

REQUIRED AUDIO

HEARD BEFORE THE HERD TEXT BY JOEL MARASIGAN

The Mixtape Mixtape

Rel

Why make a demo tape to get a deal from some bigwig? Just go ahead and make one to show off your talents to everyone. Carson, Calif., native Rel shows he has a little bit of polished skill on the microphone. On this "mixtape mixtape" (with beat backings by radio rap hits) he gives you more than enough lyrics and cadence switch-ups to flatter you, all the while pushing the idea he can rock the rewrites well



enough to impress the average listener. On the flipside there's jackin' for beats and then there's jackin' for songs—keep it short and sweet, Rel. Get through the first 16 bars and switch it up. And it isn't karaoke so don't try to mimic the hit-maker's style and do his hit song over again. It's his hit—he owns it already. You got the skills; find that producer and do you.

—Hi-Fantasyrecords.com

Street's Disciple

Nas

This 2-disc, 25-track set hit the shelves already. If it ain't platinum, it will be soon. Old-school seasoned cuts like "Virgo," "You Know My Style," and "U.B.R. (Unauthorized Biography of Rakim)" as well as featured folks like Olu Dara (Nas' dad), Ludacris, Doug E. Fresh, Maxwell, Busta Rhymes, and girlfriend Milkshaker Kelis only set guide points for where the boundaries should be. With all that Jay-Z vs. Nas stuff going on, you were hard pressed to pick a favorite. Pseudo-wholesome rap listeners should side with Jigga; the rest of you should follow me over to Nas' crib.



Wildflowers

Connie Price & The Keystones

First it was D'Angelo, Musiq Soulchild and Erykah Badu who brought back neo-soul. Now it's time for a new-funk comeback. Melding the styles of American funk and soul, Jamaican rocksteady, roots reggae, Afrobeat, New-Orleans second-line rhythms, '60s and '70s jazz ensemble—touted to be the best musicians Los Angeles can offer—the group puts down a mix that's unique.

Breakestra Producer/Leader Dan Ubick spent years cultivating and contributing to records by Macy Gray, DJ Babu, and Madlib. He now takes his spot in the limelight with this virtual soundtrack to the best movie you'll ever see.

Who R You

The Frontline

Richmond, Calif., throw your hands up. The alumni of MTV's freestyle battles are here to show being in second place just means there's still a title to take from someone. Getting assistance by playing regulars on "The Wake Up Show" (an internationally syndicated radio program hosted by Sway and partner King Tech) and press in publications like *XXL*, *XLR8R*, and *Murder Dog*) the

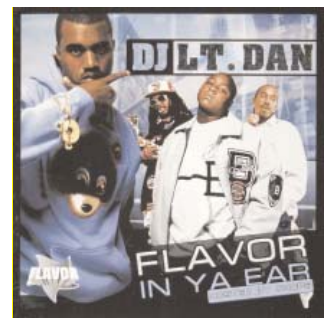
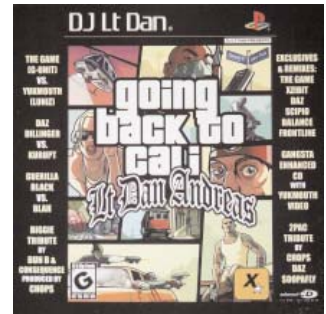


group plans to catapult itself out of the Bay Area, rap-duo classification. Look out for the production on this one. It seems that Left, E-A-Ski, and CMT—with their neck-snapping beats—are looking for extra work using this previously "Bay Only" release.

Going Back To Cali

DJ Lt. Dan

"Going Back to Cali" is West Coast music flipped New York-mixtape style. It's loaded with diss track battles like Kurupt vs. Daz Dillinger, Guerilla Black vs. Blah Bloomberg and Big Wy (Relativez), and The Game vs. Yukmouth (Luniz). It throws props to 2Pac and Biggie. It features exclusives and remixes for The Game, Xzibit, Daz, Scipio, Balance, and Frontline. It has a Yukmouth video. It won a mixtape award. It's dope.



Flavor In Ya Ear

DJ Lt. Dan

Hosted by soon-to-blow producer Chops (of the Mountain Brothers) Dan shoots out another set of exclusives that may blow your mind. Not only do you catch new cuts from Pitbull, Willie Stubz, Q-Tip, and Shyne you get Snoop's "Drop it Like it's Hot," Lloyd Banks' "I'm so Fly," and Lenny Kravitz's "Storm" with Lt. Dan beat-makeovers.