

## Arts & Entertainment

### BRANDY: FULL MOON

Clayton Mercer  
Arts & Entertainment Editor  
Cnice40@collegeclub.com

In the four years since her last album, *Never Say Never*, was released, Brandy has been a busy woman. From her own television show and a stint in Hollywood to getting married and becoming a soon-to-be mother. Brandy has grown from a young lady to a full-fledged woman right before our eyes. Her maturation is easily noticeable, and it shows throughout her latest album *Full Moon*.

Brandy uses productions from Rodney "Darkchild" Jenkins to perfection, writing and producing nine songs on the 17-track album. The song *I Thought* is similar to previous work done by the duo. *What About Us*, the lead-single from the album, has Brandy using a deep voice that meshes well with Jenkins' production. *Full Moon* helps to showcase Brandy's vocal talents and a new style. *I Thought* has Brandy speaking on a love that was never really there.

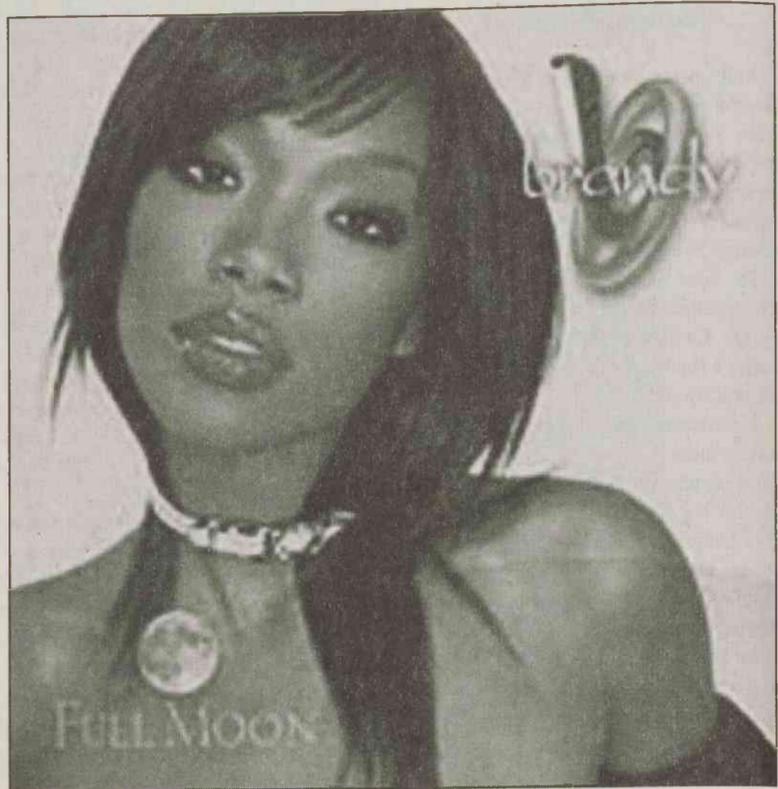
The beauty of the album comes with the ballads. The gem of the album, *When You Touch Me*, will probably shock first-time listeners who are expecting the braid-wearing, good-girl Brandy of the past. The song, reminiscent of previous Janet Jackson

work, has Brandy pleading with her man to love her the right way. *Like This* has Brandy taking control of the lovemaking: "If you wanna celebrate me/ And if you wanna keep me pleased/ This is how my love has got to be."

Sadly, Brandy strays away from her high self-esteem and sings songs that portrays her in a state of disorder. She asks her lover not to abandon her on *It's Not Worth It* (which also includes additional vocals by Michael Jackson!). She hopes he will change on *Anybody*, fears she will be dumped on *Come a Little Closer* and weakly concludes: "I am nothing without you" on *Nothing*.

*Full Moon* is Brandy's best work to date. Although the album brings nothing revolutionary to the table, it is nothing like her previous work, with the exception of the production. Brandy also co-wrote four songs on the album, which was mostly written by the "Darkchild" production crew. People who are used to *Moesha* may cringe when they listen to this album, but this is Brandy-The Woman.

C-Nice's Rating: \*\*\*1/2



BRANDY

-Photo courtesy of [www.epinions.com/musc\\_mu-444044](http://www.epinions.com/musc_mu-444044)

### R. KELLY & JAY-Z: THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Clayton Mercer  
Arts & Entertainment Editor  
Cnice40@collegeclub.com

When the announcement was made on January 24, 2001 in New York that Jay-Z and R. Kelly would record an album together, eyebrows raised in anticipation. Hip-hop and R&B collaborations are nothing new, but never before have such superstars united for an album. Collectively, they have sold more than 30 million albums and have 10 platinum awards. The demand for the album was so outrageous that numerous songs from the album 'leaked' to the public weeks before the release date. Amid the bootlegging and R. Kelly's alleged sexual misconduct, *The Best of Both Worlds* was finally released on March 19, moved up from the originally planned March 26 release date.

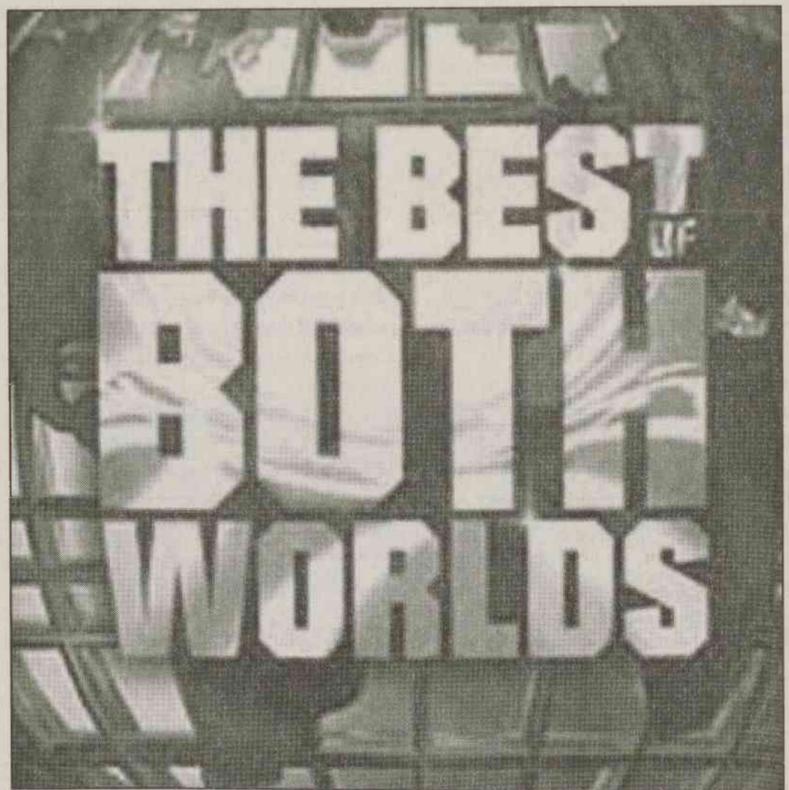
The album kicks off with the title song introducing everyone to the album. As R. Kelly sings the hook, Jay-Z makes sure that everyone understands that this is an extraordinary event: "The combination of Perry Mason and Larry Davis/ Martin and Malcolm/ This is bigger than the album R." Surprisingly, Jay-Z makes only one reference to his on-going lyrical battle with Nas, saying: "We mastered this/ don't you know I eat Ether and breath acid?" In *Take You Home With Me* (a.k.a. *Body*), Kelly re-works an old lyric from Jay-Z's *Ain't No N\*\*\*a* and puts a 2002 spin on it.

The album comes to a serious point on *It Ain't Personal* as Jay-Z and R. Kelly talk

about friendships that changed when success came. *The Streets* add a little inspirational flavor to the album, as Jay-Z and R. Kelly send a message about the trials and tribulations that shortcutting can cause. R. Kelly goes solo with *Naked*, a typical Kelly-style slow song and the only solo selection on the album. Other crowd-pleasers include *Somebody's Girl*, *Honey*, and *Get This Money*. Spanish-style guitars, overpowering drum beats and, of course, the often-mesmerizing interplay between Jay and Kelly are present throughout the album.

The album, which was predominantly produced by Trackmasters, includes guest appearances from Beanie Sigel (*Green Light*) and Lil' Kim (*Shake Ya Body*). The latter seeming unneeded as the "Queen B" classifies herself as the best female in hip-hop: "They picked the best of all girls/ So how ya'll sound? / I got the best of both worlds/ Holdin' me down."

This is a must-have album for all hip-hop enthusiasts. It is truly the first time two artists of this caliber have collaborated to produce an entire album. The downfall may come from the negativity of the bootlegging of the album and the R. Kelly sex misconduct that overshadowed the project. Obviously, Kelly and Jigga are capable of producing a better album than this release. This album only heightens the anticipation for their respective solo projects scheduled to release in November. Regardless, *The Best of Both Worlds* is a pleasing, 13-track effort by R. Kelly and Jay-Z.

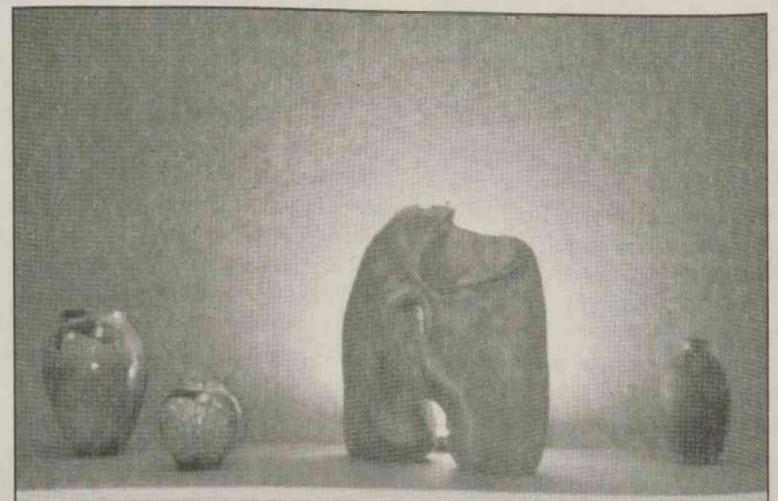
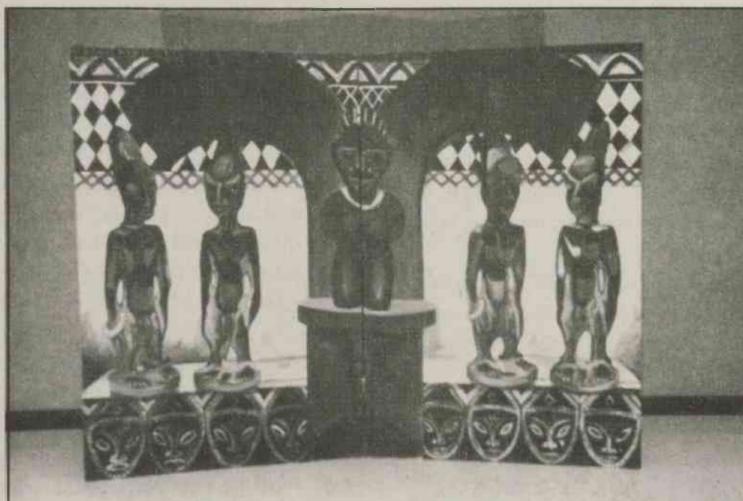


R. Kelly

-Photo courtesy of [www.epinions.com/musc\\_mu-444044](http://www.epinions.com/musc_mu-444044)

C-Nice's Rating: \*\*\*\*

### WORKS OF ART DISPLAYED BY PORTSMOUTH POTTER



Works by Robert Davis of Portsmouth, VA

-Photos by Rich Harvey