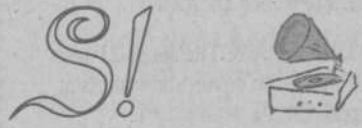


Greenville band high on talent, low on originality

BY PHIL WATSON
THE GAMECOCK

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Music



They're pop and they're not afraid to admit it. Snap Robinson's new album, *Throw Away the Key* is made of 13 pop songs.

The Greenville band calls itself a "pop-rock quintet."

Many music fans won't be able to get past the fact that the album is full of pop music.

With all the horrid pop music out there today, having the title "pop-band" can mean certain death in the music world.

Marshall Barron plays guitar and is the lead vocalist.

Blake Ross plays the keyboard. Patrick McAmish is the drummer. Adam Roberts plays guitar and is a backup vocalist. Bart Zweigoron plays bass and is also a backup singer. The young band has been played on various radio stations in South Carolina, as well as in Ohio, Illinois and

Texas.

Snap Robinson is made up of talented musicians, but it lacks an original style. All the songs on *Throw Away the Key*, flow smoothly and have good rhythm, but have a tendency to sound the same.

However, that doesn't mean the album isn't good.

The third track, "All That's You," really caught my attention. It had an enjoyable beat and classic love song lyrics.

"Exhale" shows off Snap Robinson's ability to harmonize on vocals.

Lead singer Marshall Barron, along with backup vocalists Bart Zweigoron and Adam Roberts, harmonize well in "Exhale."

Another smooth song is "Charleston." The guitar in the beginning of the song is similar to the guitar styling of England's most humble rock band, Oasis.

"Charleston" would have to be my favorite song off *Throw Away the Key*. This song is laid back and relaxing, which is nice.

The song with the best intro is "The Factory." It has a catchy guitar intro, which kept me listening to the whole song with interest.

Blake Ross's keyboard playing is also a good touch to "The Factory." Deep lyrics and a great beat make this song one of the album's best

songs.

The tenth track, "Negligent," gives Barron a chance to put emotion into his singing.

He has an angry voice in this song, yet keeps it under control. Many singers lose control of their voices when they use motion.

Barron also sings with an angry, yet manageable voice in "IOU." The best part of this song was Ross's keyboards.

He provides a peppy background to the song. With the keyboarding in the background, this song sounded similar to many of Semisonic's songs.

The album's last song, "Pocketfull," was similar to the rest of the songs with one exception. It has a barely audible voice in the background, repeating what Barron says. This voice is purposely distorted and terribly annoying. If I could change one thing about the album, I would take out the echoing voice.

Throw Away the Key is not a bad album. It's obvious that Snap Robinson put some time and thought into their new album's lyrics, unlike many pop bands. The songs are easy to listen to and are organized well. Overall, it's a good album.

The spotlight desk can be reached at gamecockspotlight@hotmail.com.

snaprobinson



throw away the key

Special to The Gamecock

Band offers refreshing album

BY MEREDITH DAVIS
THE GAMECOCK

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When Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg took the MTV and rap industries by storm in the early '90s, listeners believed pure hip-hop music would never be able to prevail over the smutty tracks and nasty lyrics such rap had promoted. To those same listeners who enjoy hard-core bass and catchy lyrics, welcome to some Southern Cali fare that doesn't spout quips on weapons, hoes, and Hennessy.

Meet Dilated Peoples, an L.A.-based underground hip-hop group that holds on to the old-school sound and has that sacred element that keeps beat-loving purists satisfied — background tunes reminiscent of the early years.

Dilated Peoples' *The Platform* is neither breakthrough nor controversial, but it is refreshing. One track, "The Main Event," matches deep bass with a catchy melody, setting the trend for the rest of the album, promising staying power. The best of The Fugees' *The Score* is captured here,

with smooth emceeing and an overall low-key sound. "Years in the Making" is most clearly influenced by the Wyclef team, so anyone who mourns that album's legacy will certainly cherish this group. Dilated Peoples finds more words to rhyme with "dilate" than they ever could have needed; but after all, they did require something to fill in those holes where words like "bitch," "A.K." and "69" would have been highlighted.

Puff Daddy, they are not — and thank goodness for that. Original tunes? Decent lyrics? Sophisticated deejays using turntables in a way that actually enhances an album instead of destroying it? Who knew?

Capitol Records took a risk with these guys, but now they are benefiting. "The Platform" has been heralded by professionals in the music industry as one of the most exciting albums of the year, and it will prove to be a valuable collection addition to any album-buying entrepreneur.

The spotlight desk can be reached at gamecockspotlight@hotmail.com.



Special to The Gamecock

Aretha Franklin, Berry Gordy, others pay tribute to famous soul singers

BY NEKESA MUMBI MOODY
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Aretha Franklin, Smokey Robinson, Erykah Badu and Bonnie Raitt were among the stars who paid tribute to forgotten soul singers of the past at the Rhythm & Blues Foundation's 11th annual Pioneer Awards.

While superstars such as Stevie Wonder and the late Marvin Gaye were also honored Wednesday night, the bulk of the four-hour ceremony was dedicated to lesser-known acts such as the Chi-Lites, who faded into obscurity although their harmonies on hits such as "Have You Seen Her" helped define the sound of the '60s and the '70s.

"It's one the most important awards that we ever received," said Chi-Lites founding member Eugene Record. "They (the R&B foundation) do things that are very unusual as far as helping artists who have fallen on hard times, and I don't know any organization that does that for musicians and entertainers."

In addition to bestowing long-overdue recognition, the foundation awards most honorees with cash — \$20,000 for groups, and \$15,000 for individual artists.

Motown founder Berry Gordy helped boost the foundation's coffers, announcing a \$750,000 donation to aid former acts from the legendary label who are struggling.

"These are our pioneers, the people that we got something from, we benefit from, so we have to look out for them like all people do," he said. "It's everyone's responsibility. It's our legacy."

Some of the artists honored by the foundation in years past were cheated out of their royalties and received little during their brief celebrity.

"Many artists did not get adequate compensation, and even today, find it very difficult to survive even though their

music is known and played," said Mary Wilson, one of the original Supremes. "As human beings, they're sort of forgotten. I think the Rhythm & Blues organization gives not only sort of an award, but also gives them something that they need inside, as human beings, to be respected."

Besides the Chi-Lites, the foundation gave pioneer awards to Huey "Piano" Smith, who performed on the hit "Don't You Know It/High Blood Pressure"; Sylvia Robinson, who had a hit with "Love is Strange" in 1957 and years later helped start the rap revolution with the discovery of the Sugarhill Gang; Clyde Otis, who wrote and produced songs for artists including Nat "King" Cole and Dinah Washington; The Impressions, whose hits include "It's All Right"; Johnnie Johnson, a legendary pianist who discovered and played with Chuck Berry; and Betty Wright, who may best be known for her hit "Clean Up Woman."

Wonder received the lifetime achievement award, while Gaye's children accepted the Legacy Tribute award on his behalf. Ahmet Ertegun, founder of Atlantic Records, received the R&B Founders Award.

The event also served as a concert and jam session, as the honorees performed some of their biggest hits. Wonder's performance was perhaps the most rousing, as he sang a medley of hits like "Superstition," and "I Was Made To Love Her," with Raitt, Badu, Sister Sledge, Robinson and Dionne Warwick singing backup.

Wonder called for today's performers to unite with past artists for an album that would feature old hits and give back royalties to those singers and their families.

Though Wonder has received countless accolades, he said this award held a special significance for him.

"It really is the essence of how I began," he said. "I was an R&B artist, a rhythm and blues artist, and I have great respect and I am very proud of that."

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