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François K.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

BOSSA MUNDO 2

WAVE MUSIC



Relatively ancient R&B and soul-influenced deep house get an even heavier dose of grown-up good taste on this second compilation from Wave Music and Yellow Productions. One highlight, the N.Y.C.-based wave music honcho François K.'s dubby, Mr. Fingers-style "Awakening," is so uplifting, it will transport faithful house lovers back in time. With swiny Brazilian jazz and sly, understated vocals against impeccably composed electronic backdrops, *Bossa Mundo 2* isn't as much groundbreaking as it is gorgeous. *Amanda Novinski*

YOUNGBLOODZ

DRANKIN' PATNAZ

ARTIST



Youngbloodz' 1999 debut LP *Against da Grain* is a classic on par with OutKast's first album, even though what should have been *Grain*'s breakout single, "85," remained an Atlanta secret. Underterred, Sean Paul and J-Bo have jumped back in the "ac for

their boisterous sophomore set. The rolling bass line and catchy hook of "Cadillac Pimpin'" is the album's standout, while the lyrically smooth "No Average Playa" proposes cuttin' without counting, and "Tequila" finds the duo at the bar toasting a metaphorical "ho" named "Cuervo." *Drankin' Patnaz* delivers a cocktail strong enough to get the nation slizzard. *Damien Lemon*

ESG

STEP OFF

SOUL JAZZ



Twenty-five years ago, the four Scroggins girls honed a gift for rubbery bass lines, slender dance rhythms, and saucy dance bitches, becoming postpunk, art-funk icons. Down one sister and up two daughters, the South Bronx clan returns—just as the '80s revival is hitting full swing—with a collection that sounds endearingly anachronistic. On "It's Not Me," singer Renee throws a suitor the cold shoulder, while "Six Pack" has her yelping with romantic glee. ESG's music is spare, prizing subtlety over cacophony, but it never loses sight of how a groove can, and should, fill a room. *Jon Caramanica*

BOOMSHOTS

By Rob Kenner

"It's straaaange," Barrington Levy once sang, "how the DANCES are changing." But he shouldn't have been surprised. It is called dancehall, after all. Sure you can flash a lighter or "bus" a blank," but since the earliest days of Jamaican music, the way to really show your love for a record is to bust out some footwork. In fact, you can trace the evolution of reggae through the way people move on the floor.

Levy sang "Strange" in the '80s, when folks were doing the water pump and the ever popular rub-a-dub. As the decade came to an end, Shabba Ranks encouraged ladies to perform the suggestive whiney whiney. Buju Banton ushered in the gun-miming bogie for the '90s. Soon after that, Jiggy King and Tony Curtis gave a big up to the butterfly, and Oprah Winfrey practiced the sexy step on national TV.

Now, the styles are changing faster than ever. At a recent sold-out reggae showcase hosted by Bobby Konders and Jabba of New York radio station Hot 97.7, T.O.K. never stopped the action during its brief but explosive set. Elephant Man pulled a dozen women onstage to see who could do the best log on. And Sean Paul—whose video for "Gimme the Light" introduced the latest Jamaican step to the MTV crowd—brought a wicked trio of dancers: Ponytail, Precious, and the amazing Tanisha Scott.

"What's neat about reggae is that there's a new dance every week," says Scott, 23, who's gyrating on Shaggy's tour. She lists moves like the Taliban ("it looks like a gunshot going forward and back"); the on-line ("you lift up your leg and swing it"); and the screechy ("where you go around real quick"). Almost every big song has its corresponding move. "The Diwali riddim has claps in the track," she says, "so in the Diwali dance, everybody claps along." Scott adds that she uses dance to express her personal flavor and is grateful for the opportunity to share that with the rest of the world. "Hope we can open up people's eyes to the fact that reggae is actually fun," she says. Nothing strange about that.



Tanisha Scott does the Taliban.

HEAVY ROTATION

JOE GIBBS and THE PROFESSIONALS *No Bones for the Dogs* (Pressure Sounds)

SINGING MELODY Expressions (VP)

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Ballywood* (Greenleafes)

WARRIOR KING *Virgins Women* (VP)

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Christmas Greetings From Studio One* (Heartbeat)