

**CD Review:****'Wake Up!' by The Roots and John Legend**

By Daniel Heyman  
Managing Editor

'Wake Up!' by The Roots and John Legend is a collection of R&B and funk cover songs, each one of them providing social and/or political commentary that is arguably just as relevant today as when the songs were written.

The song selection is rather impressive. The Roots and John Legend recall R&B greats like Marvin Gaye and Donny Hathaway, but they also include some lesser known names among today's average pop-music fan,

like Baby Huey and the Babysitters and Les McCann.

One interesting thing about the songs the group chose to cover is that each song either has been sampled, or is sample-able in hip-hop music. Real hip-hop fans won't have much trouble picking up on this correlation, for instance, The Roots and John Legend recorded a rendition of Donny Hathaway's 'Little Ghetto Boy' and of

course, this song has been heavily sampled in hip-hop music, probably most notably by Dr. Dre in 'Lil' Ghetto Boy' and the Wu-Tang Clan in 'Ghetto Boys.'

The CD as a whole is pretty hit or miss, in that, some of the tracks are real gems, and some of them just fall flat. The title track, 'Wake Up Everybody' (originally recorded by Harold Melvin and Teddy Pendergrass) comes across as cheesy, and the featured appearance by rapper Common is lackluster given his knack for thought provoking verses.

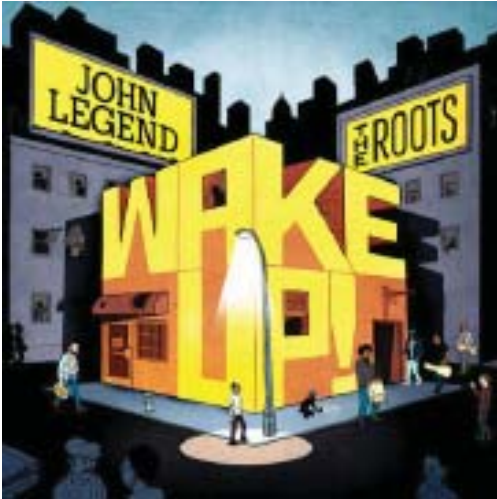
The cover of 'I Can't Write Left Handed' originally recorded R&B legend Bill Withers is an amazing journey of R&B and Rock infused guitar solos that really hits home with fans of artists like Martin Luther and Robert Randolph, but when compared to the original Withers masterpiece, it sounds like a third-grade band's attempt. The Roots and John Legend really took a hefty task upon them trying to cover some of these legendary tracks.

The CD doesn't fall short on every attempt however, for example the groups performance of 'Hard Times' by Baby Huey, I would even go so far as to say it the singing expertise John Legend brings to the table, and ?uestlove's unexplainable funkiness ala Clyde Stubblefield surpasses the Baby Huey original.

Rap fans, skip this album. Of course, if you would file yourself in this category, any record by The Roots or John Legend probably isn't your bag. The Roots have a history of employing the knowledge and expression aspect of hip-hop in their music, instead of treating it like a soup line.

Fans of a more traditional John Legend may find this record inaccessible too — save one or two tracks, the album takes a love for R&B pioneers like Nina Simone, and Percy Sledge to really truly appreciate it.

The social and political commentary is applicable today and overall, it's a solid album, but few will find it profound enough to warrant a listen all on its own and it's too funky to have a place in today's radio line-up.

**KEY LIME PIE**

from Chef Boy-ar-Dave

**Average Cost of Meal:** \$8-\$10

**Time of Preparation:** 10 minutes

**Cooking Time:** 9-12 minutes (until a toothpick comes out clean from the middle)

**Serving Size:** 6-10

**Ingredients:**

4 egg yolks  
2 cans of condensed milk  
2 graham cracker pie shells  
12-14 oz. of key lime juice

**Instructions:**

Preheat the oven to 350°. In a mixing bowl combine the 4 egg yolks and the 2 cans of condensed milk and key lime juice. Mix until thick and consistent in color throughout. Pour evenly into both pie shells. Bake in the oven for 9-12 minutes or until a toothpick comes out cleanly after insertion from the middle of the pie.

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