

For the Record

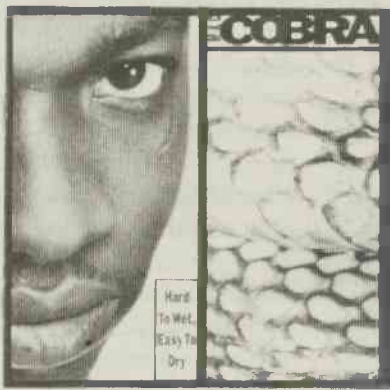
Ice Cube's crew Da Lench Mob scores big; Mad Cobra, Brand New Heavies hold their own

TJ Stancil
Music Editor

I must say, September was not a bright spot in the 1992 music scene. Nothing has really come out and taken over yet on the charts, so I'm just sitting back and biding my time. (Heavy D, Special Ed, Anita Baker, Janet Jackson, anybody, where are you?) Well we don't have to wait much longer on Grand Puba Maxwell. Advanced reviews say that his solo album *Reel to Reel* is, at the least, decent, but I haven't got the word yet on The Brand Nubian album (minus Puba and DJ Alamo). As I cruised local record stores this week I did spot new albums by Da Lench Mob (Ice Cube's crew), Diamond D. and The Psychotic Neurotics, and Al B. Sure!, among others. Public Enemy has released their "Greatest Misses" as they call them, which in fact are new remixes of PE classics along with 6 new tracks. As I mentioned last week, ya'll don't sleep on reggae, but I didn't mention all these new Black Rockers. If that isn't your style and you cannot see yourself changing, that's fine. But for those who like to see how the other half lives, or just want to dabble in other types of music, check out Hard Corps, Follow for Now, 24-7-Spyz, or Basehead. I see three trends developing now in Hip Hop: 1) Rap vocalists leaving their groups just like mainstream, 2) The emergence of other races in the rap game, and 3) The shying of rappers to sampling and scratching and the emergence of original rap scores with the utilization of live instruments. Watch the development of these three issues in the future. As visualized in Quincy Jones' new *Vibe* magazine, (check it out!) Hip Hop is in the forefront of modern music and is threatening to encompass all music markets. The reason is that Hip Hop draws from a variety of sources and constantly regenerates itself through sampling and a never static style. I mention this because unlike other forms of music Hip Hop is no longer just music as much as it is an art form and way of thinking, acting and dressing. Hip Hop is the music of the 1990's and beyond, which puzzles me as to why it is not accepted by radio as a whole. Well, enough of that. As

always, here are this week's reviews. Peace, or if you prefer, UMGAWA, BLACK POWER! "The Music Man", 348 Morrison. (What's up, Karena!)

Mad Cobra



Hard to Wet, Easy to Dry
Columbia Records
Reviewed by TJ Stancil

Mad Cobra is one of the hardest of the hardcore Dancehall "DJ's". In *Hard to Wet, Easy to Dry*, Cobra introduces America to his rough and rugged style, as well as his sensual side. Many of you may not have heard of Mad Cobra, but perhaps have heard "Flex," which is his bass-filled dancehall ode to sex. Cobra holds a striking resemblance to Geto Boy Scarface, which perhaps is why I wasn't surprised when they appeared on "Dead End Street," one of the album's better tracks.

This album was partially produced by Sly Dunbar (of Sly and Robbie) and reggae gurus Clifton Dillon and Tony Kelly. Dillon and Kelly were instrumental in the American debut of Super Cat (which of course, was a hit), which bodes well for Mad Cobra. Mad Cobra's similarity to Super Cat ends there, since he has a different vocal style and is more Hip Hop oriented than the Cat. I will say that Columbia Records, who have been aggressively recruiting dancehall stars, did not repeat their Super Cat error by not releasing Mad Cobra's album with better remixes on the market. If, like Super Cat they decide to remix some of his tracks, the fifteen tracks on the album are of sufficient listening pleasure.

I was really impressed with Mad Cobra part the most part, since though his vocals didn't vary, the background did. You have the big hit like "Flex", and the potential hits like "Dead End Street", "Legacy," and "Run Him," but you don't have a drop off after those tracks. The album is well-rounded, with no listening "gaps".

Hard to Wet, Easy to Dry gets a B, because even though the tracks are good Mad Cobra leaves me wanting more. Cobra is a true talent yes, but not a Super Cat or Tiger. Other tracks of mention: "Wet Dream" (self-explanatory), "Minute to Pray," "Glue". I think this is a significant buy for the dancehall fan, and a possible crossover favorite for the Hip Hopper. B

Brand New Heavies

Heavy Rhythm Experience Vol. 1
Atlantic Records
Tameka Green

Brand New Heavies is known for its jazzy 70's sound in such songs as "Dream Come True," "Never Stop", and "Stay This Way." This 70's sound is combined with some of rap's most famous artists such as Main Source, Gangstarr, Grand Puba, Ed O. G., Black Sheep, Kool G. Rap and features Jamalski, Tiger, Master Ace and a new rap group, Pharcyde into an album entitled *Heavy Rhythm Experience volume 1*.

Throughout the entire album, BNH's phat beats is mastered by each artists' lyrics. Each artist is confronted with the fact that this is not the traditional rap album. These are live instruments and there isn't a lot of sampling in any of the

songs. But each artists' usual rapping style is evident in each song. From Grand Puba's laid back rapping and his use of sampling to Jamalski's reggae sound, BNH tried to make each artist's style as consistent as possible.

Not everyone will like this album because you would had to have liked BNH before this rap album. If you're looking for a versatile album without the heavy rap sound, BNH is what you're looking for. B+

Da Lench Mob

Guerillas In Tha Mist
Reviewed By Scott Johnson

Ice Cube's back up crew, composed of J.D., T-Bone, and Shorty, decide to take it to the mike on their debut album *Guerillas in tha Mist*. Although Cube produces and raps on a lot of the tracks, Da Lench Mob has plenty of skills which are illustrated both lyrically and musically on one of the better albums which have come out this year. It is hard to believe that three brothers with so much talent could remain back up to Ice Cube for so many years. Da Lench Mob has a variety of different styles, with message filled lyrics, and a number of well known samples. Most of the lyrics either have to do with the superiority of the black male and female, or killing the white man and this is due to

the fact that the members of Da Lench Mob are in the Nation of Islam. In "Buck tha Devil," the second and one of the best songs on the album, this is evident

when J.D., says "As Salaam Alaikum/Shake him and whitey can't fake him/And if he tries F.O.I. will break him." In "You and Your Heroes," J.D., and Shorty continue to flow with lyrics which make fun

of white entertainers and athletes, like Babe Ruth, Rock Hudson, Madonna and of course Elvis. Musically, T-Bone mixes in a number of styles and samples like on the title track, "Guerillas in tha Mist." Other notable tracks on the album include "Ain't Got No Class," fea-



turing B-Real from Cypress Hill, "Lost in tha System," and "Inside tha Head of a Blackman."

This debut album is definitely one you should have in your collection. If you are a big Ice Cube fan, don't look for him to take control because he leaves the show up to Da Lench Mob; however, he does produce the whole album and raps in about half of the songs. Look for Da Lench Mob to take off in the rest of '92. A-

