

FEATURES

Campus Happenings: Department of English, Foreign Languages' Speech Contest



Speech Contest Winners (left to right) : Darryl Hardy, 3rd Place; Angela Seabrooke, 2nd Place; and Jerald Hurdle, 1st Place.



Other speech contest contestants included: Vincent Woody, Jason Muhammed, Shauttaun Hinton and Gwennette Simon

The Roots At Ziggy's: A Review

BY VINCE WOODY
Staff Writer

What does the traditional hip hop concert usually contain?

It consists of a DJ, a turntable, and a between two MC's and nowadays played out sex and crime subject matter.

What does a Roots hip hop concert consist of?

It consists of sound effects, old and new school beats played live rather than sampled, a human orchestra, drum, bass, and keyboard solos as well as new twists on hits from their past and present album.

Let's face it, you go to the concert to get something different than you find on tape and the Roots gave that to you. Fans get tired of hip hop shows that give the crowd uninspired lyrics and far less than commercial beats.

The Roots recently performed at Ziggy's, a local club here in Winston-Salem. An alternative/heavy metal band, The Urge, played before Roots. The Urge were nothing more than an excuse to make noise. Most of the black people in the audience became frustrated at all the loud racket and began to scream for the Roots to come on and for The Urge to get off. Slam dancing and loud guitars have never been our style.

Once The Roots entered the stage the crowd was ready for some good music. They began their performance with a whole new variation on their album's beginning track, Respond/React. From this

moment I knew that The Roots were on the next level of hip hop. Not only did they play their own beats but they changed the whole set up of the songs. It was almost as if The Roots did their own personal remixes of almost every song for the audience.

One of the major standouts was Razhel the Godfather of Noise, this man can do anything with his mouth that a band can do with instruments. Many of the things that you need a guitar player or saxophone player to do Razhel did with his mouth and it sounded authentic. May be this is why the Roots didn't have a turntable because Razhel and his mouth were sound effects and scratches enough. Razhel even beat boxed and sung at the same time, something I've never seen in any hip hop show or ever.

Songs such as "Distortion to Static," "Proceed," "Concerto of a Desperado," "What they do," and "Clones" were spiced up by new and original underlying beats that gave you a different feeling from when you heard it the first time.

The Roots gave all the non believers a hip hop history lesson by playing old school hits by Schooly D, Big Daddy Kane, Rakim, and the Audio Two on live instruments assisted by Razhel the Godfather of Noise on beat box.

It amazed me how Black Thought (the head MC of the Roots) could change his voice to that of the MC's I just mentioned and not only the old school artists but

new school artists like Method Man, De La Soul, and Tribe Called Quest to name a few. I believe it shocked the Roots that heads in Winston Salem kept up with hip hop so well.

Bass and drum solos by Question Love (drums) and Hubbard (bass), may have left something to be desired in Hubbard's case. Brother Question represented to the fullest on what little drums he had and "the audience was feeling it."

However, Hubbard took it a little to far on the bass for me. Somewhere in his guitar solo he lost his rhythm and got on some Jimmy Hendrix type of flavor. They say ridicule is the burden of genius; well in Jimmy Hendrix's case it was, but in the case of Hubbard's bass playing it wasn't because there wasn't any beauty in his being so unorthodox.

All and all, with the exception of certain parts of Hubbard's bass playing, I would say the Roots have the best hip hop on the market. If you ever hear of them coming to a town near you it would be to your best advantage to go and see them. It'll be well worth it.