

Worth the Cash Or Straight Trash?

the blacker, the better

Representing 919

"Diary of a Sinner: 1st Entry"

- Petey Pablo

By John Cleveland



Finally, somebody in the wide world of hip-hop is putting North Carolina on the map. The Greensville native, Petey Pablo, globalizes North Carolina's urban flavor by producing club-thumping beats flourished with his unique personal, saliva-slinging lyrics. His rough tone and country dialect properly insert North Carolina into the off the record collaboration of states representing the Dirty South.

This album is full of Carolina defining, club jamming, head-nodding rhythms, and anyone who has been clubbing lately would know that Pab's latest most intriguing club jam is titled, "919 M**** F****." His tendency of yelling "m**** f****" after stating the elite 919 area code, is damn near contagious as it gets in your head and becomes impossible not to reiterate the profane word over and over. As a matter of fact Petey repeats the blasphemous word multiple times on every track.

Although the majority of the album is comprised of club jams, Pab does reveal a little bit of calmness with a couple of mellow jams that are decorated with a lyrical biography of his life. He makes an unsuccessful attempt to voice his poetic side by talking to his audience, a strategy only conquered by Ja Rule and DMX through prayers. Clearly this is a tactic that isn't made out for the innovative artist to utilize. Nevertheless, his track titled, "Didn't I," which resembles a remake of Juvenile's ground breaking single, "Ha," is off the chain.

So, don't be a little b**** by downloading the CD. Represent like a true Carolinian and buy the CD "m**** f****." As the illustrious Petey Pablo might state it, buy it at warehouse for only \$16.99 "m**** f****," or even \$13.99, "m**** f****," at amazon.com.

Whatever Hater

"Invincible" - Michael Jackson

By Joy Mcneil



No one ever thought it was possible. He went on a long hiatus, raised two children and only popped up to make an occasional statement to the press. All the while, he was perfecting an album unlike all the others in his lifetime. That man is Michael Jackson.

Out of nowhere, you turn on the radio and television, and there he is with a modern and hard-hitting sound that can make even the most hardcore hip-hop heads give respect. But is Michael Jackson truly invincible?

"Invincible" is Michael Jackson's first studio album in six long years. Like all his other albums, "Invincible" is setting standards in the world of music. As executive producer of the album, Michael proves that he can continue producing hits. With "Invincible," Jackson confirms that he can work with the hottest producers out there, Rodney Jerkins and Teddy Riley, and experiment with the hottest beats in the industry to produce an ultra-modern, ultra-smooth, ultra-cool album.

The first track on "Invincible" sets the standard for the album. "Unbreakable" sounds like a newer, fresher Michael with lots of attitude, grunts and a message that can't be confused: "Whatever, hater!" In "Unbreakable" Michael sings "don't you ever make no mistake/Baby I've got what it takes/And there's no way you'll ever get to me/Why can't you see that you'll never hurt me/'Cause I won't let it be, see I'm too much for you baby." From "Unbreakable" you can see that the album is dedicated to all the haters out there that thought it was over.

The second track, "Heartbreaker," keeps in line with the same idea. Michael decides in the track that he will play as he has been played. The hip-hop edge to the track, engineered by Rodney Jerkins, hits home

that Michael isn't just singing about bubble gum love or lust. He sings "but I hope in time that she will finally realize/I'm onto her game and she'll get played the same."

His first single from the album "You Rock My World" is vintage Michael with an ultra-cool, modern beat and a joy in his voice that we haven't heard in a long time. He isn't afraid to express his real feelings about the woman he wants.

From fast to slow, Michael Jackson is in rare form. His slow songs on "Invincible" form the core of the album. The hottest track on the entire album is "Butterflies," a slow-to-mid tempo track. It makes you want to call up that love interest and chill. You can bob your head, dance, or just vibe to "Butterflies." On this track, Michael hits both ends of his range, the extremely highs and lows, which ironically mirrors the highs and lows of crushes and relationships. "Butterflies" is like butter; it melts in your mouths, or perhaps just in your ears. And, "Break of Dawn," another slow jam on the album just talks about making love. Michael sings "I don't want the sun to shine I wanna make love/Just this magic in your eyes and in my heart/I don't know what I'm gonna do I can't stop lovin' you/ I won't stop 'til break of dawn makin' love." Yes, this is the new improved, invincible Michael.

There are other songs, 16 in all, which host Michael Jackson in the rarest, most priceless of forms. He really has reached his prime in the music world. Does this mean he is invincible? Of course. Michael Jackson cements his staying power every day.

So if you're looking for an invincible Michael Jackson with a hard-knocking album, then look no further. "Invincible" is one of the best albums of 2001.

Keepin' It Real

"Mahogany Soul" - Angie Stone

By Gahmya Drummond-Bey



How many of us have been through a relationship that ended before we felt it was time? Better yet, how many of us, females, have wished that we didn't miss [that man] anymore? The same man who we were tired of giving chances to and hearing say, "I'm gonna change."

The understanding that Angie Stone possesses of men is no doubt apparent in her new album "Mahogany Soul" as she belts out ballets in her husky, yet soulful