

Lucien: latest shows his love of nature



Lucien

On a sedate Monday morning, I call up Jon Lucien, the maestro of quiet storm music, at his home in Puerto Rico. A native of nearby St. Croix in the Virgin Islands, his voice is as cool and laid back as his mellifluous songs. Hearing the roaring ocean in the background makes it understandable where he gets his inspiration to write such soothing, natural sounding melodies. It's as if he's at one with nature. So much so, he jokes that to capture his real essence I should hop on a plane, drop my feet in the blue Atlantic and conduct the interview in person.

Lucien's current release, titled *Mother Nature's Son*, exemplifies his love for nature and music. On this Top 10 Contemporary Jazz charter, Lucien intertwines the two and creates some of the coolest sounding jazz, Brazilian and R&B melodies on the scene today. "Making this album was a very spiritual experience for me," Lucien says. "It's like no matter what your flavor is, I've got something for you."

Something for you he has, from the r&b/pop balladry of "Special Part Of Me" (a favorite on quiet storm radio formats nationwide) to the jazzy, seductive sounds of "How About You" and "But Beautiful," both of which feature string and horn arrangements that add an incomparable seasoning to Lucien's voice.

"I always loved working with strings and horns," he says, "but at a certain point it was no longer in vogue to do that. Fortunately music is going back to being real so I decided to return to where I started on these two songs because it's a part of me I've ignored for too long now."

Lucien's music is globally accepted and transcends cultures because, as he puts it, "it makes you feel, it makes you react." With songs like "Luna Mi Luna," his first ever sung in Spanish, Lucien further broadens his ethnic horizons. Why the song in Spanish? "I'm at home there too," he says. "It's not like I'm treading on unfamiliar territory. My roots span from New Orleans to the Carribean, African to Spanish. My music represents all people of color. It fits everywhere! It is black music."

Staying in touch with his roots is something that Lucien speaks a lot about. In fact, it's his fierce ethnic pride that makes him feel African Americans are being shortchanged culturally. "Don't get me wrong" he says, "I love hip-hop and funk, but people should not be fed just one kind of diet. Music is a rainbow."

A creator of music that pulsates with rhythm, passion and romance, Lucien says, "who I feel that I am, I express totally in the music. I dream these sounds. This is how I speak."

Lucien is truly an artist, as his musical talents range from writing to playing several instruments (electric and acoustic bass, guitar, piano and various percussions). Beginning his musical journey as a seven-year-old, he has recorded with such artists as Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Dianne Reeves, Phyllis Hyman, Tania Maria and Dave Grusin.

Lucien, being a very spiritual person, says, "my talents are a gift from the Lord. 'Mother Nature's Son,' for example, was born out of a spiritual awakening of sorts. I had an incredible urge to write something that would fulfill me not just creatively and artistically, but spiritually as well."

The song, "Mother Nature's Son," sits close to Lucien's

heart as its socially conscious message about the plight of the rainforests and the ecology could just as easily address the issues of urban America. "People of the inner city are intelligent. It's dangerous for the powers-that-be to assume that if exposed to the full spectrum of black music, African Americans would not understand or appreciate our many diverse black cultures. If given the opportunity they too would see and feel what I see and feel, that we are all Mother Nature's Sons."

FCC gives BPI right to buy Kiss

It's official. The Federal Communications Commission has granted Broadcasting Partners, Inc. the right to acquire WCKZ-FM from Compas Media Group, according to Wayne Brown, general manager of WPEG-FM 98.

BPI owns WPEG and WGIV-1600 AM.

"We're excited and anxious to take over," Brown said Wednesday. We are real excited about having a second FM station in Charlotte."

Industry insiders have speculated WCKZ, known as Kiss-102 will be changed to an urban adult contemporary station. Brown would not confirm or deny the speculation, but said the company will make an announcement in January.

"I guarantee it's going to be exciting and something the community will like. Charlotte has not been introduced to a new format for quite some time."

BPI's acquisition of Kiss had been challenged by Ken Koontz, a former employee and TV sports producer.

"He exercised his rights but it had no bearing on our license," Brown said. "His opposition was based on opinion and not fact."

-Winfred B. Cross

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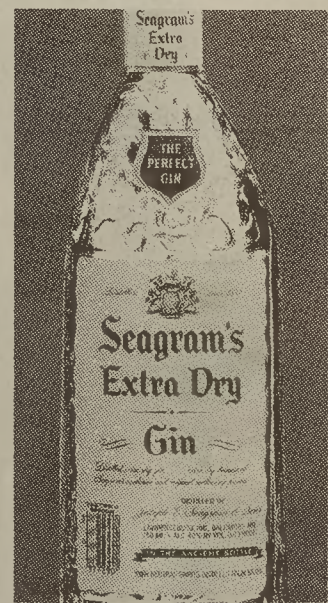
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