

Thrive's quick spin through what's new

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Be a Master Mixer

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	THE BIZ	THE SKINNY	A TINY TASTE	WHAT YOU'LL LOVE	WHAT YOU WON'T	P.S.
DVD	<p>Blackalicious 4/20 Live in Seattle MVD Visual \$19.95 list price</p> 	<p>Underground hip-hop group Blackalicious (Gift of Gab and Chief Xcel) release their first DVD, a concert film of a 2006 Seattle appearance on that most hazy of days, 4/20. Interviews with Gift of Gab and Chief Xcel discussing their craft are weaved in with the 14 live tracks.</p>	<p>Gift of Gab nails his showcase rap, "Chemical Calisthenics," with an ease belying the verbal tongue-twister. Latent the Truth Speaker shows up for a few songs, including the Latyrx staple "Lady Don't Tek No." Other guests include Pigeon John and Lifesavas.</p>	<p>Instead of simply letting the cameras roll on the concert and calling it a day, the filmmakers sit down with Gift of Gab and Chief Xcel to talk about their history together, their influences and their career. Anyone who thinks hip-hop success comes overnight should know this: Blackalicious have been at it 19 years.</p>	<p>Underground hip-hop is kinetic energy in a club, but watching it on TV can be a different story. Here, that isn't so much the filmmakers' fault as it is Gift of Gab's. He's a killer rapper, but his stage presence is terrible, barely moving his large frame aside from his hands. A showman he is not.</p>	<p>The DVD's bonus material includes a video for "Deception," plus a short documentary taking the viewer on a tour of the Blackalicious tour bus. Note to Gift of Gab: For the love of God, stay away from the Pop-Tarts. C.D.</p>
BOOK	<p>The iPod & iTunes Pocket Guide, Second Edition By Christopher Breen Peachpit Press \$9.99 list price</p> 	<p>With all the ancillary iPod accessories out on the market, the guide book was inevitable. Breen, a Macworld writer and editor, covers basic and advanced functions of the iPod line, including music, video, audio and photo applications. He also provides an overview of all iPods released to date.</p>	<p>The chapter on "The Informational iPod" explains how to use the device as a de facto PDA. It can be used to store contacts, keep your life organized with a calendar and leave yourself important reminders in the notes function. Few people know you can do this.</p>	<p>"The iPod & iTunes Pocket Guide" provides useful information for everyone from the brand-spanking-new iPod user to a seasoned pro looking to get the most out of the device. Breen organizes the guide for ease of use and quick comprehension. Even if you think you're an iPod pro, you can learn something here.</p>	<p>The emphasis here is on the basic, which means chapter upon chapter of information that only the most technically deficient person will need. It's almost painful how step-by-step Breen is in chapters explaining the controls and basic functions. Leaf through a few chapters before buying.</p>	<p>Invariably, your iPod will malfunction on some level, so the chapter on troubleshooting will come in handy. Before you take it to your repair guy, read this book. You might be able to figure it out on your own. C.D.</p>
DVD	<p>The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift Directed by Justin Lin; starring Lucas Black, Brian Tee, Zachery Ty Bryan, Bow Wow Universal Studios \$29.98 list price</p> 	<p>That's right. TF&TF is back, but director Justin Lin had the sense to ditch Paul Walker. The third in what is potentially an endless series of big nasty car movies is about a rebel kid named Shaun (Black) who gets kicked out of school only to end up in Japan racing Yakuza mafioso for his life.</p>	<p>The movie's tagline says it all: "If You Ain't Outta Control, You Ain't In Control." This takes on even more meaning when read in either Black's thick southern twang or Bow Wow's attempts at gangsta-ese.</p>	<p>The driving in this movie is dope (Bow Wow made me say it). A handful of hardcore stunt drivers tore into a huge supply of muscle cars and street monsters, and they make it look not only fast, but also furious. Surprisingly, the plot is not nearly as hateable as the previous two, despite the add-on of Zachery Ty Bryan.</p>	<p>Anyone who has any appreciation for mint condition '67 Fastback Mustangs be warned. The movie-makers purchased about nine of them from independent parties on line only to destroy them in fires, skids, crashes, etc. You'll cry.</p>	<p>The original "Drift King," a Japanese man named Keiichi Tsuchiya, appears in the film as a fisherman. He also drove some of the stunt scenes. E.R.</p>