

the sound is still alive and kicking with bands like Rancid, NOFX, Green Day, and Gob.

Gob is a four man band out of Vancouver whose music is anything but boring. The songs are energetic, driving, and short. Like most punk, these songs are not stuffed with pointless filler. Gob uses relentless percussion, crunching guitars, catchy bass lines, and kazoos. Yes, Kazoos!!

"Marching Song" is a minute-long gem featuring just a beat box, kazoos, and a lot of creativity. It's a melody that will get stuck in your head for days. The CD contains a number of other catchy tracks including "Extra, Extra," "Leave Me Alone," and "Soda," to name just a few. The lead singer's vocal abilities may leave a lot to be desired, but on a disc of this type, that doesn't matter. *Too Late...No Friends* is great for what it is — a fine example of the now de-punked 'punk rock.'

JODY GURHOLT

**Blackface**

Shai  
MCA

Sweet! Sweet! Sweet! Move over Boyz II Men, Shai is back in the house and are kickin' it better than ever!

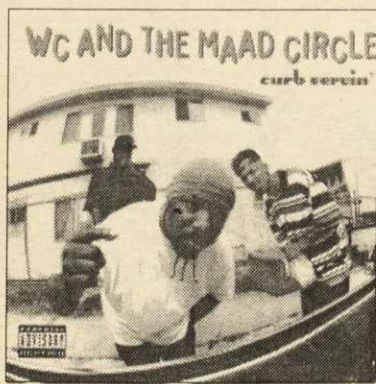
What's to say? I loved everything on this album. That about sums it up.

As good as Shai's first record was, *Blackface* is even better. It's that smooth, free-flowing, pure R & B style mixed with the silky vocals of the group that make this CD amazing. It has everything from sweet, slow tracks (I especially liked the leadoff track "Come With Me," probably the best song on the disc) to upbeat tempo songs, from inspirational messages like "Did You Know" to intense Shai philosophies ("Concert A [The Hidden One]" and "Planet Solitude").

All of it makes for good listening. It's the kind of album you immediately like after the first listen. Forget terrible groups like 4pm and All-4-One. This is what R&B is all about; groups like Shai, Jodeci, and Blackstreet.

Get this CD. Gentlemen, it's a little something for the girlfriend that you won't regret playing. *Blackface* just relaxes you and relieves all tension. It's a real good time.

MOHANAD MORAH



**Curb Servin'**

WC and the MAAD Circle  
Payday/London

Seven years after his debut with the group Low Profile, South Central native WC is back again with his MAAD Circle crew (Big G, Crazy Toones, and Coolio), coming "strictly for the hooriders...with a trunk full of funk." Although WC's stuff will never be confused with the upper echelon of west coast rap (i.e. the Pharcyde and the Hieroglyphics crew), WC should also not be confused with radio-friendly, main-

REVIEWS & SPEWS

stream-oriented acts such as the Dogg Pound and Coolio.

*Curb Servin'* is made strictly with fans of west coast rap in mind. This is apparent in both the topics of the rhymes and the production style. WC kicks reality rhymes in his own distinct style, with no remorse. On "Wet Dream," one of the album's best cuts, WC dreams of a day when his entire neighbourhood will come together and realize unity is the first step in improving their lives: "brother-to-brother, hand-in-hand/30,000 motherfuckers ready for action, man." *Curb Servin'* is a perfect example of the 'reality rap' that fans call art and government calls destructive and deserving of censorship.

On the production tip, everyone comes knee-deep in funk. Crazy Toones does 11 of the 16 tracks, including the surprise DJ cut "A Crazy Break Pt. 2." He gets help from a number of other west coast producers, including Ice Cube. The styles are distinct, but there is a certain consistency to them that helps to keep your attention on WC.

Although the music is not like most west coast music (read: Dr. Dre rip-off's), the George Clinton samples are a bit played by 1995. In fact, there are no less than 5 Ice Cube samples on this album, reminding you (too much) of 1992's "The Predator."

All in all, WC's album will satisfy his market audience, and for that he must be credited. It won't, however, sell like his good friend Coolio's will, largely in part to a poor leadoff single ("West Up," featuring Mack 10 and Ice Cube). As for mainstream fans and true east coast hip hop heads, you might do best to let this one pass by and choose something else from the recent flood of quality hip hop albums.

SOHRAB FARID

**Modes of Transportation Vol. 1**

Spokey Ruben  
TVT

Spokey is a pop music geek who lives in his basement and has way too much time and musical equipment on his hands. But the thing is...he knows how to use them.

You might remember Spokey from a video he made independently called "These Days Are Old." They used to play it every now and then on City Limits and it really stood out. The video showed Spokey getting shoved into snowbanks, walls, and fences as well as being thrown to the ground. It also featured a great face plant off a bicycle and into a mud puddle.

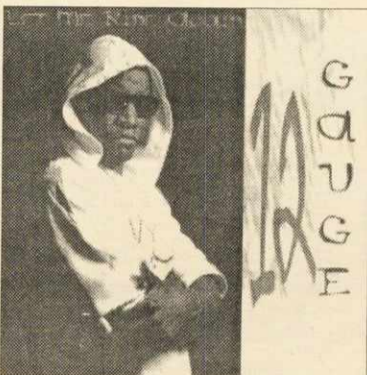
At least one year later he's finally put out 12 more songs on a full length cd. *Modes...* is Spokey in his basement doing little pop experiments. Some of the songs are quirky, some of them almost "normal" pop. Overall it's a great project. He takes bits and pieces of '80's pop sounds and blends them into his well arranged songs. This guy wrote, played, mixed, and engineered practically everything on the cd, which is no small feat considering how many complex elements there are in every song.

All of this being said, *Modes...* isn't just music for weirdos. It's more like music by a weirdo for



**All Change**

Cast  
Polydor



**Let Me Ride Again**

12 Gauge  
Street Life/Scotti Bros./Attic

people who like good pop music. "Running Away" and "Wendy McDonald" ("One billion trees equals two double burgers with cheese") are particular standouts. Don't be spooked.

MIKE GRAHAM

First things first, this guy ain't nothing like his appearance or his name. He should be called "Pea-Shooter."

When I first saw the serious look on the CD cover I said to myself, "Oh no...another guy on a shooting spree in the Bronx or Compton." But it ain't like that. I thought I was listening to MC Hammer or something! Somehow I recognized ALL of the beats from the songs. Do you see something wrong here? This maestro lacks originality. Most of the beats were a combination of MC Hammer and Two Live Crew (way old).

Press play on your CD player and you begin with "Get my Freak on." With a fast beat and pace the first thing you want to do is get up and do the running man (at least that's what I did). Most of the songs involve dancing or some sort of movement. For example: "Let me ride," "Shake It 'Round and 'Round," "Backstroke," and "Keep it Hype," all wanna make ya bump and grind!

One thing I should mention though — this guy does not curse! Nope, not one single curse word on this CD was heard by my ears. He doesn't use any profanities nor does he degrade women in any manner.

I'll say it again: this guy ain't nothing like his appearance or name. I guess ya can't judge a CD by it's cover! Ciao.

ADRIAN MURPHY

Pumpkins. Cast are a band that comfortably rides (incidentally, their music is similar to the band Ride) the wave of this Oasis-driven British Invasion. Their future is certainly looking "Alright."

A. NEIL MACLEAN

**Heroic Doses**  
Glueleg  
Liquid Records

I first discovered these guys at the Sunfish gig previewed in the Gazette last issue. I was looking forward to Sunfish and had no idea who Glueleg was except that they were opening. Suffice it to say that after they played I immediately went to their table and introduced myself to their road manager.

And so I came into possession of *Heroic Doses*, Glueleg's first full-length album and their second release after the EP *Park Alien*. When I saw these guys in concert, my first impression was that they sounded a lot like Faith No More. A lot of flowing bass melodies and simple, crunchy guitar; intense urging vocals both high and low and a sparse, double kick drum beat. But this band is so unique in so many ways.

First off, bass player and vocalist Carlos Alonzo doesn't actually play a bass. He plays a chapman stick: a long, stringed plank that he sort of touches and plucks somehow to pump out the funky, sometimes melodic, sometimes growly sound.

There aren't any keyboards in this band — there's a saxophone and a trumpet. Sometimes they provide riffs, at others times they solo, a good deal of the time they're providing shots of sounds like a horn section backing up a big band. The effect is electrifying and makes the band sound better than it could ever have without them. I could actually tell the difference in that they were real horns — they have an unmistakable sound and intonation. The horns didn't come out as well at the show (partially because Bob Mackowycz, their trumpet player, wasn't on the tour) and on the disc the horn sound is so much more evident that it was a delight to listen to it over and over again.



The rock/metal style of Glueleg is so influenced by funk, jazz, and even classical music that I really can't distinguish which properly defines the sound. The vocals are usually a searing metal whine but range from sweet and strong to some sharply-done reggae.

The range of music on this CD can be a little disturbing but the quality of the collection is very high. It's intelligent music that you can put your head down and "Ree-reeee-ree-rah" to.

If you buy this as a fun album you'll probably be disappointed because it's something to which you have to pay attention. It demands that notice. But for the sheer musicality of it, it is relatively unparalleled in my recent memory and worth a listen just for that. Glueleg have gone out on their own musical limb and created a new spot on the tree.

TIM COVERT