

REQUIRED AUDIO



IMAGINARIUM/L'roneous

Bay Area hip-hop veteran L'roneous re-releases his '98 debut and shows how far ahead he was at the time. Being closely related to other underground hip hop saviors such as Project Blowed, Anticon and Living Legends explains why his lyricism and musical style seems to lean less from "rap artist" and more toward "hip-hop poet." His topics that revolve around socio-economics, racism and black-consciousness have been heard before, but its popularity hasn't seen the light since the early '90s. His revival of Imaginarium may not be the catalyst, but it certainly beats an enlightening and positive path in the right direction. Check out cuts "Imaginarium," "The R.A.I.N.S." (Reasons Arguably Igniting Nigger Separation), and "A Place Called This." You can't be disappointed.

I'M SERIOUS/DJ Vice

Seems like all the mixtapes you get are from everywhere *but* the West. DJ Vice of Los Angeles radio-station Power 106FM has a plan to blow it up—by putting out yet another of his West-flavored mixtapes. I'm Serious steps to the plate with collector-edition "exclusives" from Truth Hurts f/Rakim, Mike Shinoda of Linkin Park, Jay-Z & Memphis Bleek and Tank. Also on the CD are new heaters from Petey Pablo, Sixx John, Lexicon, Camron and Shade Sheist. All 27 cuts auralize the palette of the West and are mixed West-coast style. Outside of Cali? Nab this mixtape and taste the flavor. Vice's CDs are limited in quantity, so go out and get one today. Djvice.com, hollaboyz.com.

SEVEN GRAIN/Variable Unit

In the abyss of music that's out these days, our generation tends to listen to many genres of music. Variable Unit is a mind-and-ear pleaser, in that it provides a fusion of breaks, dub, hip-hop, classical, rock and soul. Think of it as a Sampler at Denny's, except jazzier than onion rings. Let me break it down: Let's say you got a couple people coming over—particularly some girls you'd like to impress and show you have a little class—pop this in and they'll be asking to stay the night. Of course, you'll probably need some game, but I'm sure you've already got that.

REQUIRED INTERVIEW: THE JUNGLE BROTHERS

TEXT BY { MIKE GRUB }

A few months back we came across this PS2 game that featured, among others, a new Jungle Brothers song. The game is called Frequency and it's produced by a company called Harmonix. What is it about? It's about making you into a musical genius.

Well, OK, not quite. Josh Randall, the producer/music director of Harmonix writes, "...We wanted to make a game that allowed non-musicians to feel the same buzz we felt making music." In its basic framework it's kind of like Busta Groove, it's not about that kooky dancing stuff but more of its hand to beat. I'm not trying to dis Busta Groove. I've been drunk with some friends in the presence of that game. Ah yes, good times...good buds—that's another story in itself.

Frequency is more about making the music so you can eventually get hot chicks. It's like practicing to be a rock star. The game's strategy revolves around your ability to hit the controller buttons to the beat of the song. Each musical segment is broken up into sections such as drums, synth, vocals, scratching, bass, etc. The best part is since there are a slew of musical acts featured on the game, you won't get bored.

The game is mostly contributed dance music from ultra-popular hitters like Paul Okenfold, Orbital, Powerman 5000 and Freezepop. On the same coin, though, you've got artists like DJ Qbert, No Doubt and, my favorite, the Jungle Brothers—making Frequency an all-around attraction.

The JB's have been around for a while and are considered one of the originators. I remember a few of the cuts from these albums: Straight Out The Jungle (1998), Done By Forces Of Nature (1989), Raw Deluxe (1997), V.I.P. (2000).

Required Audio got the opportunity to interview Mike G of the legendary Jungle Brothers. Check it.

Mikill: First, I just want to say thanks for doing the interview.

MGJB: Ah, no problem man.

Mikill: There are a few elements I feel make an artist truly great. You guys are hip-hip legends. What is it about the Jungle Brothers that makes you so respected?



The Jungle Brothers are one of the many artists featured on Frequency.

MGJB: I would say our innovations. The energy we bring to new ventures we step into when we get into the studio. You know, if it's jumpin' over a drum 'n bass track or jumpin' over a house track or jumpin' over a jazz track and just kinda bringin' the right energy to the table. I think that's what brings the respect.

Mikill: Do you favor one genre over the other?

MGJB: Naw, I think with hip-hop it encompasses all styles of music. So it's just having hip-hop as a guide, a template. You know, it kinda lets us venture off into everything. My personal, I like the oldies.

Mikill: I've always loved Native Tongue. How did that all come about?

MGJB: It basically happened when we first started. There weren't really as many artists as there are now, and we kinda stood out from the rest of the pack. And De La was one of the groups that stood out as well. And we just kinda linked. Actually, we got to do a show together down in Boston. That's when we first got together. You know, we kinda kicked it. We talked a lot. Our album was out. Their first single had just dropped. We made some connections. We got back in New York and it was kinda like everybody soared more than we did. But you know, it was really natural. We just kinda just started a relationship and it just took off from there.

Mikill: Who is your main influence?

MGJB: My main influence? Wow...it would um...that's pretty hard to sum up...heh-heh. But it all comes from the DJs. I think from my early



Sony's PS2 music-based game Frequency is available now.

those who are getting started in hip-hop or music in general?

MGJB Just don't be afraid to mix it up. Definitely don't be afraid to mix it up and keep your identity, you know. Come in with a game plan and know it's about business...heh-heh. I mean you want to have fun. You don't want the business to bump out your love for the music, but definitely take care of your business because it'll make you hap-

pier at the end of the day.

Mikill is a radio DJ from the University of California, Irvine. His "Keepin It Right" radio show can be heard locally at 88.9 FM. KUCI is streamed over the Internet for you Real Audio diehards. Check the schedule at KUCI.org for showtimes. You can see more of Frequency at the Sony Computing website. SCEA.com

education from hangin' around Red and Bam those are my inspirations in a sense of ear-openers. It's hard for me to just pull out one person, but if I had to say one person I would probably say James Brown.

Mikill: There are artists I'm sure you guys have influenced. Who do you think are really good hip-hop artists out now?

MGJB: There are so many. There are so many great artists out here now. I mean I love 'em from East to West. I gotta give Jay-Z some love. Even my guy down there in Texas, Devan. West Coast, Black-Eyed Peas. Mos Def, Talib, Hi-Tek...you know that whole flavor.

Mikill: Would you guys ever mix it up with some other stuff, like some punk?

MGJB: Oh yeah, if the vibe is right, you know what I'm sayin'. It's like sometimes you never really know until you get up in the studio and you play it loud.

Mikill You have a new song, "What's the Five-O?" featured in the PS2 game Frequency. Should we be looking for a new album?

MGJB Oh yeah. yeah definitely. We recently just finished recording and mixing our new album we worked on with Todd Terry, who's the producer of "What's the Five-O?" on the Frequency game. We got about 12 tracks. We haven't really stuck to a title yet. It's kinda waitin', waitin' to get all our clearances and all that stuff goin'. Hopefully that'll be out by early summer.

Mikill What would you like to pass down or tell