

MUSIC REVIEW

"Blowout Comb"
Digable Planets
Pendulum Records
Grade: A-

"Heccy, Funky!"
That's the chant you hear on "Dial 7," one of the standout tracks from Digable Planets' new album. The group that was a smash in 1992 with the hit "Rebirth of Slick (Cool Like Dat)" is back with its second album, along with everything that made the group famous.

One of the main groups to break "jazz rap" into the mainstream eye, the Planets continue with their production combination of live and sampled jazz and hip-hop.

While the first album was to orient the listeners to the Planets' world, the group takes that for granted in the second and digs in with the abstract stories.

One thing this group does well is abstract rhymes. Butterfly and Ladybug are two of the best abstract rhymers out today.

The first single, "9th Wonder," features a Grandmaster Flash sample, as well as Jazzy Joyce. This is one of the best singles out this year.

Two fellow Brooklynites, members of the Gang Starr crew, found their way onto the album, too. Guru lends his monotone voice to the lengthy and mellow on "Borough Check" and Jeru the Damaja on "Graffiti."

Another standout performance is by Sara Webb on "Dial 7 (Axioms of Creamy Spies)." She sings the sweet chorus. And if you're wondering about the title, Butterfly explains that cream always rises to the top, and we are all spies watching life.

So whether you are looking for great hip-hop, music to cool out to or just the latest great tape — "Blowout Comb" will not disappoint.

— Greg Schick



Soundtrack to the motion picture "Love and a .45"
Various Artists
Epic Records
Grade: B

In the giant cesspool of bands called "alternative," a separate petri dish of "just plain cool" bands emerge on the soundtrack to the movie "Love and a .45."

"Just plain cool" is defined by

a strong, driving beat and fiery lyrics — no fluff. It includes artists and bands such as Johnny Cash, Kim Deal and Bob Pollard and Meat Puppets, Mazzy Star and April's Motel Room.

The soundtrack also makes a wonderful showcase for up-and-coming bands with high potential for the "just plain cool" category.

Mazzy Star, for example, appears with "Ghost Highway," featuring lead singer Hope Sandoval's intense vocals and alluring, hypnotic timbre.

The Jesus and Mary Chain offers "Come On," a track from the Chain's newest album, "Stoned and Dethroned." "Come On" grooves with harmonic feedback — if there is such a thing — and has a pseudo-dark sexual side to it.

"Black," a sacrifice from "April's Motel Room," drives with

some really smooth lyrics and guitar chords.

Johnny Cash offers up his "Ring of Fire," which is a wonderful little exception to the alternative nature of this album, with its alterna-

country "Happy Trails"-ish tone. "Am I in Love" by Country and Western and "King of the Road" by Roger Miller are similar exceptions.

The other 10 artists on "Love and a .45" carve a niche for themselves in the alternative world and create some hope of dissolving the ambiguous "alternative" label.

They all have a sense of honesty and heat in their music and lyrics. It's hard-edged yet not thrashing. It's music that defines a hazy nightclub in south Detroit — or some other nondescript town with a lot of smog.

— Paula Lavigne

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People Watch

Six men claim rap star gave cold shoulder

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Rap star Ice Cube is being sued by six men who claim they wrote a hit song with him and are still owed part of the profits. Their lawsuit, filed Tuesday, claims they helped Ice Cube, whose real name is O'Shea Jackson, write "Wicked," a hit song on his 1992 album "Predator." Lee Young, a lawyer representing Ice Cube, did not return a phone call seeking comment. The six claim they had an oral agreement with Ice Cube to produce and supply the instrumental part of the song. So far, they claim, they have received a combined \$30,000 in production royalties and no songwriting royalties. They are seeking a total of \$50,000 plus damages, said their lawyer, Neville Johnson.

Last week, a Florida judge ordered rapper Luther Campbell to pay rap artist MC Shy D \$1.6 million in back royalties, punitive damages and interest.

Mozart opera to be costumed by Italy's finest

LONDON (AP) — Italian fashion is joining with a Mozart opera on the London stage. Giorgio Armani will make his first venture into opera by designing costumes for an updated version of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's "Cosi fan tutte," to be directed by Jonathan Miller, the Royal Opera House said Wednesday. "Jonathan Miller has devised an original and elegant way to present 'Cosi fan tutte' for us in London and then in Rome, which cried out for coolly elegant Italian costumes," Nicholas Payne of the Royal Opera said.

Baseball star finds normalcy in Hollywood

ATLANTA (AP) — Major-league baseball star David Justice and his wife, actress Halle Berry, have gone Hollywood — in search of a normal life. They bought a house in the Hollywood Hills section of Los Angeles, where their neighbors include comedian Jerry Seinfeld and actress Sharon Stone. They go skating at the beach almost every day. "Believe it or not, you feel like more of a normal person," Justice, the Atlanta Braves outfielder who had made his off-season home in the Atlanta suburb of Sandy Springs, told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. "I can go anywhere I want, do anything I want. Out there they are so used to seeing so many so-called celebrities that they are just used to it. It is nothing to them."

a night in the orient
november 12, 1994
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formal attire

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don't forget

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

A conference sponsored by the Fulbright Association, Teachers' College and International Affairs Center will be held at the Wick Alumni Center, 16th & R Street, on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus starting at 8:30 am on Friday, November 11, and 9:00 am on Saturday, November 12, 1994. CONFERENCE IS FREE AND OPEN TO ALL PLEASE JOIN US For more information contact Joseph Stimpfl at 472-5358 or Ed Nemeth at 472-3345.

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