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Listen Up: *Wednesday, October 17, 2007*

The Rivercrest Yacht Club

The Rivercrest Yacht Club (Fake Rabbit)

Imagine if acts like the Beastie Boys, RUN-D.M.C., and LL Cool J had launched from Panther City instead of The Bronx or Brooklyn. Imagine also if they had kept one snow-white Adidas firmly planted in the local university's library with the other in the 'hood, specifically the mean streets of Fort Worth's Rivercrest neighborhood on the West Si-eeeeed.

The result would be the Rivercrest Yacht Club, a collective that employs a dozen contributors but revolves primarily around four main characters: Heffminster de la Roca, Generic (a Weekly staffer, for the record), The Gaucho MC, and DJ MC DDS. On the RYC's eponymous debut, weird and pop-cult-savvy references abound, from Lacan and Scylla and Charybdis to Star Trek and Kevin Bacon. Even the double entendres require a decent bookish background to be fully appreciated. Parse this nugget from "H-E-F-F," alluding to de la Roca, who "lets his participle dangle like the OED." Who knew that the Oxford English Dictionary could be so sexy?

Plus, you'll also get advice on proper dental hygiene — in real life, DJ MC DDS is a dentist. "A tooth is a cube, it has six sides!" he raps, rather aggressively, on his eponymous song. "When you brush you get three, but you need to get five!"

The brainy elements are tossed into the blender along with the stereotypical trappings of rap, like being fresh, enduring sucka MCs, and jocking ho's (employed more in service of puns than out of malicious intent). Perhaps the band may be best described as the Beasties fronted by a young and less angry Henry Louis Gates Jr. Production values are mid-level at best, but the outcome is still super-infectious. Although many of the stylistic underpinnings harken to early East Coast hip-hop, a lot of them are, um, novel, like the ominous synth chorus on "Electronic Philharmonic" and the sitar and jazzy electric keyb's on the Paul's Boutique-ish "Shake" and "The Party Vigilante." There are also some post-rock flourishes, like on "Robo Jox."

A la early De La Sol, RYC also does skits, like "Tiny Mr. Bubbles," a humorous aside about misunderstanding the term "bubbly."

All of the borrowed stylings are accomplished enough to distract the casual listener from the band's geographic location, but the RYC is definitely representin' the Fort. On "Back, Yo" is the following declaration: "Like Lacan's la langue we emanate from the part of your brain / That drops names, creates slang, and alcoholics / Before meaning, in the field of the pre-symbolic / We rupture like a polyp / 817 is what we're callin'."

Funkytown's b-boys and -girls should be proud to have such a talented, smart-assed bunch calling out t' all area crews. — Tom Urquhart



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