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TONGUE IN GROOVE

IN CLUBLAND

Bigotry is marring the queer dance club scene in Portland— but it's a bias aimed at music, not patrons

by Rachel Eborá

Earlier this year, I had the unexpected displeasure of DJing at a dyke-owned club which mandated that DJs spin only "neutral music," by which they meant disco and techno (does this mean hip-hop, soul and rap are "biased" music?). For an all-around audiophile like myself, this type of music ignorance and bigotry cannot be tolerated. So listen up and listen carefully: There is more to club music than disco and techno—no

Donald Byrd, Noel Pointer, Ronnie Laws, Gene Harris, Horace Silver and several other jazz greats, the product is a fresh set of songs that carry contemporary flavor mingled with classic smoothness.

ROBI-ROB

Robi-Rob's Clubworld • Sony Music

This latest release comes from half of the C + C Music Factory: Robert Clivilles. A welcome relief after hearing the Macarena played all over the place so damn much, these Latin-inspired grooves mark Robi-Rob's first release since the unexpected death of the other C, David Cole, earlier this year. *Clubworld's* bilingual beats (some of the songs are sung in Clivilles' native tongue, Spanish) are made even better by big-name vocalists like Martha Wash and Ya Kid K adding their unmistakable voices on some of the tracks.

Definitely not much like the more popular C + C stuff played on the radio, Robi-Rob's mixed tracks are the product of a DJ whose reputation in the highly competitive New York underground club scene has steadily risen over several years. I especially liked the first track, "Boriqua Anthem '96 Remix," for its beautiful blend of Robi-Rob's rapping with a Latin flavor that underscores the Macarena's bland redundancy.

Music

wonder P-town's queer club music scene sucks. But, negativity aside, here's a buncha music that you'd be lucky to hear anywhere in the so-called "dance clubs," a mixture of old and new releases that range from acid jazz to house to dance hall music.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Jungle: The Sound of the Underground • Sony/Columbia

From that ever-evolving British music scene comes the sound of the jungle. Originating from a group of predominantly black and ragga-inspired DJs who inevitably fused the sounds of the then emerging techno scene with their own original mix of ragga beats. That fusion then evolved into what's better known as jungle: fast and frenzied beats mixed with slow ethereal ambient sounds that make for a unique combination indeed.

This compilation includes one of my favorite "sing along at the top of your lungs" versions of "Come Together." Though a mix of sounds that perhaps may be too strange for those whose ears are used to hearing a particular kind of dance music, jungle—like jazz—is the result of DJs' continuing experimentation with the tunes and influences of music styles from around the globe. Unlike sounds you'd hear in Tarzan's world, however, this sound doesn't go with lush green plants and trees—it's meant for those of us trapped in the concrete jungle of urban living.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Da Underground Sound: East Side, Vol. 1 • Priority

If you are down wit' da beats, you'll greatly appreciate groovin' to this CD. With rappin' hip-hoppin' funkstas like Wu-Tang Clan, Das Efx, A Tribe Called Quest, Gang Starr (a k a Guru), Slick Rick, Brand Nubian and KRS-One, to name but a few, you'll be wondering why the current popularity of hip-hopsters like The Fugees didn't happened sooner.

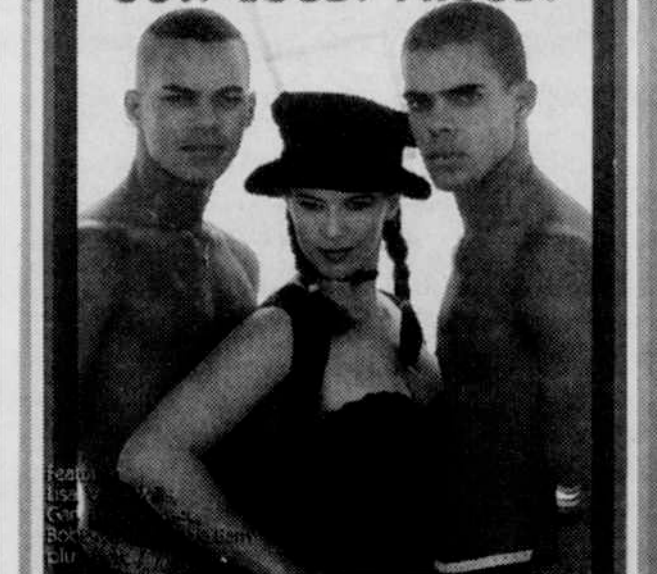
I've noticed that the rap and hip-hop style of delivery and mixing of beats are being appropriated by more and more alterna-bands like Cake and Soul Coughing. Oh well, at least they know how not to be neutral!

VARIOUS ARTISTS

The New Groove: The Blue Note Remix Project • Blue Note

Coming from Blue Note is another great compilation featuring great jazz tunes that provide more than toe-tapping music. Remixed tracks from

OUT! LOUD! PROUD!



Gay Classics, Vol. III

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Gay Classics, Vols. I-X • SoBe/Hot Productions

The arrival of this set of CDs was not a surprise to me. After all, we all know how much queers have been a part of the club scene. However, having neither the time nor the energy to listen to all 10 CDs in one sitting, I enlisted the help of a friend to determine if this set was any good. Lo and behold, my disco-delighting friend found most of the songs on each CD poor imitations of the original hits they were supposed to have embellished upon and therefore improved. The remix of the disco hit "I Will Survive" by Gloria Gaynor (the original is one of my friend's favorites) was bland and mediocre in comparison.

I can't honestly say, however, that there isn't a song worthy of a listen among 120-plus tracks. Eighties hits like "Stay with Me" by India, "Stormy Weather" by Viola Wills, an old-style remixed "West End Girls" by Pet Shop Boys, and a good lip-synching song like "All American Boy" by Barbara Pennington were tolerable. But a handful of OK songs among a bunch of CDs wouldn't be a good buy, would it?

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