

REQUIRED AUDIO

HEARD BEFORE THE HERD

TEXT BY JOEL MARASIGAN

A Piece of Strange CunninLynguists

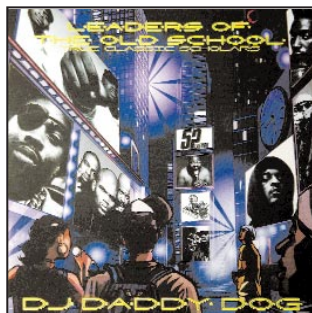
Some may think the Dirty South is all about Crunk and other types of music for dummies but Kno and Deacon, who form CunninLynguists, take that stereotype and stomp it to bits with their semiconcept album, *A*



Piece of Strange, which vibes you in a pimpy, jazzy, soulful direction. They go back to recapture the soul of the South in a fashion similar to older Outkast albums. Kno's remix of Jay-Z's *Black Album*, *Kno vs. Hov: "The White Album,"* shows his genius in all 16 cuts. The soundscape is so good that by the end of 2006 you should be hearing about the album's straight-to-DVD film release. *A Piece of Strange* will remind you why you started liking hip hop in the first place.
—www.cunninlynguists.com

Leaders of the Old School DJ Daddy Dog

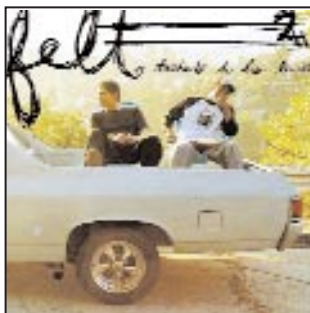
It's been a quarter-century for hip hop music, and at this juncture any "old-school hip hop" release battles emotional classification. Is it now a "remember when ..." or a "so that's what it was like" album? DJ Daddy



Dog, of 5th Platoon, makes those questions moot: Who cares about "when," when you rock the tables right? Here's a collection of 34 circa-1990 cuts mixed and scratched in a way that will make you *feel* hipper even though you're getting older.
—www.5thplatoon.com

Felt 2: A Tribute to Lisa Bonet Felt

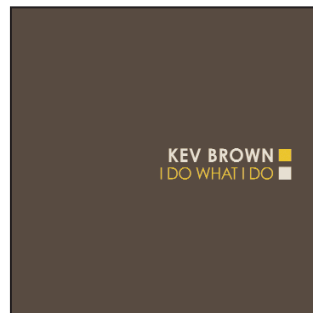
You want to know what good "backpacker" hip hop has over the 50-rotations-a-day mainstream crap? Everything. Here's a prime example of good music and lyrics. The Felt duo (Murs of Los Angeles' Living



Legends and Slug of Minnesota's Rhymesayers crew) went fishing for Christina Ricci with their last tribute album but failed to catch even a passing glance from the starlet. They recast their hooks in Lisa Bonet's part of the lake and put out some phenomenal hip-hop bait. The way these world-class lyricists layer lines over smoothed-out tracks should help get some type of attention this time around.
—www.rhymesayers.com

I Do What I do Kev Brown

As part of Jazzy Jeff's "A Touch Of Jazz" production crew, Kev Brown brought his influences, Pete Rock and Premier, into the production room for De La Soul and a host of 12-inches. His Jay-Z remix album,



The Brown Album, led to the release of this debut solo album. *I Do What I Do* features folks like Kenn Starr and Quartermaine, Cy Young, Grap Luva, Phonte, Oddisee and soulster Eric Roberson to help add some layers to the smoothness. Be aware: this album adds "mood" to a room. We always liked the smoked-out sound of Madlib and Jay Dee; Kev Brown helps continue that "high."
—www.upabove.com