

# Band Profile: 24-7 SPYZ



By Zach Hanner

Hold on to your dreadlocks kids. The funkiest, hardest, dopest jam masters are back...and straight outta Cali.

24-7 Spyz, one of the premiere black rock and funk bands in the nation, has put together their sophomore effort, *Gumbo Millennium*, and it shows that they're more than a flash in a pan.

Often compared to crossover success Living Colour, this San Francisco-based group succeed in creating their own style and keeping it funky at the same time. Following the lead of Living Colour and Bad Brains, 24-7 Spyz proves that a black band can crack into the punk/funk genre previously dominated by white groups like Red Hot Chili Peppers and the new fan-faves, Faith No More.

The key idea to understanding and respecting this varying-from-the-norm style music is that art differs from person to person. Blacks advancing themselves in varying types of music should be encouraged, not denounced. And the Spyz have advanced into a top-notch musical band of the '90s.

Spyz debut, *Harder Than You*, on In-Effect Records, was well-received by critics and funk fans alike for its hard-driving bass and smokin' vocals by lead singer Peter Fluid. Their cover of Kool and the Gang's "Jungle Boogie" got some serious rotation on MTV in the summer of '89.

It's obvious that the band spent long hours in the studio making sure their new product was as clean and jammin' as their last. The first track, "John Canally's Theory," opens up with a classic

Black Sabbath groove laden with thick bass by bassist Rick Skatore. Skatore's muscle definitely pushes the band to much heavier horizons than the last album. Drummer Anthony Johnson works in perfect synchronicity with Skatore's pluck/thump style providing some def beats. Jimi Hazel holds things together with a solid guitar reminiscent of the late Hilel Slovak of Chili Peppers fame. Finally, Fluid's vocals paint a picture of how often the lives of the Spyz is spiced to its finest — 24-7.

Last Tuesday, the group opened for Jane's Addiction at Memorial Hall. The set was jumpin' the whole time the Spyz were on stage. Movin' the crowd like Eric B. & Rakim, the four masters of jam blasted out some of the best amplified work ever down in those old-style walls. It was a symbol of the new age invading

the new.

The Spyz don't play possum with their beliefs as is evident in lines like: "Niggers, crackers, 'Spics and Jews/ Words the Devil likes to use/ Hate is gonna slit your throat/ hold your ground don't be abused." Words like these get across their philosophy of racial harmony without demeaning their house rockin' party ideal.

While flexing on most tunes, they do some artistic range on tracks like "We'll Have Power" and "We Got A Date" adding another dimension to an otherwise thrashing style.

If you're already a Spyz fan and happened to miss the concert, don't worry. Around spring time, the group will be back around the area, so keep your ears and eyes open. In the meantime, remember: Spyz is dope.

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