



Poor Righteous Teachers

Losing My Religion

(Exit 7A Records)

By Thomas Gibson

There was a time you could count on the Poor Righteous Teachers to drop some funky grooves every other year. In the early '90s, the group cranked out cuts like "Nobody Move," "Shakilya" and "Rock Dis Funky Joint." But Father Time has not been kind to our favorite Moslem MCs—these days PRT sounds more self-righteous than ever. *Losing My Religion* was billed as a comeback, but ends up backfiring like an old Ford truck.

On the new track, "Nuttin New," the group takes a series of stabs at the lame choice of subjects rappers normally speak on, but it comes off as didactic and out of touch. Missing from this opus are the trademarks of other PRT efforts, like the Jamaican chanting of lead man Wise Intelligent, who is mysteriously restrained here.

Tracks like "Everytime" and "Dis Money" delve even further into the shortcomings of other contemporary rappers.

PRT has always been a spiritual lot, rapping out diatribes that struck serious chords back at the time. Although the messages on *Losing My Religion* still need to be heard, it feels like PRT is preaching to the choir and not to a new generation of hip-hop listeners. •

For more on this band, go to steamtunnels.net and search for keywords "Poor Righteous Teachers."

The many faces that are Kool

Hip-Hop Schizoid Man

By Tony Green

The Analog Brothers

Pimp to Eat

(Nu Gruv Alliance)

Kool Keith

Matthew

(Threshold)

(scorepress.com)

Eccentricity comes with its own set of burdens. Hip-hop oddball Kool Keith has made a career of being, well, nuts. From the alien gynecologist Dr. Octagon, to project-dwelling cannibal Dr. Doom; Keith has

hyper produced timbres that populate much of hip-hop—Keith has expressed disdain for "that same old Trinity keyboard sound"). This album's tracks bubble and squeak with vintage Bernie Worrell-ish charm.

Elsewhere, like on "More Freaks," he unleashes his patented free associative prowess, referencing everything from old school NBA skywalker David Thompson to Marvel Comic's Ben Grimm.

On *Matthew*, Keith's brand of crazy isn't nearly as wide-ranging or as interesting. *Matthew* is at its most disappointing when Keith overindulges his habitual disdain for mainstream excess. On tracks like "F.U.M.F"



The so-named Analog Brothers (l to r): Keith Korg, Ice Oscillator, Rex Roland JX3P, Silver Synth and Mark Moog.

trotted out a dizzying array of personae, constructing skewed visions of everything from science fiction to hip-hop culture. Consequently he's burdened with the cross of expectations. Material that would, from another artist, be considered forward thinking and refreshingly offbeat, is considered a disappointment from Mr. Thornton. Two recent Keith-related releases—*Pimp to Eat* and *Matthew*—show that Keith's eccentricity extends to the quality of his own work.

Pimp to Eat is credited to the Analog Brothers, a crew of five that includes Ice-T (a.k.a. Ice Oscillator). The concept is a goof on the RZA's *Bobby Digital* (Keith appeared as "Robbie Analog" on the sleeve of the Doom release). It's also a subtle dig at the

and "Mad Man Departure," he unleashes stream-of-consciousness broadsides against "plastic people" and "jiggy perpetrators." The stripped down "I Don't Believe You" ("you say you mess with Lauryn Hill...I don't believe you/you say Shaq's your cousin...I don't believe you"), is funny merely because you don't know whether Keith conceived it with tongue-in-cheek. If he did, it's hilarious, but it's even funnier if he didn't. All in all, *Matthew* might not be Keith's best work. But for novice heads looking for something a little different, it is worth at least a couple of spins. •