

SLUMPLORDZ

THE PRESS KIT



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SLUMPLORDZ : BIO



The Slumplordz were formed in Oakland, CA in 1997 with no preconceived notion or expectation. The only idea the Lordz ever had was to make the type of bumping ass hip-hop not seen since the early 1990's. Like most long-term hip-hop heads, the Slumplordz had grown to a point where the music they had loved since its inception (hip-hop), no longer appealed to them. It was not that their love of the music had diminished, but rather that the quality of it had reached an unbearable level. Whether considering the production and lyrical content of contemporary hip-hop on the radio, in music videos, or on the shelves of record stores, it was clear that the only way to bring back innovative hip-hop was to make it. With the help of friends who started the label Knock Factor, and its earlier incarnation Math Sound Workshop, a plan forged to market the group's music to the public at large.

So who are these Slumplordz? Well simply put, they are a collective of MCs and Producers who live and love hip-hop. The groups members include: Ogre, Irahktherigor, Hard Rard, Gravy, Davie Doses, & The Littest. Within the Lordz camp, we find not only individual artists and producers, but also a number of groups including SunnMoonSekt (featuring Rard & Irahktherigor), The Yakuza (featuring Ogre & Rard), & The Original Raw Elements (featuring T, Gravy, & Ogre) among others.

Having grown up in Oakland California during the socially charged 1980s, each Slumplord was influenced by a wide range of music and sociopolitical thought. Life long fans of hip-hop, it was natural to express themselves through the medium and not surprisingly, each member had been involved in a group prior to 97'. The trio of Ogre, Gravy, and The Littest were all members of 1993's Elements. Ogre and Gravy were each respectively involved in Longevity (93/94) and Fall Out Shelter (96). Davie Doses had been a member of the L.A. based group Metamorphosis (96), while Rard and Irahktherigor respectively belonged to the East Coast based Devious Dysfunctional (96) and Oakland's own Young & The Restless (93).

The Lordz' first offering as a crew, was a 1999 self-titled LP by SunnMoonSekt. Although always recognized as some of the Bay Area's best underground MC's, it took the raw and experimental SunnMoonSekt release, for critics and writers to take notice of the Lordz unique sound.

Fans tuned on to the group via the Internet, record pools, college radio, and small retail outlets. Though Rard and Moon were the first to be introduced to the public, tracks like 'Twisted Metal' and 'Eight Fold' (which featured Ogre and Gravy) had fans asking about the other Lordz. The underground buzz around The Slumplordz was made official with the release of 2000's 'Yakuza' LP, along with the re-release of the group's seminal 'SunnMookSekt' album (both of which were distributed by WEA--Warner Elektra Atlantic). Following the success of 2000's releases, the Lordz took a self-imposed hiatus. Fueled in part by the vicissitudes of every day living, and more heavily by litigation brought on by a breach of contract by a one time Bay Area based label, the group appeared to be reaching its end. The Lordz were more concerned with the day-to-day living than with beat making or word crafting.

"I wasn't really feeling the whole music scene after everything went down with Stray (former Indie label)", says Moon. "I was always making beats and working on flows, but it took a minute to reset after that shit!" This sentiment held true for each of The Slumplordz, until 2004, when Gravy began to condense his individual tracks into one cohesive album, the yet to be released 'Searching' LP.

SLUMLORDZ : BIO

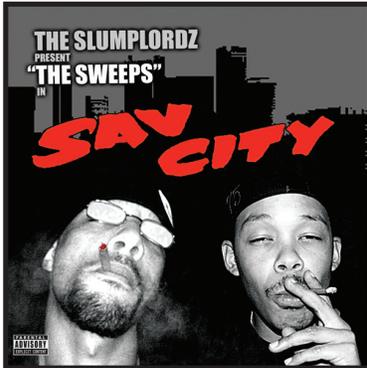
As work on Gravy's album increased, the entire Slumlordz camp began to rekindle the flames of their musical ambitions. Numerous projects began at once. With a growing catalogue of new music, the group, now reinvigorated, decided to release two LPs in 2006, starting with 'The Sweeps' (a group featuring Dave Doses and Hard Rard) and then 'Searching' (Gravy's solo release).

The Sweeps' album, like that of The SunnMookSekt's before it, features all the members of the Slumlordz, although starring Dave and Rard. The work was the culmination of the tumultuous years following their releases of 2000. It is a reflective album, which holds true to Lordz's roots, while demonstrating the groups maturity. Tracks like "Use Your Mind", featuring poet Danny Harris, break the mold, by encouraging listeners to use their minds, while revealing the fact that they are blinded sheeple, consuming without pause to satisfy their insatiable appetites. On the track "Folx", Hard Rard laments a friend run amuck, when he sings, "I wish you'd wake up and stop fucking up. I know its time to move on, but a nigga just feels stuck. I know you're running out of time, and used your last ounce of luck. And now them thoughts in your mind, got you falling!"

For fans of the Slumlordz, their latest effort will be a much-welcomed return. The Sweeps release has been described as sonically falling somewhere between the SunnMoonSekt and Yakuza albums. As one fan from the East Coast said, "I'm feeling that SunnMoon album. My home boy is on that Yakuza shit...but right now, we both agree, the Sweeps album is the hardest!"

Whether you are a fan of the Lordz or just a casual listener, the upcoming releases promise to be thought provoking if nothing more. Rest assured! The Lordz are back! ---but then again...they never went anywhere.

SLUMLORDZ : DISCOGRAPHY



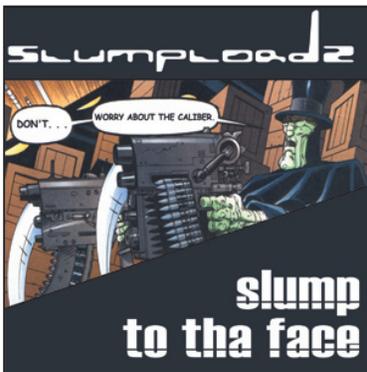
TITLE : THE SWEEPS IN SAV CITY
FORMAT : CD
YEAR : 2006



TITLE : THE YAKUZA IN DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE KALIBER
FORMAT : CD/2LP/CS
YEAR : 2000



TITLE : SUNNMOONSEKT
FORMAT : CD/2LP/CS
YEAR : 1998



TITLE : SLUMP/TO THA FACE
FORMAT : 12"
YEAR : 2000



TITLE : ADVENTURES/DO THA SUNN MOON
FORMAT : 12"
YEAR : 1998

RELEASES : COMPILATIONS



TITLE : JUST PAYIN THE RENT
[AMOEBIA MUSIC COMPILATION VOL. 2]
FORMAT : CD
YEAR : 2000



TITLE : STRAY FROM THE PACK
FORMAT : CD/2LP/12"
YEAR : 2001
NOTE : GRAVANAUGHT APPEARS ON A TRACK WITH ZION-I.

SLUMPLORDZ : PRESS + INTERVIEWS

Mr. Blunt : bit of a bold statement that, don't worry about the kaliber; that's some serious confidence that these have got going on. Of course i'm worried about the calibre, that's why it's my job to review this shit. Especially as tha slumplordz seem intent on shrouding themselves in mystery, keeping their plans tight to their chest and talking in a coded language that has peripheral heads struggling for access. Trust no-one except yourself seems to be the message - bearing that title in mind, it seems that tha 'lordz have already got that one locked.

With a soundscape that reflects a barren wasteland that you might trade secrets on in the dead of night and an unnerving feeling of someone always peering over your shoulder, tha yakuza, rather like the japanese mafioso in question, should in no way be messed with, or even contemplated about in a way likely to topple their high out-of-sight ranking. Its blunt simplicity is the key to a series of nonsense-free flights of instilling fear where evil treads a menacing path of minimalism. Beats crunch with such an impact matched by a godfather-like delivery of threats that no amount of sound effects and production tricks are big enough to stand up to. Perhaps they have every right to state don't worry about the kaliber after all, bearing in mind the unprecedented dominance of five souls not necessarily angry, but just a false move away from not being responsible for their actions - it's that kind of pact, they talk, you listen.

Tracks plum the depths like the most desperate of down and outs and at times are so dark you can't see them through the scare-mongering density. Cape & arm & sword exemplifies the belly-of-the-beast mentality with judgement day overtures, furious rhymes and peculiarly freakish sounds effects converging on a harassed break forced into attaching itself to something so grimy, no amount of soap will rid it of the filth. Don't worry about the kaliber whisper the doom merchants - it's hard to do anything except agree. Simbiotik bomard reeks of underhand dealings and localised espionage that cannot be trusted, a deceptively mesmerising bassline placing doubts into occasional keys already preaching fate for the worse. This dead of night kruger-style mindset, when you can't make the distinction between reality and distorted imagination remains a powerful weapon on urgent utterances from the underworld such as lace 'em, which after a chilling sampled introduction, has a scared-sounding orchestra seeking solace from a lyrical crescendo that chops and chews like a cannibal after a fasting. Cmp, its meaning unknown but its intimidation undeniable, gets things a little more g'd-up with perilously inquisitive strings ensuring the edge of the seat keeps the ride uncomfortable. Cause for moral panic? Clearly murderous is preferred.

Having gone about its business with a subtlety bordering on brutality, the yakuza occasionally pinpoints the vulnerable on a more deliberate vibe. Dr doom is required for henchman duty such is the tremulous undercurrent of bass that has the walls praying for forgiveness on bunk piootch (what was that about talking in code?) And back weapon. The vocals may at times sound pre-programmed and a little robotic, but there's a certain attention to detail that ensures listeners are in no position to argue with the poetic being forcefully instructed. And when the blatant becomes too much of a chore, the drama without the need for being melodramatic reverts to strong-minded minimalism that structurally is the hardest, with rakim-sounding aggressiveness to match. Young tanaka strips to the bear bones an effects-free cruncher who's lack of technical standing is replaced by an uncompromising basis of basics; and instances of these stubborn hard-nosed tales joining funky yet fraught prowlers like dopefien continue a saga intent on styling itself on some underground dynasty with a commitment to rise through the ranks. Dopefien takes on the mantle of an innocent on-the-run, with a simple loop doing the chasing and an uncomplicated break - a feature of the majority of beats here - making the lunge in order to try and snare its victim. Keep it simple do it well remarks the old adage. Presumably this was burned onto the brain once anti-establishment initiation rolled around.

Tha slumplordz, like any other secret society or socially hostile organisation, are only appreciable from the inside. If it's a case of looking from the outside in, then clique wannabes are gonna struggle to appreciate the earthy magnitude acting as this gang's password to success. However, this shouldn't hide the fact that the whoop-ass administered occasionally suffers from the trigger fingas locking up, such is the vacuous slo-mo lethargy that threatens to undermine the residing superiority. Some under-zealous moments aside, this is a slept-on beaut from the lords of the slump. Its dynamism is channelled into a slaying taken at a pace that makes its agenda all the more clinical. Don't worry about the kaliber they say - see, they were right all along.

- review by wordzsmith

Vice magazine : remember how you felt when you first heard hobo junction, mystik journeymen, or the kraken? Thata how i felt when i first heard this crew. They're waaaay too dope for you to understand. Face it, you're an idiot. - fritz le kat

Manhunt : slump, especially when practiced by tha slumplordz, refers to a style of hip-hop music marked by heavy baselines and fronted by medium paced emceeing. It's music that goes well with dimly lit areas, like the backseat of a black car rolling through alleys at three o'clock in the morning. It's music you can listen to with people, but only if their faces are hidden by darkness, like the characters on the front of "tha yakuza in don't worry about the kaliber", the new, extraordinary offering from tha slumplordz.

Tha slumplordz are a collective of emcees and producers coming out of the oakland/bay area. Held together mainly by producer hard rard, the group has come with an original piece of work that defies classification. "slump" is probably the closest you can get to any type of definition.

The lordz master tracks like "slump[lordz]," "hardest," "dopefien," "to tha face" and "lace'em". Not that these are the only songs worth listening to. In fact, this is one of the rare hip-hop cd's that demands to be listened to from start to finish. This alone is a huge accomplishment, given the amount of single-driven hip-hop records available today.

There are also no skits, no pointless vignettes about visiting the "weed spot" or the liquor store. As one song bumps to a close another one slams open from the beginning of the record to the bonus track. Each song fits well in its place. You can tell that there was at least some sort of idea concerning the overall flow of the album when it came time to place the tracks.

This is a cd most hip-hop fans will enjoy. The album is original, raw and features talent with great potential. Just hope that they don't stay as well hidden as the characters on the front of their cd.

Africa's gateway : the slumplordz are a collective of mc's and producers which was formed in oakland, ca in 1997. Members include ogre, moon, hard, gravy mc, davie doses and tee. Not only do they consist of individual artists but also groups like sunnmoonsekt, the yakuza and the original raw elements. The slumplordz first offering as a crew was the 1999 self-titled lp by sunnmoonsekt.

SLUMLORDZ : PRESS + INTERVIEWS

Slumplordz really put out a good album here. On “thee yakuza” they flow over a bare but nasty beat that had me hooked immediately. But the mad track on here is “to tha face” is guaranteed to get your head nodding in appreciation. Others include “lace ‘em”, “back weapon” and “anythang niggaz”. You need to have this in your hip hop collection.

Africa's gateway : this cd landed in my lap just the other day, and playing it was most probably the best thing i did last night. This have some of the most unique sound i've heard in a while. They seem to be living one level underneath the underground. What may sound like totally simple beat patterns they twist it around which results in a totally abstract sound. On top of this layer they smear totally wicked rhyming styles. This is some next level shit.

Sf examiner :

The slumpordz: innovative hip-hop, straight-up and beyond
By eric k. Arnold - special to the examiner

The slumpordz' recent album, “tha yakuza in: don't worry about the kaliber” (stray), is one of the most refreshing takes on bay area hip-hop in years. Too short and the dangerous crew are obvious influences, but then so are saafir and souls of mischief. While “tha yakuza” provides plenty of straight-up nasty bump, it also boasts some agile lyrical expositions -- perhaps more than one would initially expect from the genre.

One song that illustrates the difference between the slumpordz and the approximately 1,000,001 other rap crews on the planet is “why waste time,” a duet between guest mc zion (of zion-i) and gravanaut. On the track, gravanaut displays an innovative syllable-twisting rap style as hard to decipher as it is to copy, while zion drops lines like “i drink ink, than dribble it over your manuscript.” the song represents a notable contribution to the underground rap scene. It's harder than most abstract hip-hop, yet more intelligent than simplistic thug material.

“our style is like both sides of the coin,” explains rapper-producer pokerface. He feels the crew, consisting of rappers dave doses, gravanaut, irahk, and j.jonah and producers hard rard, 9 continents and black male suspect, present a new era of bay area hip-hop flavor, one that can't be easily categorized.

“the slumpordz bring that bridge between gangster rap and what you'd call straight-up hip-hop, if that's how you want to explain it,” pokerface remarks. “when people listen to our rhyme style, they expect us to say certain things, and we don't say those things, so then they're like, ‘man, where do these guys fit in? Are they trying to be hard or are they trying to be lyrical?’”

The group takes its name from “slump,” a slang term for rap music with large drum beats and booming bass. When played at high volumes, the effect is so overpowering it causes listeners to slump down in their seats, hence the name. As pokerface explains, “if you say one line and somebody goes, ‘oh!’ and the the next line, they go ‘ohh!’ then the next line, it has to escalate. And it has to have that wonder. We want people to wonder about us and piece together our individual personalities.”

The slumpordz' innovative sound owes as much to their musical influences -- everything from bob marley to sade -- as it does to their use of admittedly retro drum machines like the roland 808 and 909. “we try not to use it in every song, we don't wanna use it in every song,” says pokerface, “but when you're sitting there listening to a beat, there's certain strategic points where you put in an 808 and it makes the beat seem that much bigger. It's certain types of drums and certain types of snares that's gonna sound right. You don't always wanna use a 909 snare and a 909 kick, but at the same time, they sound right in almost every song.”

Most rap groups tend to either be strong lyrically or musically, but as pokerface notes, “people are paying attention to the beat as well as the lyrics. My whole thing is, i try to build up anticipation throughout a song. When i start out, i want fools to be like, ‘what's he talking about?’ as you go through the song, you kinda figure out what i'm talking about, but then it's like, ‘oh, what's up with the beat?’”

Musically speaking, one of the most interesting songs on “tha yakuza” is “i'm yours,” a tale of late-night seduction. Pokerface claims the song's dub-reggae groove wasn't intentional, it just happened. “some songs might sound like a reggae beat, some songs might sound like a doo wop song, but if we know that we can flip it and do it right, we'll do it.”

According to pokerface, the biggest factor in the slumpordz sound is emotion. “the slump style, to me it's genuinely from the heart. I don't wanna say it's different from other music, it's just, we put our heart into what we do.”

Manhunt : slumpordz interview by jake paine

When you first put the needle to the slumpordz'12” “slump” single, you feel a sense of family and purpose. Then, when you sit down and have a chance to talk with the men behind the mic, it only confirms that dedication and chemistry to, and within, each other. This group is quickly gaining recognition. Their lp and singles are widely getting mixtape cameos, as well as underground credibility. On the list of “about to blow oakland hip hop”, the &mac247;lordz find themselves with a very down to earth mindframe, and clearly understanding of the music they create.

This crew, which has congregated as friends since toddler years, has been working as a unit since &mac247;97. They have focus, and a new twist approach to the underground. This is a group that can put themselves and their goals within the reality that they rhyme about. Musically, it seems that they go against the grain. Sounding nothing like the other hip hop figures in their area code, yet still providing a west coast theme, the slumpordz have a tremendous asset to offer our ears, minds, and record collections. Raw beats, grimy slang, and the cypher-friendly “pass the mic” approach set the &mac247;lordz apart from the others. Still early in their career, this group will surely be a major player on the authentic hip hop market. But enough about that, see what the &mac247;lordz themselves had to say, when we sat down and played “20 questions”.

1. First off, let me congratulate you on the exceptional work on the 12” single. I strongly dug “slump”. After doing the research, i noticed that you are a five man crew, not counting your producer (hard rard), is that difficult?

SLUMLORDZ : PRESS + INTERVIEWS

Dave doses: thank you. I mean yes and no. We are all on the same wavelength, so its easy to communicate. But sometimes, it can be difficult to reach consensus.

J. Jonah : no, not very difficult at all because we are all on the same team. (actually we all do some producing.)

Pokerface: first we'd like to say thanx for the support & positive words. We greatly appreciate it. Also, thanx for the opportunity to be interviewed on your site. Being a five man crew, at times, is extremely difficult. There might be a song someone is feeling and someone else isn't or some fool might miss practice, or worse yet, a show. But from the individual's perspective, its dope to have four homies to go through this experience with.

2. Just as large crews such as outsidaz or wu tang, there aren't always everybody on a track. For you, how do you decide who spits when, and whodoesn't?

D.d.: pretty much its always been who's around when the beat is created. Every once in a while the producer will have someone in mind for a particular track.

J. Jonah: it's pretty much based on who's feel'in a particular track. It depends on on who's vibing at the time, since we are not always all present at the studio.

P.f. :that depends on a) who made the beat, b) who's feelin the beat, c) exactly what they have to say.

3. Gotta ask the common gumble question, how you guys meet, and how long you been together doing this?

D.d.: some members have known each other since diapers. Everybody knows someone in the group since pre-school. We've been slump'in collectively for at least three years.

P.f.: i have known gravanaut since we were about 10 or 11. We really didn't hook up again after that until after i met irahk in '94-'95 in high school. Irahk & myself in '97 started sunmoon sekt. That led to the rise of the slumplordz. Gravy & jonah came in & laced the s.m.s. album. Dave doses came in & laced "don't worry about the kaliber". We basically been at it as a group since '97 or '98, each having done some shit prior to that with other crews.

4. There's the history, now how bout the future. Where do see the slumplordz in five years?

D.d.: i hope to be a group that can make a living solely off of music and that we are widely recognized and respected.

J.j. : workin hard and still doin it, steadily advancing to the next level of the game.

P.f.: i wanna say i see us as a lot of things. I'm kinda happy to say i can't wait to find out.

5. One thing i love about you, is the originality. You are representing a mecca of hip hop, oakland. Yet, you don't stereo type your sound to the area code. Was it harder to get accepted with unconventional sound and style?.

J.j. : yes, because people notice when you are original and the music is good - the music speaks for itself. No, because i feel we still are not accepted because we don't have a mainstream sound, (which to me, means fools not comin with it and tryin to be like everyone else.) Nothing wrong with that, but that's not what we are doing..

P.f.: it seems nowadays that in order to get accepted in "hip-hop", you have to follow a set formula. If you want millions of listeners to be exposed to your music, you better make a hit & have money behind you. Well, if the slumplordz are gonna reach millions, then that's divine. But music doesn't start from being a fan. I say all that to say this - our sound is like feelings, one way or another, you have to accept it. And it is not hard.

6. Another cliché question, but this question-i like. Who are your biggest inspirations (musical), and why?.

D.d.: groups like de la soul and tribe called quest influenced me when i was young to do my own thing and stand on my own two feet when it came to rappin and life in general.

J.j. : gangstarr and too short because after all these years they are still in the game and doin their thing.

P.f.: collectively the lordz are influenced by good, unique, emotional music of whatever genre. Me - i'm influenced by people like bob mauley, billie holiday, too short, sade, the last poets, goodie mob, saafir, nirvana, damn near everything that was on the radio in the '80's & real early '90's. These are artists that exude the most emotion to me.

7. This is year 2000. I love your work. This isn't a question to judge you in any way. But there's a million hip hop acts, why should we listen to you? What can you offer us that the others can't?

D.d.: i'd have to say that slumplordz is not your average hip-hop group. I think s.l. has a unique way of lookin at and expressing things that you won't find with other groups as far as lyrics and production are concerned.

J.j. : we're comin out of oakland, not too many like us out of oakland or anywhere else.

P.f.: the lordz as a whole offer a sort of chaotic type of order to whatever scene we're associated with. We offer change inside of constant, freedom inside of prison. You listen to us when you realize a lot of other artists don't know how to respect your intelligence as a listener yet.

SLUMPLORDZ : PRESS + INTERVIEWS

8. In one word, please limit the slang (although i love some of that slang throwin' on the single), but in one word....describe your group's collective style?

D.d : unorthodox

J.j. :slump!

P.f.: intrusive

9. Give us the plug, when's the lp ready. And how can kids all across the globe get it?.

P.f.: now, the album is called, "slumplordz: present: the yakuza in: "don't worry about the caliber" dropped in october. Luckily we got national distribution so one can pick it up just about anywhere, even the 'net where you'll biographical info. And tracks at dogdayrecords.com, then go to the stray banner. Also, look for the re-release of the sunnmoonsekt album in feb 2001.

10. With that in mind, are you doing any solo, or collaborative work?. Who you working with?, and what's the next step from here?.

J.j.: look for upcoming solo projects and a few surprise collaborations.

P.f.: stay tuned...

11. Thank you kindly, i wish you the greatest support. We at manhunt.com appreciate your time and effort. Is there anything you'd like to add, that i haven't said, or anything else?. Thank you kindly, and most definitely...we will do this again. Peace, respect, one!

D.d. : peace!

J.j. : thanks for the opportunity of putting us on your site. Bump that slumplordz s@#t till yo speakers blow!

P.f. :peace to knock factor, stray, manhunt & ada/ to all who listen & support good music. One love! Peace pokerface tanaka! Rebirthmag the latest crew to emerge from the streets of oakland, california, are tha slumplordz. Made up of j. Jonah, pokerface, dave doses, gravanaught, and irahktherigor, tha slumplordz are taking it back to the golden age of oakland hip-hop. One listen to their latest album, tha yakuza, and the old school too short, hieroglyphics, and hobo junction influences are immediately evident. But don't be too quick to dismiss them as just another cookie-cutter hip-hop crew. Tha slumplordz refreshingly bring a unique sound to the currently stale state of hip-hop known as "slump", a combination of trunk rattlin' beats, swift battle rhymes, and, of course, that "'town sh*t."

And when it comes to "'town sh*t," no one embodies it more than sir too short does. On tracks such as "i'm yours" and "bunk pioootch," the 'lordz appropriately pay homage to the godfather of oakland hip-hop with a couple of their own "freaky tales." from the "dope fiend" beats provided by hard rard (a.k.a. pokerface) to the ever popular "biaaatchhh," short dog's influence on the 'lordz is undeniable.

But the 'lordz also draw inspiration from other oakland hip-hop luminaries. On tracks such as "to tha face" and the self-titled "slumplordz," the flows of the 'lordz can easily be traced to the hobo and hiero crews.

But what makes "the slump" work in the end is how the 'lordz manage to fuse all their influences together to create an original style and sound all their own. Although some tracks do "slump" more than others on "tha yakuza", the diverse flows and slanguistics will have the heads open while the bass-heavy production will ensure that the 'lordz remain "in the trunk." from fans of northern california bump to the hip-hop purists, tha yakuza has something for everybody. Don't sleep. Go pick it up. And while you're at it, pick up the first slumplordz release as sunnmoonsekt.

Manhunt : the five man oaktown crew is starting to cause a ruckus on the scene. Slump is absolutely crazy. With trent reznor style hand-claps, ad some hard hitting keys. (produced by hardrock), the crew passes the mic. Although we only hear three of the five members on this track, each emcee has a distinct style, tone, and flow. You will be really surprised how the jopint ends, i like it, real unexpected kill switch style. This is definitely a crew thats going places, and with joints like this, they'll be going sooner than later. From the same area code a rasco and the luniz, but yet, they have a style all their own. To the face is a bit more thuggish. Very laid back, gliding beat (another hard rard gem), with a flow to match it. Im feelin the slangology with such scrabblers as yakuzza, the title lp, but yet, im not feelin this half as much as slump. For my two samples of the lordz, i have nuff respect for them. Coming up in a hiphop crossroads, they choose their own path, mi! - jake paine

Globalhiphop.com : the slumplordz is on an underground takeover mission. The group made up of 4 mc's is poised to take aim at lyrical supremacy matching their rhymes against the world in a battle for it all. The album "tha yakuza in don't worry about the caliber" is an intense project backed by hardcore tracks and raps that are not for the faint of heart. The production: bass heavy and simplistic at times features very few beat changes. In other words, straight loops that often creep and buzz along that take on a hypnotic effect. Its not the most complex production style but that doesn't take away from the effort made. But, i have to say after you hear the 16 plus songs in the slumplordz arsenal, some higher quality production could have helped make things easier on the ear. All that said, the strength of the album lies in its lyrical performers. The four mc's in the group take no shorts on the mic. Pokerface is the definite star of the group. With his low toned voice and robotic sound and style he moves you every time he spits. While j jonah catches you with his clever rhymes and speedy delivery. The other mc's don't tend to stand out as much and often sound like each other which throws you off as to who is who. Regaurdless, key tracks like "to the face" and "back weapon" feature what the crew does best; which is rip the mic apart with rage and fury. The type of material you'll hear from the slumplordz lyrically range from dissing fake mc's and commercial artists to emitting a battle style of rap that never lets up. Their go for broke mentality of a hip hop group hungry for props and respect instead of c.r.e.a.m. dreams and gangsta poses makes them stand out and lifts their underground appeal. If you are looking for some hardcore hip hop from the 'o' (oakland, bay area) thats new and focused, check for tha slumplordz. - russell carrington

Aiding & abetting : stunning beat work, though the raps could use a bit of a charge. These pieces sound great, and the songs hold together quite well. The slumplordz are more thoughtful than brutal, but there's plenty of attitude.

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The basic sound is a modified dub, cranked up a bit but not sped up. The slumplordz take their time, though the intensity is still high. Don't worry, everything still hits like it should.

The star is still the music, a really great mix of dub and other electronic ideas. The beat work here is just great, driving the raps to higher places than the ideas would reach by themselves. Both compliment each other, lending to the superior sound of this disc.

I still don't think these guys are world's greatest rappers. The lyrics are better than average, and the delivery fits the sound well-enough, but still, the stars are the hands that turned the knobs. For me, that's fine. This is a great disc to hear.

Aiding & abetting : thick, thick, thick in the groove. Heavy bass, but more of an electronic heaviness than a hip hop fuzz. The real star here is the beats; the rhyming is passable but often not much more.

Still, the creativity surrounding the beats and music is awesome. While sticking to a basic hip-hop feel, sunnmoonsekt drops in all sorts of fresh ideas. Unfortunately, the rhyming is rarely up to task. As innovative as the backing tracks are, the lyrical delivery is rather generic. It just falls flat.

Part of that problem is the material. The lyrics cover familiar ground: boasts, the street, goofin', rhymin', etc. There's not much there to get excited about.

On the other hand, a lot of this disc sounds great. If the rhymes can catch up with the music, watch out.

Hhn newsletter #62 : out of oak town come the slumplordz. Fans of pharcyde and dilated are going to love to real hip-hop that runs through such notable songs as "thee yakuza", "i'm yours", and "to tha face." more proof that west coast underground has got it locked.

T.r.u.e. magazine : sunnmoon sekt:as innovative the sunnmoon sekt are, they needed to come together to sound as one. The tracks are tight, but the lyrics would be better if they would compliment each other's voices. The arrangement of the material was put together well, especially on order of assassins. This track was one of my favorites on the album, because the flow was very consistent with the track. Also on the album was this track called adventures. I like the composition of this track it's definitely a headnod bangin track. I would recommend this album in the collection, put it under the skillfully creative crate.

East bay express another example of lyrical slump, which is shaping up to be the local sound of the millennium. Its name drawn from the martial arts clan headed by invincible asia (played by brigitte lin) in the jet li epic swordsman ii, sunn moon sekt combines the bass-heavy "town shit" style with hip-hop battle rhymes and its own esoteric lyricisms. Strong production from the slumplords makes this an appropriate soundtrack for the ride. Quote: "they can see you through your television/ hear you through your phone/ that vaccine that you took is biochips to yo dome/ you might be a cloneé"

Rapmatic [this is translated from german] : the hip hop in the usa developed end of the 80's and at the beginning of the 90's very positively. Everywhere in the country new trends were set, as pioneer areas applied thereby naturally in particular to new york and the entire west coast. In oakland (california), as well as in the entire bay area, thereby digital became underground by acts such as too short,; del the funky homosapien; rbl posse and hobo junction a typical new sound, the slump brought out. The slumplordz was based 1997 in oakland and its musical request consisted of it: " hip hop was not any longer heard to make, like it since start of the 90's ". One dissociates oneself on the one hand from the gangster image, on the other hand from the strongly aufgekommenden commerce rws. One created the label better record (in former times times math sound workshop) and began themselves with the music to employ in detail. Who now actually belongs to the slumplordz? In detail the ogre, davie doses, moon, hard rard, gravy and the lytist, whereby the slumplordz still into individual sub-groups e.g. sunnmoonsekt itself, is the yakuza and raw of item split up. 1999 were the year of the first publication, i.e. sunnmoonsekt lp also here are again the phenomenon of the internet to be observed. The selling runs to a large extent over it, importantly is naturally still numerous college radios. Next the yakuza ep is to appear, a slumplordz lp is also in work. Here in d-country there is the slumplordz 12x27x27 " slump " since short, thus watch out!!! To the sound that can young be said that one does not over-hear the westcoasteinfluss. Straight beats, knackige sners, partial sounds of key board (however differently than in ny) and in addition the raps. One must in-hear oneself into the sound of the slumplordz only, then one begins to love him. Perhaps beats&lyrics of some explain - > mini mali tic style!

Flow magazine [sweden] : sunnmoon sekt är en underground duo från oakland, los angeles. Det här är dock inte gangster rap utan mer rymd rap de gör. Som namnet, skivomslaget och beatsen bevisar är denna duo väldigt fascinerade av rymden. Produktionen är väldigt avskalad. Sköna trummor med sci-fi samplingar. Deras flow är också mycket tillfredsställande. Både beats och rhymes är alltså bra, på gränsen till väldigt bra. Skulle det finnas en stil som hette space rap skulle sms vara ganska ensamma i den, vilket betyder att det här är mycket annorlunda hip-hop. Om jag ska sammanfatta mina tankar kring det här albumet så skulle jag tycka att det skulle passa perfekt som filmmusik i en 'cyberpunk' rulle eller en sci-fi film där ett stort krig utspelar sig. Om det är meningen att framkalla dessa tankar har sms lyckats mycket bra. Anton augustinsson

Riffage : "slump" style: it's that west coast bounce that makes heads move, with the kind of raw deliveries and bangin' mixing that have been known to set off party scenes from new york to l.a. dope slumping material like "to tha face" can be found on their newest release, the yakuza. Representin' for their east bay hood of oakland, california, this hot crew of lyrical assassins are shaking up your speakers thanks to the same cats who brought you sunnmoonsekt.

4th-district : sunnmoonsekt consists of two members, sunn and moon, who handle both the vocals and production. From the math sound workshop, these two members of the 6-man crew slumplordz have been quietly picking up steam. Already releasing the vinyl single, "aventures" b/w "do the sunnmoon", the oakland-based duo is part of the flourishing california independent scene, which is as talented as it is flooded with a flurry of great and not-so-great artists.

Sunnmoonsekt are out to prove that they have skills with this recording. The album begins with a humorous intro, where someone calls a chinese restaurant asking for sunnmoonsekt. This is followed by "area 33rd". The production has a soft melody, accompanied by pounding piano sounds and a soft drum. The two mc's go back and forth over the beat in this solid track. A happy, yet eerie beat highlights "raw apparatus", which just flashes by, along with the all-too-short "hypno". These two joints are followed by "do the sunnmoon", over a frantic

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beat. The lyrics are pretty decent, and the deliveries follow the quick pace of the beat quite well. The added scratched in samples are used to good effect as well, as are the spacey background sounds. "here comes tha sunn" shows up next, featuring a smooth chorus as the title of the song is sung. The production follows the same sort of trend as the previous tracks "somewhat dark with melodic, yet slightly sinister backgrounds. The same can be said for "violint", with its heavy violins. While the beat is satisfying, the subject matter tends to be slightly bland. The production similarities would also apply to "eightfold", but the beat is so dark that it jumps out at you. A rather tight battle oriented track, the two sound amped over the energetic and frightening production.

The pounding beat is what will grab you first on "order of assassins". Taking shots at the outside world, the line, "corruption rules everything around me" hits the strongest. They say on the chorus: "this is how i propose we take control/ to change the rotation of the axis". A strong statement against the world, this is easily one of the most conceptual tracks on the album. Soon after, the fantastically produced "qwaze/d. Mic" runs through the speakers. The creative production is sure to get your head nodding, but overall, it seems too short, and would definitely be 12-inch worthy had it been stretched out. The album proceeds to "adventures", which utilizes some interesting samples to create a spacey mood. The words "time and space" are repeated with the samples in such a way to create a murky background, one that the hazy production helps enhance. The album concludes with "twisted metal rejekts". A track that glorifies the strength of the slumplordz, the rumbling production helps make this one of the standout efforts to the full-length, and a fitting end to this piece.

This album is a very solid introduction to the sunnmoonsekt team. Lyrically and musically, it's a satisfying listen. However, this fails to make any impressions conceptually, and those looking for deep subject matter will be disappointed that most of the tracks are on the battle tip. Nevertheless, the mc's are good enough, and the production is slick enough to hold anyone's attention, making this a very decent album. The mic work comes across exceedingly well and listeners will find at least one track to enjoy. Sunnmoonsekt is a solid, satisfying listen.

Rebirthmag : with all the insanely good hip-hop that's coming out of the west these days, i was anything but skeptic when this album arrived in the rebirth mailbox. While i hadn't heard of sunnmoonsekt, i still felt positive about them simply because the bay area seems to be running things about right now. So here we're presented with the sekt and their self-titled debut album. The whole "math sound" representation is interesting no doubt; let's see if they can hang like i figured they would

The album begins with an intro where someone calls a chinese restaurant asking if they have sunnmoonsekt. It's pretty funny, but hey, it's an intro so why don't we just move on. The first joint is "area 33rd," and features some pretty tight production that bangs even though it's pretty laid back. The emcees spit back and forth and come off nice while doing so. Following is a short cut called "raw apparatus," which has some spaced out beat that turns out quite fresh. Lyricism is somewhat choppy here, but it sounds good coming from them. Get it? Ahh, slide over to "hypno," another joint that seems like a snippet. I like how the mc (i don't know their names) spits, "take you for your mind / f*ck your rhyme and your scrilla nigga / we be verbal ballin' / habitually steppin' to the mic is my calling." it almost comes off like a punk-out of all the gangster-style bay area rappers and it quite ill. Too bad the song is only just over one minute long.

"do tha sunnmoon" is up next, and this is where one starts to realize the odd concept of the group's production. The beats are kind of choppy and simple, but they put them together just right so that it seems like they've complicated the production to the maximum. It sounds confusing but it's a relatively good idea that shows itself nicely when backing the vocals from sunnmoonsekt. "here comes tha sunn" is one of the dopest cuts on the album, as they producer has laced a nice guitar sample in with the bass to showcase a nice combination. Put that along with a female crooning the chorus, and you've got some nice backing. The lyrics are where they really shine though, as both emcees spit rapid fire and short, sudden verses that are interspersed by the chorus. Check it out to get the best presentation of what sunnmoonsekt is.

Next is "murder mouth," and the production's tempo does a 180 as the beat reminds one of slow motion clips in hood movies. It bumps for sure, but one thing that i started to notice at this point of the album was that most of the things talked about are how good they are or how wack everyone else is. This is a common plague of the underground/independent scene and it really starts to show here. "violint" follows, and the twist on the title (violin/violent) has to do with all the strings that back the beats here. Once again though, it's more destruction of wack mc's and reps of dopeness. They come with some tight lines and good metaphors, but subject matter has become monotonous at this point. After this we get "eightfold," a joint that follows in the trend of darker beats that have come to dominate the album. Once again though, the metaphors and similes of "burying emcees" = "you're wack and we rule" are prominent. I need substance, people! Like i said though, don't get me wrong; they are tight flow-wise and have some good verbiage. Subject is what's killing it for everyone.

We then come upon "order of assassins," and we finally get a little more substance and variance as the group speaks taking control in our little society here. I like how they flip with lines such as, "now if you want to get up, stand up / step to the front like a man and put your hand up / i see the opposition moving in position / gotta be alert when they try to put the chip in / i cannot give in to substandard living / on a ball of dirt with no type of vision / and blind to the fact, all they wanna do is put a whip to my (back)." the sick lyricism and content of this song makes due for a lot of the other braggadocio that tries to ruin the album, and the track turns out to be one of the best here. "deathblow" shows how they're "verbal arsonists" and how emcees "bite on the mic so hard they chip their tooth." it's a pretty fly metaphor but the production is somewhat drowsy and cannot support the blahzay lyrical sound here.

"qwaze/d. Mic" is probably the best or second best song on the album, as the beat thumps so hard your neighbors will be dancing on their beds. The guitar riff is what makes it happen, and they make better use of their verbal skill and played out topic of how dope they are. The song is only just over two minutes long though, and we all could have gone for at least four. "adventures" is also very good on the production tip and becomes very spacey and dramatic as the emcees get intergalactic for the listener. They're the dr. Octagons and phoenix orions on the cut as they travel time and space taking out weak emcees and rocking crowds. "anti-notch" is a decent track and we then finish up with "twisted metal rejekts." as far as i can tell it's a posse cut with their crew slumplordz. The synthesizer got extra work on this jawn as several emcees take to the mic to make the "sunnmoon section crowd connection."

Overall, the album is good. These guys have talent on the mic and one can tell that they have intelligence from wise vocabulary usage. The biggest downside is that most of the songs are all about taking out the next emcee and how sunnmoonsekt is here to rock the crowd and be the best. Now that's all well and good, but as stated before, it's a common symptom of our culture's music. I feel that if more time were spent on these joints, the subject matter could have been heavier and would have in turn made the album much more powerful. On the production side of things, the somewhat simplistic sound made to sound jam-packed with instruments and complicated combinations is actually pretty cool. Now i'm no producer, but that's what occurs here in my opinion. So we've got an album with some crazy cuts like "here comes tha sunn," "order of assassins," and "qwaze/d. Mic," and as a whole it's pretty dope. It is lacking in a few departments, but

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is definitely still worth checking out.

Urbansmarts : as you travel through galaxies, something solid, not hard, but firm, slaps you right in your face. Step back, you now even see twice the stars you saw before, and your nervous system gives you answers, to questions your body wasn't designed to operate with. You turn around and try to find what it was that hit you, that disturbed the peace you exchanged in return for your critical thoughts. A sudden rush of conclusion reaches your brain and in fear of being taken over, your body starts to shiver and tremble.

The sunmoonsekt behind you watches you with interest. It's small and does not draw too much attention, if you don't give it that follow up look. And that's all it needs to hit you a second time. But this time much stronger. And from now on it will not hide anymore. Because you got infected by the sunmoonsekt, and it's mirror image got branded on your synapses. What can you do? Fight against it? Or commit to it's cause?

This little detour into the land of science fiction should show you, how you will feel, after listening to this album. Although it is so special, unusual and inspires to creative climaxes, it's hard to explain or describe it. Is it tricky with a hip hop aesthetic? Or is it techno-hip hop? Or is it not even hip hop no more? Is it the child of some drug addicted mothers and fathers of strange ideas? Or is it just plain dope? I'd go with the last, although all of the above probably hold some truth.

So what can i say about an album, that has sonic beats, that make other spaced out experiences sound analogue? What shall i say about the lyrics, apart from that they fit this weird landscapes of layers of synthesized soundscapes? Is it just a tamed down sensational? Or the next level of creativity of west coast hip hop, cherished earlier on releases like "beneath the surface"? Or is it even fair to compare? Isn't this album something we have never heard before, something we haven't even had anything that remotely was like this? And isn't that really what we all were hoping for in this stale world of hip hop? Is this the "screw sampling" aesthetic? Or is this just hip hop we need to respect, because this really is some next level material?

Well, tracks like "hypno", "do the sunn moon", "violint", "deth blow", "twisted metal rejekts" (to mention a few) got me in awe, while tracks like "here comes the sunn", "adventures" are much too tame, compared to the creative outbursts of the others. I will not even say, that you all need to check out the album, although, actually, you all really need to do so. But this is defenitely to widen your horizon. Just like rakim said "this is how it should be done / this style is identical to none". Can you see the sunmoonsekt hovering over you? (tadah the byk)

Epitonic : since the musical territory that some djs used to hesitatingly call 'trip hop' for lack of a handy reference has become an international cultural and corporate phenomenon, the historic truth about said musical territory has lost all hope of being understood. Nearly all truly ground-breaking hip hop records that have changed the game for all to come after, from the first albums of run dmc, public enemy or cypress hill to the roots' all-time classic 'things fall apart' have been 'trippy', exploring sounds and styles less travelled and tweaking the very definition of the art form.

Enter sunmoonsekt from oakland, ca. The 'sekt' venture forth lyrically from the urban here-and-now to the deepest freudian recesses of the mind, on a magic carpet ride of beats and samples that make portishead and tricky sound like the carpenters by comparison. Can you handle the trip? We ain't sho' how to describe it. Ever see 'stargate,' blood?

Manhunt : 'you couldn't feel me if my skin wallpapered the room' that's a line from 'do tha sunn moon' off sunmoonsekt. The bay area strikes again with math sound workshop's offering from the slumplordz. Skip 'ride or die,' just ride, homie. Beats with that knock, and lyrics to match. The style is raw bay ala saafir & hobo junction minus the offbeat delivery.

'Are you annoyed, captivated, or destroyed?'

If you appreciate sounds you never heard before with that familiar bump, peep murda mouth, twisted metal rejekts, and order of assassins.

'Coming off like starscream verses omega supreme'

West coast underground does it again. Check these kids out now, see if you' re feeling it. These kids are putting in work and i'm sure the support would be welcomed. If we never support the hip-hop we like, it'll never rise like the mainstream weak foam does constantly. Words: black knight