



BURNT FRIEDMAN & JAKI LIEBEZEIT
featuring **DAVID SYLVIAN**
Auf Und Davon [Non]

KING BRITT
Presents **Sister Gertrude Morgan** [Ropeadope]

As producer/pals, King Britt and Tim Motzer have dropped mixes on three Rhino CDs in 2005: *Mayfield: Remixed* and *Adapt or Die*, from originals by Curtis Mayfield and Everything But the Girl, respectively, as well as a Chic remix. But their most engaging projects are yet to come. Eerie electro-vibing producer Britt and guitarist Motzer have provided the searing *Bitches Brew*-lite soundscape to the thought-lost Preservation Hall label recording of *Sister Gertrude Morgan*. An African-American folk painter whose works reside in the Smithsonian did an album of heaving, cleaving "Negro spirituals" called *Let's Make a Record* – only vocals and tambourine – onto which Britt and Motzer have sent the percolating spirit of godly, soul-filled mood-tronica. Meanwhile, back in Germany, Motzer's fluid, wobbly string solos and barely-there lines of flickering wah-funk peek out ever so subtly through electronic composer Friedman's delicate, elegant atmospheres; pastoral pieces topped by Sylvain's baritone warble. While Motzer provided electronique landscapes to upcoming projects with Jeff Sharel and 4 Hero, the too-brief *Auf Und Davon* must surely be a teaser of a promising full album to come. It must.

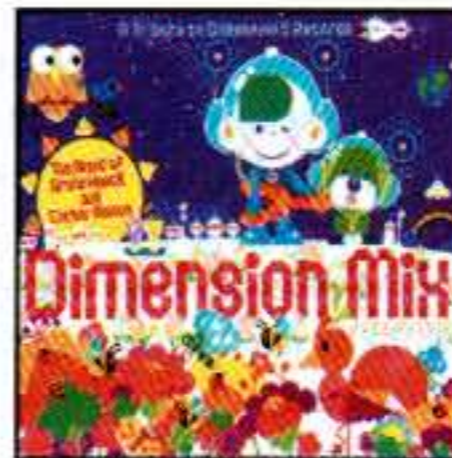
VARIOUS ARTISTS

The Free Design: The Now Sound Redesigned [Light In The Attic]
Dimension Mix: The Music of Bruce Haack and Esther Nelson [Eenie Meenie]
The cushy, brassy psychedelia of the Free Design; the kiddie-quake of composer/synth-builder Haack and his singing co-conspirator Nelson; these queerest of '60s icons get nearly their due on these quixotic artist renderings of their finest moments. Remember first that Free Design was a family of button-down white kids. So then to have their angel-wing vocals, gentle bossa folk and harmonious melodicism imagined by Madlib ("Where Do I Go") as chamber Afro-funk, by Peanut Butter Wolf ("Umbrellas") as breezy cop-show jazz, by Murs and Danger Mouse ("To A Black Boy") as historically relevant folk-hop is as shockingly poignant as like-minded Free-followers Super Furry Animals and Sharpshooters. Haack, a haunted, innovative soul who made squirrely, spiraling synthetic music for schools and educational media, doesn't get quite as

much apt tribute despite the illustrious cast. While Topsy (the dippy "Popcorn"), Anubian Lights (a nearly lurid, lounge-y "Walking Eagle"), Stereolab and Fantastic Plastic Machine (worthy, busy versions of Haack's hurried vision) make merry of the Nelson/Haack collaboration (and From Bubblegum to Sky make a spooky, silly "Abracadabra"), Beck, eels, and Apples in Stereo do little beyond be themselves; good, but certainly nothing worthy of a Haack-classroom gold star.

THE JUAN MACLEAN

Less Than Human [DFA/Astralwerks]
Sputter. Kling. Klang. That's the space bloop of TJMac at its danciest; a tight, early tech-house-y groove. Produced by the LCD Sound team, *Human's* tips of the hat to post-disco (the sinewy syn-drummed "Give Me Every Little Thing"), ESG and Kraftwerk (the wood and metallic "Shining Skinned Friend"), and cowbell-tronic funk ("Tito's Way") will remind you that, once upon a time, you left your coke spoon at Danceteria.



KEITH LEBLANC
Stop the Confusion [Collision]

Rhythmist/sequencer LeBlanc has kept himself knee deep in the funk since his '80s tenure as house drummer for the Sugarhill label; the first big samples for Malcolm X's "No Sell Out," creating the electron-dub avatar Tackhead with Adrian Sherwood. This snaky solo album captures his past's esthetics – the starlight reggae of "The Beast," the bell-banging, power-tool hop of "Story of Violence" – without resting on laurels.

FAUNA FLASH

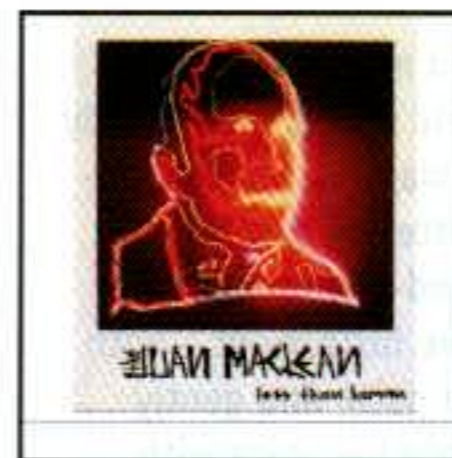
Worx [Defend]
The nu-jungle Brazilians of Germany's Fauna Flash takes on remixes beyond genre or groove on this layer-heavy down-dub-tempo effort. Christian Prommer and Roland Appel play mad scientists to the staunchly Afro-centric jazz master Abdullah Ibrahim, the taut tech of Minimal Compact, and Klaus Doldingers' droog-ish "Ju-Ju-Man." Not for the fair of heart.

TIM FITE

Gone Ain't Gone [Anti-]
BOOZOO BAJOU
Dust My Broom [K7]
A blue rootsy singer with a twang in his guitar, Dada in his heart and catty, cut-pasted noise in his background isn't always Buck 65. Sometimes it's Tim Fite taking us through slow space reels ("Toasted Rye"), Roxy-tronic hip-hop ("Shook"), shaggy, backward sonics ("All I Need") and terpsichorean tone poems ("The Flowers Bloom") that're mostly A-OK. Sometimes it's Boozoo. Bajou does the same thing, only with more syn-space vibration ("Barkensignal"), dancey diversity ("Blast"), liquid grooves for the sake of soul power ("Treat Me"), and thickly rippling bossa-jazz house ("Killer"). Way A-OK.

DAMIAN LAZARUS

Suck My Deck [Resist]
Lazarus hits the dance floor hard with this odd-lot compilation of funky green groovers (James Holden's "Lump"), quiet rioting rockers (M83 from Superpitcher), and even the nancing new wave of the Stranglers and Thomas Dolby. Avoid and die.



DEVO

Live 1980 [MVD]
Beyond "Whip It," this DualDisc look-listen at the men in flowerpot hats shows off the maligned, divine Ohio-tronics at their best. Calculatedly absurd, the slowly building angst of "Swelling Itching Brain" and the swirling kink of "Pink Pussycat" – revolutions in electronic music, so overlooked – are only matched in ingenuity by Mark Mothersbaugh's neurotic squawk and gnarled guitars on "Uncontrollable Urge." And the hats are nice.

HIMURO

Mild Fantasy Violence [Zod]
Sniper-like precision and not the splatter of buckshot is the key to the antiquated ponging game sounds (Nintendo, Atari) and crooked melodies of Yoshiteru Himuro. Hot jungle-hop beats with icy, mismatched 'lectro-layers seem incongruous at first listen. Good. That discomfort keeps you guessing as to what tricked-out burst of found sound or '80s catchphrase could come next.

KIMONE

The Mill [Silverthree Sound]
Less cloying than Muse and poly-rhythmically spattered than Tortoise, Kimone manage un-irritating ethereal music that's active and vivacious. A tremulously textured emoti-rock record with shimmering layers of ambient noise around, neither its weighty words nor haunted vocals are swallowed by its wall of sound.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Bargrooves: Cosmopolitan [Ultra]
The Kings of House [BBE]
After avoiding the strict house genre for so long, these two compilations of old house (Frankie Knuckles and Jamie Principle, Blaze) and new (Rollercone, Matthias Heilbronn), blue house (Louie Vega, Ron Trent, Robert Owens) and true (Masters At Work, Candy Apple) offer four of the most dynamic re-introductions to the penthouse-to-pavement sound in eons. From Vega's take on heavenly strings ("Journey's Prelude" with Ursula Rucker) to Smooth's divine "Promised Land," the idea of house-music-all-night-long never sounded so good.

-A.D. Amorosi