



Singles

BABYLON ZOO

Spaceman - EMI **ehr/d/a**
 PRODUCERS: Jas Mann, Steve Power
 Basically a good pop tune whose hooks grab you by the throat, it is adorned by snippets of samples, distorted vocals and dramatic techno outbursts. Programmer **Johan Smedrijns** of Belgium's **Studio Brussels** finds the in- and outtro particularly catchy. "It's a mixture of different things, which is typical '90s music. It'll catch fire in the UK first, but I'm sure it will become a European hit at some point."

JOSE CARRERAS

En Aranjuez Con Tu Amor - Erato/Warner **ace**
 PRODUCER: Nigel Wright
 The Spanish tenor takes a shot at the millions of people out there who just love romantic, sweeping music and he's doing a very good job of it too. Less exuberant than Pavarotti, Carreras has that melancholic, broken-hearted tone which makes B-side *Tristesse* almost sound like the blues. From the upcoming album *Passion*.

DAVE CLARKE

Southside - Deconstruction **d**
 PRODUCER: Dave Clarke
 A stark and simple tune without vocals, designed for one purpose only: to hypnotize the grooving crowds on the dance floor. The hard uptempo beat will do just that. *The Surgeon Dub Of The Storm* is equally sparse, but sounds 'dirtier' nonetheless.

DJ BOBO

Love Is The Price - EAMS **ehr/ace**
 PRODUCER: René Baumann
 Still lingering in the Eurochart Hot 100 with *Freedom*, DJ Bobo slips into a seductive LL Cool J mode, slowly rapping over a relaxed beat. Female vocals take over the chorus to add a little extra variety. A great EHR candidate, but mellow enough for ACE too.

NICOLETTE



No Government - Talkin Loud/Mercury **d/a**
 PRODUCER: Plaid
 Although decidedly anarchistic, this is not your run-of-the-mill punk anthem, but a quirky electronic song. If you get past the ultra-exotic intro and Nicolette's deep, eccentric voice, you'll basically find an infectious dance groove, which will go down well with a broader audience than just the alternative crowd.

JUNIOR M.A.F.I.A. FEATURING AALIYA

I Need You Tonight - Undeas/Big Beat/Atlantic **ehr/d**
 PRODUCER: Bosko
 Remixes are seldom suitable for radio, but Bosko's job sounds sufficiently warm, swampy and compact to make some EHR waves. Aaliya's vocals, especially her charming lisp, will warm anyone, and deserve this kind of remix. Junior's raps don't sound out of place either.

L.V.

Throw Your Hands Up - Tommy Boy/CNR **ehr/d**
 PRODUCER: DJ Moe
 Currently touring Europe with his buddy Coolio, this Angeleno is more of a soul singer than a rapper. As songwriter and co-vocalist of *Gangsta's Paradise*, he prefers to stick to the spiritual side of black street music, citing Curtis Mayfield as a major influence. His own version of Coolio's smash hit has a melodic, sing song feel to it.

LAIDBACK LUKE

Loud Flava - Groove Alert **d**
 PRODUCER: Laidback Luke
 Flavour in the form of deep grooves, minimal yet potent vocals, all on a serious house slant, comes your way courtesy of Laidback Luke. His new EP *Loud Flava* is filled with impressive "gonna make you move" tracks such as *Enjoy*, *Hey You* and *I'm Not Impressed*.

SHED SEVEN

Getting Better - Polydor **r/a**
 PRODUCER: Chris Sheldon
 Shoegazers gone grunge, Shed Seven have even added a soul brass section to their rock song. The cheerful chorus with its psychedelic guitar carpet is especially infectious.

TEK 9

Old Time, New Time - SSR/Crammed **d**
 PRODUCER: Dego MacFarlane
 SSR/Crammed Discs has released another gem for the record collection. Tek 9's *Old Time, New Times* EP is filled with a smooth jazz-techno sound which includes influences from reggae and hip hop. Music for the easy listening crowd and junglists alike. The main man behind Tek 9, Dego MacFarlane, is also half of 4 Hero (*Universal Love*) with partner Manix.

TEMPLE OF THE GROOVE

Treat Me Right - One Planet/STIP Underground **d**
 PRODUCER: not listed
 Soul and house is an unbeatable couple. *Treat Me Right* from *Temple Of The Groove* featuring Portia is a prime example. Wise, soulful female vocals, a sterling vibe and a bouncy rhythm arrangements assure an irresistible groove and jam on the *95 North Vocal Mix*. The *Soul Street* mix smooths it out even further for easy access.

THE TREBLE SPANKERS

Red Hot Navigator - Polydor **r**
 PRODUCER: not listed
 Riding hot on the tails of Dick Dale's "Pulp Fiction" inspired comeback, these Dutch surfmeisters—an established fixture on the underground scene—are burning rubber with their tighter than tight rhythm section. To be followed by the album *Hasheeda*.

Albums

FRANK BLACK

The Cult Of Ray - Dragnet/Sony **r/a**
 PRODUCER: Frank Black
 The strong-minded ex-Pixie hasn't exactly gone mainstream on us. But as the first single off this album, *Men In Black*, attests, he has certainly discovered the pleasure of R&R and catchy hooks, even lacing his choruses with Ramones-type background vocals. The slow, menacing rhythm of *Punk Rock City* even has a primitive surf drum sound, of which Dick Dale wouldn't be ashamed. *Jesus Was Right* is an uptempo American punk classic. For Black, this is pretty much an easy-going album, which makes him more accessible.

CULTURED PEARLS

Sing Dela Sing - East West **ehr/a**
 PRODUCER: Jens Krause
 Astrid North layers her sexy vocals on top of the jazzy grooves provided by the rest of this German trio. They did an earlier techno remix of *Tic Toc*, which on the album sounds like a funkier Sheryl Crow with its acoustic guitars and low key arrangements. Should Lenny Kravitz ever hear *Hey Come To Yourself*, he would drop Vanessa Paradis like a hot potato and rush to collaborate with North instead, providing Prince hasn't beat him too. *Sing Dela Sing* will steam up anyone's windows.

JAYDEE

House Nation - Dino **d**
 PRODUCER: Jaydee
 Only a relatively small number of dance artists can fill an entire album with interesting music. Fortunately, Jaydee's new full length CD fits the bill. Several top cuts from this finely-blended mix of house, trance, percussion and technology are suited for radio and clubs alike, namely *The Lounge*, *I Want You* and *I Know You Feel It*. Also included are two "2,000 remakes" of Jaydee's biggest hits *Plastic Dreams* and *Music Is So Special*.

MAX SHARAM

...A Million Year Girl - East West **r/a**
 PRODUCER: Daniel Denholm
 The debut album of this Australian female singer/songwriter almost reached platinum down under. Tori Amos and Joan Osborne are hot items all over the globe and there's no reason why Sharam shouldn't be. One of the Australian singles is *Coma*, a compelling, up-tempo tale of her inner turmoil, starting off with a single bassline, an acoustic guitar and operatic background vocals. Soon the song gets more dramatic, as the electric rock guitar start erupting. Check this talented lady out at MIDEM on January 21 in the Hotel Martinez.

ORNELLA VANONI

Sheherazade - CGD/East West **ace**
 PRODUCER: Mario Lavezzi
 This versatile singer with her velvet voice has produced an album full of eclectic ballads, which all have their own character. Sweeping violins, Spanish castanets, a harpsichord and a rock rhythm section

feature on *Rossetto E Cioccolato*, while *Rapiscimi* has a long Arab-sounding intro, only to dissolve into a Miles Davis trumpet solo and Vanoni sensual plea to be swept off her feet. "Maybe you like wild women," she sings. We'll leave the wild women to Hole fans; Vanoni is more of a mature diva.

VARIOUS

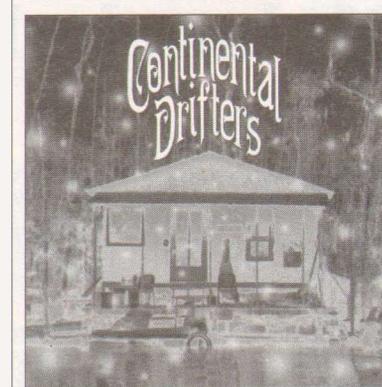
Freez Club Mixer - Freeze **d**
 PRODUCER: various
 Rarely does a mix click from the first note to the last, but *Freez Club Mixer 4: I Wanna See U Dance* proves it's possible. Roc & Kato get the job done with tracks from, among others, Daryll James, David Anthony and Todd Terry (as several incarnations). Deep, phat, boomin', warm and definitely slamin'.

CHELY WRIGHT

Right In The Middle Of It - Polydor **c/r**
 PRODUCER: Ed Seay, Harold Shudd
 Chely Wright belongs on any playlist which features Bonnie Raitt and Melissa Etheridge. Just because she's a Nashville girl doesn't mean you can stow her away in the country pigeonhole. Her self-penned rocking stomper *Right In The Middle It* will raise anyone's energy level, no matter when you play it, just like *Listenin' To The Radio*. Another Wright composition is the heartbreaking *The Other Woman* which is reminiscent of Patsy Cline's poppy country tearjerker.

Due to the MIDEM fair, the Dance Grooves column by Maria Jiménez is this week incorporated into New Releases. Next week, Dance Grooves will appear in its regular spot.

CONTINENTAL DRIFTERS



Continental Drifters - Monkey Hill/Blue Rose **r/a**
 PRODUCERS: Continental Drifters
 When ex-Bangle Vicki Peterson and ex-DB Peter Holsapple started jamming in LA with some of their pals, they weren't thinking of pursuing a big music career. They just wanted to have fun. A couple of years down the line, they're still having fun, blending essential US genres and taking turns singing. Especially when drummer Carlo Nuccio—whose voice is the most powerful—grabs the mike, the Drifters sound particularly like those other lovers of Americana, the Band. The Nuccio-penned *Mezzanine* and *New York* can hold their own among the covers of Pat McLaughlin, Gram Parsons and Michael Nesmith.