from harder rocking tracks such as "What Doesn't Kill You" and "Twenty Centuries" to slower tempo songs like "Blind Writer" and "Brand New Moses." By consistently shifting the duties of vocals and guitar leads, ABF promises to deliver a performance both audibly and visually entertaining.

Nolan Ford



GLORYTELLERS *Glorytellers* SOUTHERN

Lead by singer/songwriter Geoff Farina, Glorytellers is mainly an acoustic effort presenting gentle vocals at various cadences. The music and lyrics communicate an endearing positivity that makes them instantly likable. Although it reads as primarily folk, *Glorytellers* boasts diverse guitar styles, shifting from jazz to those of Latin or Hawaiian influence. On "Awake at the Wheel" and "Exclusive Hurricanes," finger picked acoustic rhythms blend with Farina's sleepy vocals to guarantee a relaxing listening experience. The stream-of-consciousness lyrical style fits well with the vibe of the music and is exceptionally pleasant on "Pry." Enjoy this album at the beach, around the campfire, at your summer barbecue or anywhere with a group of close friends.

Nolan Ford



TRINA *Still Da Baddest* SLIP N SLIDE

Trina's new album is so far from her typical material that it almost requires a double-take to see what it's all about. "Single Again" mixes both her vocals as a rapper and a singer, and the tracks on *Still Da Baddest* follow in the same footsteps. Aside from the guest appearances on her tracks, which make them stand out individually, the melodies and beats tend to flow together throughout the album. It's definitely not as raunchy as what can be expected out of Trina, but it's still a good album. Listen to "I Got A Thing For You" featuring Keyshia Cole, "I Got A Bottle" and "Still Da Baddest" for further proof.

Lynsie Cameron



CRASH ROMEO *Gave Me The Clap* TRUSTKILL

Wasn't it popular a decade or two ago to sing about burning stuff down in high school? Crash Romeo seems to be five years behind new school pop-punk bands and 20 behind everyone else. Boring guitar riffs and progressions abound, drilling into your skull without ever letting down or giving you any room to breathe, and the snare belongs in an epic metal band. Trustkill really bit the bullet with this one. When the vocalist sings "I wanna see you rip my heart out and give it back to me" you really want to oblige. On the plus side, you know Crash Romeo's probably been shoved into a few lockers and given their fair share of swirlies.

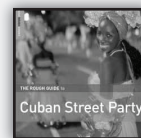
Paul Albert Harper



HELOISE & THE SAVOIR FAIRE *Trash, Rats and Microphones* SIMIAN

Springing from New York City, Heloise & The Savoir Faire is an enthusiastic electro-rock group that combines heavy dance beats with a punk personality. The group is fronted by Heloise Williams, who started off performing by singing over pre-recorded tracks, accompanied by two backup dancers. Since then, a full band has been added to the mix and they were recently signed by Elijah Wood's label, Simian Records. *Trash, Rats and Microphones* is a danceable album that would fit nicely on the shelf next to Peaches, Scissor Sisters and/or Lene Lovich. Boasting song titles such as "Disco Heaven" and "Givin U the Bizness" and sporting outfits only an '80s fetish could explain, Heloise & The Savoir Faire offer a potentially toxic mix of lust-infused tunes for electronica enthusiasts.

Janae Lloyd



V/A *The Rough Guide to Cuban Street Party* WORLD MUSIC NETWORK

The lyrics of *Cuban Street Party* highlight the connection between the body, the heart and the beat. A combination of the experienced and the *nuevo*, these men and women are both Cuban residents and US-based Cuban exiles. They speak and sing in Spanish about lips and smiles over full-bodied instrumentals built on a bevy of tools. Spanish guitar, various forms of natural percussion and the near-constant presence of brass all intertwine perfectly to lead one's elbows in tight, alternating parallel orbits. Cuba has always seemed a mysterious and dangerous land to this writer, but these intoxicating rhythms not only show the similarity of its people to ours, but also serve as a powerful tourism invitation.

Bill Kelvin