

A Mighty Shout

Anais Mitchell plays folk and country-tinged rock songs. All the idioms of roots music – big Wild-West atmosphere, traditional song structure, creaky fiddle, mandolin and percussion evocative of Native American sound – are present and accounted for in her work.

But Mitchell writes country songs the way the Coen Brothers make Westerns. Underneath it all is an uneasiness, a thoroughly modern angst that puts Mitchell's sound squarely in the now. Her voice lives somewhere between Alison Krauss's soaring harmonies, Lucinda Williams' whiskey and cigarettes, and the ethereal woo-woo of Joanna Newsom.

The honesty and bluntness with which she sings "My mama gave a mighty shout/Opened her legs and let me out," on the title track of her latest release *Young Man in America*, would make Sheryl Crow at her most "working class" blush.

This is cinematic music conjuring blue-collar images of truck stops, big open landscapes and late nights at the bar. Sometimes the music drowns under the weight of its own folk-rock same-same-ness (we've all heard Gillian Welch by now), but other times it boldly and confidently genre-hops. "Venus" is a tight and breezy pop song, "Coming Down" is brutally simple and beautifully sad, and if you tell me you expected the dirge-like clarinet and horn break in "Young Man in America," I'll call you a liar.

Anais Mitchell plays 3:30 pm Sunday, April 1, at Skip's Records and CD World, free; and 8 pm Sunday, April 1, at Cozmic, \$8. – *William Kennedy*



TEN-HUT!

Dr. Dre and Ice Cube have both laid claim to "starting this gangsta shit" on different occasions over the years. Okay, so that's more or less true – at least on the West Coast – but Brooklyn-based **Boot Camp Clik** might just be the perfect Eastern counterpart to the cats in N.W.A.

The story begins in 1992 with the formation of Black Moon – the group that would release *Enta Da Stage* only a year later – and takes a winding journey of collaboration to the present day, where we find Boot Camp Clik thriving in the aftermath of two decades of success. "Enta" was greeted with critical acclaim in '93, and the record is still considered a milestone of inspiration for some of the East Coast's fully-burgeoned hardcore rap successes – think Wu Tang and Biggie, to name a couple.

After the assimilation of Black Moon and the duo Smif N Wessun between 1995 and 1997, Boot Camp Clik released its first, highly anticipated LP under the name and started moving out of the New York shadows into a brighter spotlight. I don't want to sell these ferocious emcees short, though; they stuck to their guns and kept it underground as fuck, releasing a greatest hits in 2000 that basically gave the finger to commercial success and spun like a play list of dingy New York unknowns.

With roots and values as deep as that, it's pretty easy to imagine the sound that will blast through the doors of WOW Hall on Tuesday. To put it lightly: tough-as-nails gangsta shit, the kind only a crew like this could have started.

Boot Camp Clik plays 9 pm Tuesday, April 3, at WOW Hall; \$15 adv., \$18 door. – *Andy Valentine*

Emancipation

George Clinton once sang "free your mind and your ass will follow." This sentiment permeates through the music of **Emancipator** – it's not just dance music, it's smart music you can dance to. More than shoving decibels down your ear canals, Emancipator utilizes a sophisticated sonic subterfuge as a method for production.

"Electronic music is a happy medium (for me) because it allows me to exercise both the creative musical side and the more math, detail-oriented side of my brain," says Douglas Appling, the man behind the sampler.

Appling, who began playing music as a four-year-old violinist, started producing electronic music in 2002, and played his first show in 2009, as an unknown opener for Bonobo. Influenced by hip hop and other beat-based music like DJ Shadow and Four Tet, Appling uses audio loops like Lincoln Logs, stacking them up and fitting them together. Amongst the glitches, horns and electronic blips, Appling also likes to record "longer instrumental jams, sample the best parts and begin to work horizontally, developing layers over time."

Although his release titles (*Soon It Will Be Cold Enough* and *Safe in the Steep Cliffs*) wax a brooding, self-sovereign nuance, the cleanliness of beat production integrated with live instrumentation yawps for unbridled inhibitions and getting down.

Emancipator plays 9 pm Thursday, March 29, at WOW Hall; \$15adv., \$18 door. – *Patrick Newson*



Legendary Therapy

First off, you don't know anyone who can rap as fast as him. Okay, maybe Twista or Tech N9ne, but that doesn't count because the type of content involved isn't even comparable. I'm not knocking good ol' fashioned thugged-out rap with undertones of homicide and grand larceny; there's a time and place for everything. But **Eliq** stands in a class of his own as a definitive West Coast underground hip-hop icon. A machine-gun rapper with depth and emotive thrust, this Living Legends staple can't stop, won't stop doing what he does best – blowing minds with a venerated authenticity as impressive as the tattoo tapestry covering most of his body.

Eliq is a technically refined emcee, a top-notch showman whose cadence and delivery seem to defy the laws of breath control. And for being such an unabashed lyricist capable of flinging poetry in spitfire fashion, seemingly forever, Eliq's live sets are always well-metered displays of his catalogue – and seriously, who knows how many songs that entails when you add up the mixtapes, recorded freestyle sessions and lost b-sides from this guy's 18 years in the game? Oh yeah, he's also a hell of a producer, dropping beats under the alias of "Gandalf." Don't believe it? Go check out one of his instrumental albums, like *Gandalf's Beat Machine Level 3*, and while you're at it, point and click your way into his brand new stuff on the *Therapy at 3* album he made with Bay Area producer **Amp Live**.

Though it's fair to say that listeners probably gain more from living with Eliq's music and soaking up the replay value of his recordings, his presence on the microphone is something every underground hip-hop head can appreciate and stand in awe of. There's a reason the Living Legends made such an international impact on the '90s hip-hop scene, and Eliq's work – plugged and unplugged, live or recorded – is a big part of that. This legend is real, go see for yourself.

Eliq and Amp Live play 9 pm Saturday, March 31, at WOW Hall; \$12 adv., \$15 door. – *Dante Zuñiga-West*

