

Clinton's latest albums sound an earthy note

By Angelo Vecchio

George Clinton is perhaps the most underrated performer on today's music scene. As the leader of Parliament/Funkadelic, Clinton was responsible for the release of about twenty-five albums since 1970. In addition to these, he produced a countless number of LP's for the P. Funk spin-off groups, including Bootsy's Rubber Band, The Brides of Funkenstein, Parlet, Godmoma, The Horny Horns, Eddie Hazel and others. These names may be unfamiliar to many pop music fans, but Clinton's groups dominated the soul/R&B charts for about four years (1976-79).

Clinton experienced a relative dry spell for a couple of years until he hit number one on the soul charts last year with the upbeat "Atomic Dog."

"Dog" and the album from which it was cut, **Computer Games**, were released under the name *George Clinton*. This was the first time he opted to use his own name instead of "Parliament," "Funkadelic," or "P. Funk All-Stars."

Computer Games was a huge success for Clinton, giving his large group of musicians financial stability for the first time in two years, and re-establishing Clinton as a soul superstar.

For 1984, Clinton has released two new LP's: **You Shouldn't-Nuf Bit Fish**, and the P. Funk All-Stars' **Urban Dancefloor Guerrillas**.

Both albums are winners loaded with funk and soul. They stay with the dance groove Clinton has been employing faithfully since 1978's **One Nation Under a Groove**.

Don't misunderstand; Clinton has almost always encouraged music fans to take to the dance floor. "Cosmic Slop" from 1973 included a funky bass line and driving percussion. It's just that **One Nation** almost forced the listener to move.

The same could be said about this year's "Last Dance," the best track on Clinton's **You Shouldn't-Nuf Bit Fish**. "Last Dance" borrows from David Bowie's "Let's Dance," and it asks, "What are you, some kind of psychedelic wallflower?" It goes on to encourage the shy guy to ask his favorite gal to dance by starting, "Maybe she'll funk with you."

Some other tracks on **Bit Fish** also lay down some great party

music. "Nubian Nut" is a funky rap. "Quickie," the story of how Clinton falls for a foxy groupie, and "Stingy" include some mean guitar riffs, backed with a powerful rhythm track and forceful beat.

The two disappointing songs on the album are the title track and "Silly Millimeter." Both are too drawn out. Still, **You Shouldn't-Nuf Bit Fish** is an outstanding LP, the best funk album in quite a long time.

The P. Funk All-Stars' **Urban Dancefloor Guerrillas** is better than **Bit Fish** in that it includes an element of jazz and soul that show Clinton to be more versatile than his "funkmaster" label. "Accupuncture"--"stick it where it feels good; stop the pain where it feels bad"--has an airy, wide-open saxophone accompaniment.

Again, the lyrics are suggestive. But before you accuse Clinton of being perverted, consider this: Webster defines "funky" as "having an earthily sexual quality." Through his lyrics, Clinton encourages dancing and reckless sex. But he does it in a unique way, not a perverted way. This is obvious on both new albums.

The remainder of **Urban Dance Floor Guerrillas** includes perhaps the best song on the album, "Generator Pop," and the soulful masterpiece, "One of those Summers."

"Generator Pop" has an irresistible keyboard work, and "One of those Summers" includes a great vocal arrangement. "Copy cat" is the answer record to "Atomic Dog." It states right at the start, "Bring in the dog, let's put out the cat."

The balance of **Urban Dance Floor Guerrillas** is smooth, interesting and well done. Clinton has become one of the best producers anywhere.

As is traditional with Clinton, the album cover and liner notes (on both new LP's) are loaded with his brand of fun.

If you enjoy upbeat party music, give a listen to **You Shouldn't-Nuf Bit Fish**. If you prefer a smoother, better balanced selection of music, check out **Urban Dance Floor Guerrillas**. In any event, if you're in the market for something very different, very explicit, but at the same time, very danceable and very good, these records are for you. George Clinton has thrived on musical adventure for many years, and so have his legion of fans. Now Clinton is attempting to appeal to a larger audience. Nineteen eighty-four might be the year he's exposed.

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