

For the Record

'Fugees Won't be Refugees for Long'

Editor's Note: The following albums are reviewed by Eric Polhill.

Thought Ya Knew

CeCe Peniston
A&M Records

How many times have you been disappointed by a great new

on this album from gospel ("I Will Be Received") to house/dance ("Hit By Love") to slow jams ("If You Love Me, I Will Love You").

CeCe's first single "I'm In the Mood" is currently climbing the charts and I would check "Searching" and the Brian McKnight produced "Forever In

Roxbury 02119

Ed O. G and Da Bulldogs
Mercury Records

A few years back, these kids blew up with "I Got To Have It." Since then, they have fallen into the abyss of "one hit wonder" obscurity. Yes, they did have other releases off their debut album, but none were hits by any stretch of the imagination.

Ed O.G is back with the same basic format but with quality production on this go around. With Diamond on the mixing board its hard to go wrong. Musically this album is great, but unfortunately this is a rap album. I'm not saying Ed can't rap, I'm just saying he doesn't leave a lasting impression on my ears lyrically. But, coupled with carefully constructed tracks, Ed can work wonders.

The first single, "Skinny Dip (Got It Goin' On)" was a wise choice for the first release. This cut truly showcases how the right instrumentation can make all the difference in the world. The deep resonating bass and jazzy horn snippets combined with Ed's bragging and boasting makes for a very ear-friendly composition.

02119 should do OK because most people don't listen to lyrics anyway.

For those who are into the hip-hop jazzy sound (Giant Steppers know what I mean) this album is definitely worth checking out. It's not as innovative as Diggable Planets, but it doesn't struggle to be Jazzy

everything from straight hip-hop to acoustic guitars.

While other artists in the past have been just as diverse, the Fugees seem quite comfortable with each format they choose. So now you ask, what about the lyrics?

Well, all of the Fugees show they have skills on the mic but the



artist's sophomore effort?

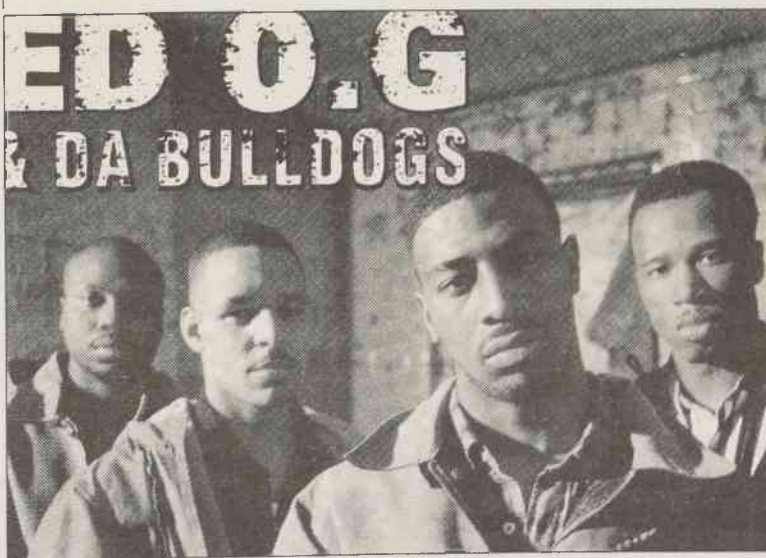
Too many times I'm sure. Well then, count how many times you were overjoyed to find that the artists outdid themselves the second time around and add CeCe Peniston to the list.

CeCe Peniston's second album, *Thought Ya Knew*, takes her to the next level. This is the type of album where you listen to each cut and say, "oh, this is my song" about fourteen times.

Thought Ya Knew is packed with possible #1 hits. But beyond that, what makes this album stand out is its diversity. I see songs topping the R&B chart, the adult contemporary chart and the dance charts.

The use of many producers ranging from Sir Jinx of Ice Cube's Lench Mob fame to Steve "Silk" Hurley of Crystal Waters fame (Crystal Who?) was a wise choice and also an effective one. CeCe gives a bit of everything

My Heart" as future hits for Ms. Peniston. If you liked "Finally"



you should have bought *Thought Ya Knew* yesterday. What? You weren't sure if CeCe could do it again? I thought ya knew!

Rating: A

Ed O.G and Da Bulldogs will never be known for any innovative styles or mind boggling concepts, but they do possess enough skills to rise above the average rapper. Even with so many technicalities *Roxbury*

like Us3, but that's another story.
Rating: B-/C+

Blunted on Reality

Fugees (Tranzlator Crew)
Ruffhouse/Columbia Records

The Fugees (as in refugees) are a little different from the average hip-hop crew. They're not hardrock gangstas, but definitely not mainstream pop rap. These kids are on a more grassroots vibe. The Fugees consist of two proud Haitians and a "yankee girl" from South Orange, New Jersey. The Caribbean influence on this album is very strong but not overpowering. The Fugees are careful not to get caught up in the very popular reggae chatting over hip-hop beats that has flooded the industry over the past few years. Musically, *Blunted on Reality* has a very diverse range. The Tranzlator Crew hits you with

big surprise is the content of the lyrics. Topics range from religion to the situation in Haiti to selling out in the hip-hop game. Being that there are a wide variety of sounds and styles, everyone will undoubtedly have their own personal favorites on the album.

I would suggest "Some Seek Stardom," which samples Aretha Franklin's "Bridge Over Troubled Water," for definite satisfaction. This track gives a smooth, almost jazzy, feeling complete with church style, well black church style organs, and a very deep baseline.

Add the conscious lyrics and a little butter from "yankee girl" Lauryn Hill and you have one dope cut. "Boof Baf", the first single and "Refugees on the Mic" are also noteworthy, showcasing the lyrical attack of Fugees members Wyclef and Prakazrel.