



CHANGE YOU CAN HEAR



June 7, 2008 --

CHANGE is in the air, with presidential hopefuls promising it everywhere they turn. Kids' musicians are getting in on it, too, with a jazzman going green, Rock and Roll Hall of Famers going young, hip-hop legends heading back in time, and a familiar favorite trying out a foreign language. Here are the latest platters that matter.

HAYES GREENFIELD,
"Music for a Green Planet"

Hayes Greenfield, the creator of children's jazz album "Jazz-A-Ma-Tazz," has crafted one of the most authentic jazz albums for kids to date.

Boasting eco-friendly packaging made of recycled paper and biodegradable inks, the theme of "Music for a Green Planet" is obvious. What really sets it apart is the music itself.

With tons of percussion and varied instrumentation, what you're getting actually sounds like jazz. It's not watered down in any way, but is legitimate jazz music! Plus there's the occasional foray into other territories, as on "Greenable Rap" (self-explanatory).

If you're sick of pseudo-jazz meanderings but don't want your kid's mind to be blown by Miles and Coltrane just yet, you can't go wrong with "Music for a Green Planet."

THE DINO-5, "Baby Loves Hip-Hop"

It's hard for hip-hop-loving parents to share their enthusiasm with their kids. But now the legendary Prince Paul (producer of De La Soul's classic "3 Feet High and Rising") has teamed up with other hip-hoppers to create a long-overdue children's opus.

Narrated by poet Ursula Rucker, the album tells the story of the most old-school rappers of all: the Dino-5. The deep baritone of MC T-Rex (Jurassic 5's Chali 2na) is enough to make you believe he really is a dinosaur, while the smooth delivery of Tracy Triceratops (Lady Bug Mecca of Digable Planets) glides over Prince Paul's groovy beats. Rounding it out are Billy Brontosaurus (Brooklyn MC Wordsworth) and Teo Pterodactyl (the human beatbox/turntablist Scratch, formerly of the Roots).

It's hard to pick a highlight, but if the prehistoric battle rap of "That's Funny" doesn't make you chuckle, you should hand in your humanity license immediately.

JERSEY BABYS, "The Music of Frankie Valli & the Four Seasons for Kids"



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