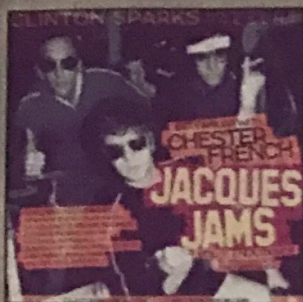


By: Jessica Buck



CHESTER FRENCH

Jacques Jams, Vol. 1: Endurance

Genre: Pop/Rock

Chester French has been pretty popular within the last year, since being signed with the infamous Neptunes. You can't go wrong working with such a unique artist such as Pharrell Williams. Chester French's sound is one that I have not heard much of, but that is always a good thing. They're not trying to be like any other group out today, and their music is easy to catch anyone's ear. Having the Neptunes behind them, I know for sure that they are leading them in the right direction for stardom. Their last album, *She Loves Everybody*, was a huge hit, so thousands of fans were awaiting this new mixtape, *Jacques Jams Vol. 1: Endurance*. This mixtape has so many artists featured on it, from N.O.R.E. to Diddy and Lady Gaga. One of their new songs featuring Solange Knowles, the verse "get familiar with the way this feels", can only describe what they are coming with in '09. It's available for download at www.Chesterfrench.com/mixtape, and trust me, this joint is truly bangin'!

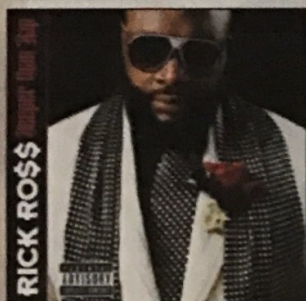
Personal Fav: *Circus Star* feat. Diddy, Jadakiss, and Clinton Sparks

TAYLOR SWIFT

Genre: Country

The new album *Fearless* has already been released in the U.S in November of 2008, but this month was released in the UK. The success that she had with her most recent album in the U.S doesn't compare to the reviews she is getting over seas. Swift's new album is the first to stay on the Billboard Top 200 for eleven weeks straight since Santana's *Supernatural*. Taylor Swift has been on the music scene for quite some time, with some serious talent, and without the need of all the bells and whistles of the studio. Hand her a mic and a guitar, and she is easily capable of killing the stage at any venue. She is one of the most popular country singers out today, despite her tender age of 19. Her voice has so much soul in it, giving lyrics like "people are people and sometimes it doesn't work out"... "you're the only thing I know, like the back of my hand"... "and we know it's never simple, never easy", true meaning.

Personal Fav: *Fearless*



RICK ROSS

Genre: Hip-Hop/Rap

Rick Ross' new album, *Deeper Than Rap*, is scheduled to hit stores next week, but I was able to get a sneak peak at the new material. Fans can only expect the best from Ross, which is what he always gives them, nothing short of perfection and blaze. His radio hit *Magnificent* feat. John Legend is only a taste of what to expect from his new album. Robin Thicke, T-Pain, and Kanye West are all featured on this album, so you know it's really going to be some fire. *Deeper Than Rap* has a multitude of different sounds that everyone can bob their heads to. Slow joints, as well as the club joints, and then the crazy unique hits, of course brought to you by artists like Pharrell and Lil' Wayne. This album is set to release April 21, 2009, so be sure to cop that quick!

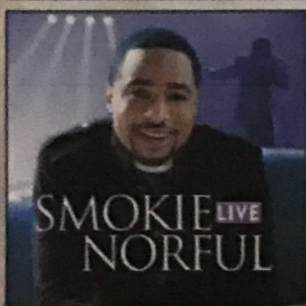
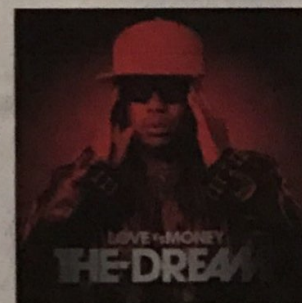
Personal Fav: *All I Really Want* feat. The Dream

THE DREAM

Genre: R&B/Soul

Love vs. Money has been set at a very high bar for this acclaimed singer/songwriter. His last album was such a hit that fans are only expecting tracks that exceed his previous potential. The Dream has been doing this music thing for a long time, writing songs for hella popular artists like Rihanna and Mary J. Blige, but decided it was his turn to be in the spotlight. *Shawty* is a 10 was a top selling hit for months, and now his new album has revived his true talent. The Dream is popular for his slow jams, but this album has some tracks that can still get the club jumpin'. *My Love* feat. Mariah Carey is an example of a "bed hit" with lyrics like "who is willing to go half on a baby", and then he has the hit *Let Me See That Booty*, which is already in rotation in the clubs. The Dream might not be the cutest R&B artist out right now, but he's got a bad chick on his side, reportedly Christina Milian, and a voice to back it all up. It is necessary that you get a copy of *Love vs. Money*, like right now.

Personal Fav: *Mr. Yeah*



SMOKIE NORFUL

Genre: Gospel

The new album entitled *Smokie Norful Live*, is the highly anticipated album from the Grammy award winner. Like the album title says, each song was recorded live, which I believe gives more soul to the songs. Norful likes to think of his music as "urban inspirational", a phrase that fits his music well. Other famous gospel artists like Tye Tribbett and Heather Headley are featured as well. Norful's sweet voice can do nothing but bring low spirits high, spreading words of wisdom from the Lord, while still having a nice beat to listen to. Also as a pastor, Norful preaches and sings every Sunday at his church in Romeoville, IL. He feels now more than ever that gospel music is ready and waiting to soothe the soul. "It's valuable and appropriate because it gives hope and provides healing," Norful said. "Gospel is a timely music for all times, but even more so during these hard times."

Personal Fav: *Dear God*

INDIA ARIE

Genre: Neo Soul

India Arie has to be one of my favorite artists to date. She needs nothing to make a hit besides her voice alone. Her new album *Testimony Vol. 2: Love & Politics* feeds off of her past albums, continuing to give her listeners all the soul and real love she can possibly produce on a track. "Soft kiss, sweet lies; let's make it a long goodbye". The fact that she is able to make such hits with nothing but a guitar, on any track, really says something about herself as an artist, and it shows that she is capable of making good music on her own, without having to have another artist featured, or a bangin' beat. Her music might not be in rotation at Club Miami (ATL), but you can for sure catch her music on the list at any low key chill spot, as well as on my iPod as we speak. This album is a must have, meaning you must have it today!

Personal Fav: *Be Glad* feat. The Roots

