

Focus

'Sir Mix-A-Lot' ends 7-Year Hiatus



"Sir Mix-A-Lot" Anthony Ray works on his new album in his studio in Auburn, Wash. (AP photo)

Grammy winning rapper releases new album

(AP)—The man who introduced big butts to pop culture is back.

Sir Mix-A-Lot, who earned a Grammy for 1992's "Baby Got Back" and then all but disappeared, returned Tuesday with a new album, "Daddy's Home."

The 39-year-old Seattle-born rapper left the recording industry in 1997 shortly after the killings of Tupac Shakur and Notorious B.I.G. "I walked away pretty disgusted

with the game," said Mix-A-Lot, whose real name is Anthony Ray. "It wasn't about music anymore. Everyone was talking about the same thing, shooting guns and being hard. The creativity was gone."

Rather than become another gangsta copycat, Mix-A-Lot simply stopped making records. He produced some artists and hooked up with a rock band, The Presidents of the United States of America, in a rap-rock collaboration called Subset. The group recorded 13 tracks, but never released any of them.

"They were burned out with the business just like I was," Mix-A-

Lot said. "We made some songs and went on tour. It was cool because it wasn't about putting out a record, it was just about the music."

Being out of the spotlight didn't bother Mix-A-Lot, but the itch to make records returned years later after hearing creativity coming back, in particular the sounds of the Black Eyed Peas, Ludacris and Missy Elliot.

"I didn't miss the industry, I missed the actual music," Mix-A-Lot said. "I missed working in the studio. I was still producing songs. But I missed doing a record, putting it out and seeing what it's going to do."

Mix-A-Lot is often branded a one-hit-wonder because he never recaptured the success of "Baby Got Back," which received the 1992 Grammy Award for Best Rap Solo Performance and has become a permanent fixture in pop culture, having been featured in the movie "Charlie's Angels" and the hit television series "Friends."

On "Daddy's Home," his sixth album, Mix-A-Lot set out to show critics and other rappers that his skills have improved during his absence.

"I upgraded my lyrical style big time," Mix-A-Lot said. "I got the chance to show I can flow, bounce, and ride with anybody."



'Man in Black' Remembered

Music legend Johnny Cash is shown in this scene from his video "Hurt." Also known as the "Man in Black," Cash's unsteady voice carried a burden of mourning and defiance that struck a nerve with young listeners raised on rap, punk and hard rock. Cash, 71, died Friday of respiratory failure caused by complications from diabetes.

'Three's Company' star John Ritter Dies

(AP)—John Ritter, a master of sitcom silliness who ruled TV comedy with "Three's Company" died of an undetected heart problem. He was 54.

Ritter became ill Thursday and underwent surgery at Providence St. Joseph Medical Center in Burbank for a tear in his aorta, a rare medical condition that can hit without warning.

He died shortly after 10 p.m. Thursday, publicist Lisa Kasteler said. He was accompanied by producers, coworkers, his wife and his 23-year-old



John Ritter

son, Jason, said Susan Wilcox, his assistant of 22 years.

The son of Tex Ritter, a Western film star and country musician, Ritter was an effortless funnyman who - given the chance - could handle drama as well. Friends recalled him as loving and buoyant.

"It's like there is a big tear in the world's heart," actor Henry Winkler told "Entertainment Tonight" on Friday. "He was extraordinary in every aspect of his life, especially as a father. His children were there at every moment of his life."

James Brown Returns to Famed Apollo



James Brown

(AP)—James Brown will return to Harlem in November to celebrate one of his greatest performances.

The 70-year-old Godfather of Soul will hold a press conference on Thursday, Sept. 18 in Manhattan to announce two concerts marking the 40th anniversary of his "Live at the Apollo" album, which chronicled his landmark performance at the famed Apollo Theatre.

The concerts will be held at the Apollo on Nov. 20 and 21. Special guest stars will be announced at the press event, Dan Forman, Brown's publicist, told The Associated Press on Thursday.

Afterward, Brown will give a free concert, Forman said.

Brown's "Live at the Apollo" album, released in 1963, contains classics such as "Please Please Please" and "Night Train."

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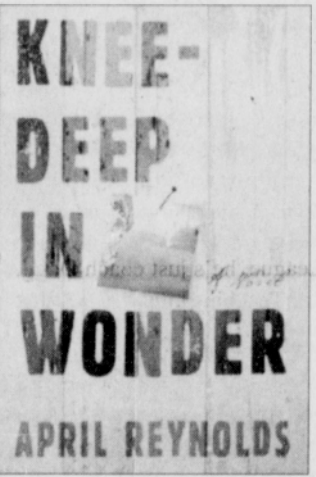
Novel tells a familiar familial tale

The buzz surrounding April Reynolds' first novel, "Knee-Deep in Wonder" is almost as thick as her plotline.

Reynolds was awarded the Zora Neale Hurston/Richard Wright Foundation award for work-in-progress and Oprah Winfrey's book club inquired about the book before she had finished it.

The novel depicts three generations of black women in the deep South, offering an unforgettable portrait of the South and its history and an unflinching exploration of family, memory, and longing.

While literarily ambitious and mature, Reynolds' story is deeply personal. The story draws deeply from Reynolds' father's background and search for his past after defying doctors' expectations following a stroke.



Take a Trip

Take a trip through time to find the hottest poetry, hip hop and soul influencing Portland Wednesdays at the Ohm. \$7 cover. 31 NW 1st Ave.

Kennedy School Coltrane Bash

McMenamins Kennedy School throws its fifth annual birthday bash and musical tribute to revolutionary jazzman John Coltrane from local musician Bryan Dickerson and friends. The birthday celebration is at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 18, 5736 NE 33rd Ave. For more information, call 503-249-3983.

Fairy Forest

Get a quick glimpse of fairy life, build fairy houses and sing and dance to fairy songs at a Fairies in the Forest party at the Hoyt Arboretum from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 5. Cost is \$10 per child, free for parents. For registration, call 503-823-3601.

Trees Have Friends

Friends of Trees hosts a CommuniTree festival from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 5 at 3117 NE MLK Blvd. The celebration includes fun tips for identifying trees, a nature escape garden tour, papermaking and other show-

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cases. For more information, call 503-282-8846.

Wild Party

Excite your child with a birthday party in the woods, meadow or near a pond, hosted by Portland Parks and Rees staff. Themes include forest fairies, Indian legends, Lewis and Clark exploration, animal tracking, camouflage critters and "what's in a waterdrop." Parties begin at \$100 for 10 children, including games, activities and favors. For more information, call 503-823-3601.

Heading Out

Bookies Sports Bar and Lounge offers entertainment Thursdays through Saturdays in October. Mutha Funk Jam plays Thursdays, DJ "T Luv" jams on Friday, Oct. 3, Black Notes performs Saturday, Oct. 4 and Ocean 503 performs Friday and Saturday, Oct. 10 and 11.

A Living Classic

The West End Players perform Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird" weekends from Oct. 19 through Nov. 2 at the West End Theater, 1220 SW Taylor St. Tickets are \$10. For more information, call 503-288-7465.

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