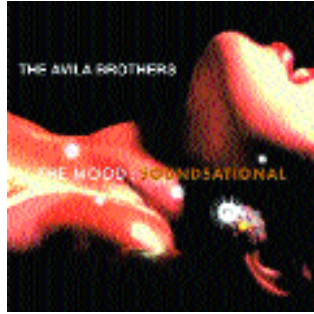


# REQUIRED AUDIO

HEARD BEFORE THE HERD TEXT BY JOEL MARASIGAN



**Death of a Dynasty**  
A Film by Damon Dash  
We never knew about the rift between Jay-Z and Damon Dash—we bet you didn't either. This cameo-ridden mockumentary of Roc-A-Fella Records shows the label's business at its finest and, at times, its worst. This movie probably won't win any Oscars or make a killing at the box office, but Damon Dash probably knew he'd reap profits on a hot DVD—the man has it locked on two cash fronts. Like the saying goes, you can't knock the hustle 'cause in the end it's all hip hop.



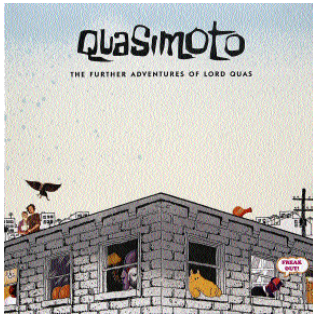
**The Mood: Soundsational**  
Avila Brothers  
Stepping from behind the curtains are brothers Bobby and IZ. If some of their stuff sounds built for Janet (Ms. Jackson if you're nasty), thank influences from Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis. Mood enhancements are made by the sexily soulful Shelea and Lauren Jones and pulls into the mix Little Brother, Dirty Birdy, Sly Boogy and Ahmad Jones (of 4th Avenue Jones). The “this-is-their-hit” debate rages between the housey “I Want You” and the love song of the year “Nic of Time.”



**Volume 03**  
DJ Juice  
We're moving on from the music of the South, Midwest and New York—we were just visitors anyway. Since we're nowhere near mixtapes—and it seems the people we know forgot about keeping us in the game—we're a little handicapped in the “fresh-off-the-street” action. As music junkies you know we needed our fixes so we called DJ Juice in the Bay Area. We're really feeling his style: less microphone shouting, more hot music and turntable styling. You'd like it. [www.djjuice.biz](http://www.djjuice.biz)



**Fear of a Black Tangent**  
Busdriver  
Los Angeles bred a phenomenal group of highly talented emcees (like Aceyalone, Abstract Rude and Volume 10) back in the early '90s whose complex rhymes raised the bar beyond the reach of their contemporaries. Busdriver's follow-up to *Temporary Forever* (2002) returns heavyweights AbRude, Ellay Khule and Micah 9 to the microphone. Production soundscapes of Omid, Danger Mouse and Paris Zax mainline the hip hop directly to the artsy avant-garde.



**The Further Adventures of Lord Quas Quasimoto**  
 Madlib and his split personality are back from astro-travellin' but only for a minute. As usual you're thrown around broken beats and jazzy loops but the flirt with late '70s funky bass lines and '80s synth pop results in a nice 27-tracked mixtape in album form. Emcees are sparse; Madvillain and MED pop in for a track each. A lot of the music at Stones Throw is made for and built around the hydro. Lord Quas shows you why you should invest in quality headphones for anti-wildin' in your La-Z-Boy.



**Awfully Deep**  
**Roots Manuva**  
 In 2001 we were mildly amused with burgeoning U.K. hip hop by accidentally catching a whiff of Roots' *Run Come Save Me*. The Streets' *Original Pirate Material* led us to believe some Brit rap was actually palatable. Hopes were high, but this year, with this album, that hope was kicked in the sternum (not helping the movement was last year's Dizzee Rascal release). The U.K. had its chance at redemption, but Skinner knows the deal and bailed while he was on top. Pity.



**Push Comes To Shove**  
**MED**  
 The West Coast emcee most know as Medaphoar, is the guest appearance any producer would enjoy. It's a wonder why main honcho Madlib let four tracks go to J Dilla and Oh No. A Stones Throw breakout must be in the works since the obvious radio friendliness of the raps from Diamond D and Poke, croonings from Noelle (of The Rebirth) and production from Just Blaze—with possibly the hottest underground-jiggy track a backpacker could stand—assist in polishing the apple.



**Track MVP**  
**Sne7en**  
 Who doesn't love gangster funk? Sne7en's style and the album in general is reminiscent of Snoop's "Murder was the Case." He says he wants you to feel his music. With his bass lines and hooks we're seeing seven guaranteed bomb cuts of his 17 being felt by the masses. That's pretty damn good for his first time out of the gate. With a few touch-ups here and there, Sne7en could be a G-Funk household name. Make sure you visit [www.calikrucial.com](http://www.calikrucial.com) to support his move. Westside!