

'Doo-Hop' doesn't come together

Release needs overhaul of fundamentals

By Joel Schroeder
Staff Reporter

Have trouble falling asleep? Well, forget those Ny-Tol tablets, and go to your local record store and get "The Doo-Hop Legacy" by the group Rappin Is Fundamental.

That is, if you want to waste \$10.

This rap group uses different approaches in its songs by using brass, varying beats and other things, but the combinations the group employs just don't come together to make this a noteworthy album.

In one of the group's worst songs — and on an album this bad, that's saying a lot — "Them Boys are Getting Better," the music just doesn't get together at all. The members are on so many different beats in this song, it's amazing that the lyrics even hung together.

And when listening to "Speak Softly," don't worry, your stereo is not broken. They actually are playing their questionable instru-



Rappin Is Fundamental
"The Doo-Hop Legacy"
A&M Records
Rating: 2

(Ratings are 1 (bad) to 5 (excellent).)

ments that slow. How slow, you say? Have you ever played a 45 record at 33 speed?

However, Rappin Is Fundamental does have a few bright spots.

"Swing of Things" is a groovy song that resembles jazz more than rap. The chorus is sung in impressive harmony. Although the group tries to incorporate this harmony into each song, this is about the only instance in which they suc-

ceed.

Another bright spot is "Whenever You Need an MC/I'll be Around." The bass line is what makes this song worth listening to — it adds much to the song's pace.

The last bright spot, "Highway to Heaven," is another song that uses the bass to pack a wallop. As the group raps "Come one, come all/ We'll all have a ball/ Together we stand, yea/ United we fall," listeners will be on their feet, dancing to the distinctive rhythm.

Other songs that round out the album are "Now That You Know My Name," "You Wanna Trip," "Rapping is Fundamental," "Ain't No Smoke (Without Fire)," "Figurin' to Get Ill" and "I Wonder if She Thinks of Me." None are particularly noteworthy — or worth listening to, for that matter.

Inside the cover, the group states its group equation: Doo-Wop + Hip-Hop = Doo-Hop. If it wasn't for a few bright spots, that equation



Courtesy of Columbia

would equal Doo-Doo.

Musicians on the album include Easy Mo Bee on the drums and keyboards, Shlomo Sonnenfeld on lead guitar, Barry Kolsky on rhythm guitar, Neil Bowman doing the bass

and lead guitars and, finally, Tomie on keyboards.

If R.I.F. would happen to make a legacy to this album, one would hope they could draw from some different fundamentals.

Mortal

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moments happen in connection with Jimmy's death. When Joyce wails to a family member, "How do I tell my son his father's in heaven?" the family member replies: "I wouldn't count on it."

The movie leaves one with a persistent feeling of "so what?" Instead of caring what happens to these people, all anyone wants to do is look at their watches. And all the annoying plot twists at the film's end serve to do is annoy the audience.

Moore, Willis and Headley all appear to be sleepwalking through

their roles. All sport extremely bad North Jersey accents; although this farce is supposed to be taking place in Bayonne, N.J., no one who's ever been near there would believe these people are for real. Guess the dialogue coach was on a doughnut break during the entire filming time for this stinker.

Moore, in particular, turns in a half-hearted attempt as Cynthia, the catalyst that sets the film's action rolling. It's amazing that Moore (this film's co-producer as well as star) would choose to follow up her smash movie, "Ghost," with something so obviously destined to fail at the box office. Although she is a talented

actress, this piece of work, even though different from other movies she's done, will not add to her marketability.

Willis appears to have fun as the rotten sleazeball in this film, but he could have given it a stronger effort. At times, Willis seems to be parodying Jimmy rather than playing him — which doesn't do much for the film's believability. And Headley adds a spark of life as Joyce, but it is a weak spark.

Giving this movie a 1 1/2 rating is very generous. The only tragedy about this tragedy-suspense film is that the film's stars agreed to appear in it.

"Mortal Thoughts" is playing at the Plaza 4 Theatres, 12th and P streets.

Escape

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"I think that confuses a lot of people because it's hard to put us in a bracket, you know," Steel said. "In Europe we've got a much more rock 'n' roll audience than we have in the States. And I think that's probably because of our chart success in the States. I think our target is everybody. We try to appeal to as many people as pos-

sible."

The lead singer got his start as an extra traveling with a band. He paid his dues in the lower ranks, then coaxed one of his friends into showing him how to play the guitar.

But right now Steel said he wouldn't want to be doing anything else but singing with The Escape Club. He said he is happy with the band and with his role in it.

And it is The Escape Club's music that has helped the band make a name

for itself.

"Musically, I think the best aspect of the band is our songwriting," Steel said. "We take songwriting more seriously than guitar solos. I think that (idea) kind of comes through."

Steel said The Escape Club would like to tour in the future as an opening band for the right group — that is, if the rest of its album is a success. But right now, band member's hands are full with writing music and lyrics for another album.

Fishbone

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frenzy/ Forgive us for we have no control or self-respect."

The album's varied musical content and excellent musicianship are highlighted by the classic ska "Housework," heavy metal "Behavior Control Technician" and power reggae "Pray to the Junkiemaker." In addition to soul and punk rock, Fishbone throws in a New Orleans blues death march to explore yet another musical avenue. Despite the combination of genres, all of the elements have a distinctly Fishbone touch provided by its usual horn section.

The work closes with one of its best numbers, the single "Sunless Saturday." The song leads in with acoustic guitar and explodes with rock 'n' roll intensity. It appropriately sums up the anxiety felt through the whole album and yet maintains that constant hint of hope.

Writer Kendall Jones wonders if "the charcoal gray and brown around me/ Is just the mirror of my tainted soul/ I think the sun will never visit

my sky/ Until the truth is seen by each and every eye." The song will undoubtedly make its way to the ranks of alternative classics.

"The Reality of My Surroundings" may seem like a big bite to chew for some, but the album is one that requires careful listening to appreciate. As a whole, it creates a distinct theme by cleverly focusing all of the musical elements working within it, and its intense rebelliousness easily makes it one of the best new releases in the last two years.

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