

Roots rescue hip-hop sound

BY PAUL GINDER AND ELLIOT NICHOLS
CONTRIBUTING REVIEWERS

1996. Hip hop is lost in darkness and fear. What once was boasting of violence begins to turn real. Not to fear. To the rescue come the Roots.

With their new album, *Illadelph Halflife*, the Roots continue to evolve and bring creativity and artistic inspiration to rap music. Unlike their previous effort, *Do You Want More?*, *Illadelph* is less experimental and more polished. Although this is their most palatable album, the Roots have maintained credibility by not selling out to mainstream influences, instead following their own path of evolution. With less emphasis on free jazz excursions, the trailblazing group has made an album that combines live instrumentation, classy production and the inimitable flow of M.C. Black Thought (a.k.a. Tarik Trotter) and Malik B flawlessly.

The first single, "Clones" is smooth and buttery. The B-side "Section" revolves around an ill, hectic beat, which is resolved at the chorus, only to slam you back into the lions' den. Tarik establishes that the Roots have come back to take the crown and he stakes a legitimate claim with his excellent wordplay.

On "Concerto of the Desperado" bassist Hub plays cello to add a moody, haunting feel to an original hip-hop track.

The most commercial cut on the album is an R&B-tinged number, "What They Do" featuring Raphael



The Roots *Illadelph Halflife*

Saadik. This groove is undeniably catchy and showcases rather than exploits the versatility of the band.

On "Push up Your Lighter," fellow Philadelphia native Bahamadia clocks in on a mellow, head-nodding groove to match lyrical wit with the Roots. And "One Shine" is a largely instrumental track which highlights the group's musical prowess.

The band's flirtation with vocal instrumentation is continued with the addition of new member Rahzel the Godfather of Noise who helps out on Malik's solo "No Great Pretender." Cut by cut, the album is solid, without filler tracks and hastily thrown together mixes.

If all that weren't enough, the al-

bum has additional guest appearances by Q-Tip, Common Sense and D'Angelo who adds "brown sugar" flavor to "The Hypnotic."

The Roots' new album is a breath of fresh air in the stagnant rap industry. For following their own musical journey, the band probably won't have MTV's most wanted jam, but for those willing to experiment with something a little farther away from the mainstream, this album will change all your preconceptions about hip-hop.

The album is a must have for all fans of rap and anyone who appreciates original, solid musicianship. By the way, the Roots are scheduled to play Friday at Duke University. They are phenomenal live; you should go.

Klezmer

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and eloquently soliloquizing like a single-reed Hamlet.

The very last number of the evening, the perennial *Roumania, Roumania* (which makes a poor claim for nostalgia's biased sense of logic: "Anything you want, you can get in Roumania") turns poignantly back to the magical boundary between speech and song, communication and expression.

A song of deep remembrance and love for an exile's home, it began in a festive mood with the joyous yelps of "Roumania" from Bressler and a fast dance with faster lyrics.

Yet as the song went on, the tempo increased and the words were sung at ever more extreme speeds until a

dervish-like intensity obliterated all sense in the lyrics, and Bressler became a mere channel for hoots and holler, yelps and grunts — the blithering of an exhilarated being supported by an aurally blinding typhoon.

I am sure that for her and the musicians, and perhaps some audience members, it was a humble kind of ecstasy, the kind yearned after by many of the folk musicians of the world, but particularly Jewish in its intensity.

For it was not the religious ecstasy of the dervish, nor the philosophical ecstasy of the raga, but the ecstasy of forgetting, of escaping for the briefest second from a condition of quiet, irremediable pain — of exile, of persecution, of historical homelessness — into the unnamable joy of non-meaning, of pure visceral expression.

In a culture in which the act of remembering is as vital as life itself, it remains a beautiful irony that this ecstasy of forgetting becomes itself remembered within the Jewish art of the Klezmer, as the music becomes memorial.

Pearl

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everyone to vote, and to "restore democracy to North Carolina" by voting Jesse Helms out of office. Pearl Jam then kicked off a second set with "Who You Are," the first single off of *No Code*, which showcased the talents of bassist Jeff Ament and drummer Jack Irons.

The band's second set provided even more highlights, as the band obviously had plenty of energy left to give.

The mellow Neil Young-ish "Immortality" was magnificently performed, and the older "Even Flow" again fueled the wild crowd.

Pearl Jam closed out the second set with "Daughter" and "Yellow Ledbetter," an unreleased fan favorite.

Opening bands The Fastbacks and Ben Harper presented the contrasting styles which influence Pearl Jam. The

Fastbacks, a punk band from Seattle, played hard and loud. Ben Harper and his band, the Innocent Criminals, played a rock set much like Jimi Hendrix.

Pearl Jam provided the audience with more than just a concert. The show was in many respects a political rally, with anti-Helms posters and brochures, speeches by Vedder and Steinem, and numerous places to register to vote.

Again, Pearl Jam proved to be a band worthy of respect in more aspects than one.

CALENDAR

To have your event listed, send mail to P.O. Box 7569,
e-mail arts@ogb.wfu.edu or fax us at 759-4561.

ON CAMPUS

Exhibits

William Hogarth Prints and Color Function Painting. Two concurrent exhibits. Hogarth was an 18th-century painter who satirized England. "Color Function Painting" displays artwork of three pioneers of optical art.

When: Now through Oct. 25.
Where: Gallery, Scales Fine Arts Center.
Cost and info: Free. Ext. 5585.

Movies

Arnold Schwarzenegger stars as an FBI agent who is supposed to erase the existence of co-star Vanessa Williams.
When: 7 p.m., 10 p.m. Fri. and Sat.; 7 p.m. Sun.
Where: Pugh Auditorium.
Cost: \$2.

Wings of Desire. German film that traces the experiences of two angels visiting post-war Berlin.
When: 8 p.m. Fri.
Where: Tribble A3
Cost: Free.

A dark comedy that traces the life of Robert Crumb, a cartoonist/artist.
When: 8 p.m. Sat.
Where: Tribble A3
Cost: Free

Rob Reiner stars as a filmmaker making a documentary of Spinal Tap. The result is a satiric look at the rock and roll industry.
When: 10 p.m. Sat.
Where: Tribble A3
Cost: Free

Music

Acoustic guitarist Mike Burris will perform selections from his first CD, *It's About Time*.
When: 6 p.m. Fri.

Where: Benson 401
Cost: Free

Marilyn Keiser. Guest organist Marilyn Keiser will perform works from the 1956 dedication ceremony of the Wait Chapel organ in honor of its 40th anniversary.
When: 8 p.m. Fri.
Where: Wait Chapel
Info: 759-5026

Tenor Richard Heard will perform in his first faculty recital and soprano Teresa Radomski and pianist Pamela Howland will also be featured.
When: 4 p.m. Sun.
Where: Brendle Recital Hall
Info: 759-5026

The Bel Canto Company is opening its season with the premiere of *Holy Canticles*, a new work by Dan Locklair.
When: 8 p.m. Oct. 18
Where: Brendle Recital Hall
Cost and info: \$10 for students. 373-2974

Theatre

Arthur Miller's controversial play about the Salem witch trials and McCarthyism.
When: 8 p.m. Thurs., Fri., and Sat.; 2 p.m. Sun.
Where: Mainstage Theatre
Cost and info: \$5 for students, 759-5788

ELSEWHERE

Clubs

This Week's Spotlight: Jackopierce. The national recording artists bring their grassroots sound to Ziggy's.
When: 10 p.m. Fri.
Where: Ziggy's
Info: 748-1064

Leo Kottke. Today: Leo Kottke. \$12. Fri.: Richard Thompson Band. \$20. Sat.: Nikki

MAJIC Benefit. Sun.: MAJIC Benefit. \$12. Tues.: Trout Band CD Release Party. Wed.: CJ Chenier.
Where: 300 E. Main St., Carrboro.
Info: (919) 967-9053.

Jessamine with Labradford. Sat.: Jessamine with Labradford. \$5. Mon.: Mayflies USA with The Rayburns. Wed.: York.
Where: 110 N. Columbia St., Chapel Hill.
Info: (919) 929-2828.

Brides of Jesus. Fri.: Brides of Jesus. Fri.: Jackopierce with Sherri Jackson. Sat.: Jason and the Scorchers. Tues.: Life in General. Wed.: Doug Clark and the Hot Nuts.
Where: 433 Baity Street.
Info: 748-1064.

Exhibits

A Thousand Years of Czech Culture. The collection of over 200 historic artifacts and works of art capture the history, politics, religion, and folk customs of the Czech Republic.
When: Through March 16, 1997
Where: The Gallery at Old Salem
Info: 721-7300

Music

The Jazz Quintet of Elon College will perform selections from Ellington, Rodgers and Har and Gershwin.
When: 8 p.m. Fri.
Where: Reynolda House, Reynolda Road.
Cost and info: \$5. 725-5325

Theatre

This play is a heroic comedy based loosely on the life of a historical figure of 17th century France. Part of the North Carolina Shakespeare Festival.
When: 8 p.m. today, Fri., and Sat.
Where: High Point Theatre, 220 E. Commerce Ave., High Point.
Cost and info: \$13 for students. 887-3001



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