

SLAUGHTERHOUSE



JOE BUDDEN



ROYCE DA 5'9"



CROOKED I



JOELL ORTIZ

PHOTOGRAPHY BY [unreadable]

STEVE KUHN TRIO
DAVID FINCK, JOEY BARON
ALBUM REVIEW

PHOTOGRAPHY BY [unreadable]

● JAZZ

STEVE KUHN TRIO WITH JOE LOVANO *Mostly Coltrane*

DCM
★★★★

Pianist Steve Kuhn explores the lyrical side of tenor saxophonist John Coltrane.

Kuhn holds a direct link to the tenor titan, having served as the pianist in Coltrane's first quartet just before McCoy Tyner.

Kuhn here takes an approach far different from Tyner's. Kuhn's quartet — with tenor saxophonist Joe Lovano, bassist David Finck and drummer Joey Baron — comes to the Coltrane songbook with soft gloves and candlelight. Much of the set is sweet without fawning, mystical without being New Age.

Even *The Night Has a Thousand Eyes*, studded with audio fireworks, exudes a simpatico nature, while Coltrane's classic *Giant Steps* is deep and gorgeous and Kuhn's *Trance*, a solo piano piece, proves to be full of elegant reverie.

Just when the set could begin to sound safe, it veers into later Coltrane, with slashing modernist tendencies on *Configuration*. But here, too, *Jimmy's Mode* provides some peace, and on *Spiritual*, Lovano plays the Hungarian, oboe-like tarogato, on which he eerily conjures up Coltrane's sound on soprano saxophone.

All in all, a nourishing set.
— KARL STARK
The Philadelphia Inquirer

● HIP-HOP

SLAUGHTERHOUSE *Slaughterhouse*

DCM
★★★

What do you do when you're an extremely talented artist who was on the verge of superstardom, but instead fell victim to music industry politics and settled for a small, loyal Internet-based audience? Start a supergroup with three other underdogs, of course.

Such is the story of Slaughterhouse, the grouping of Royce Da 5'9", Joe Budden, Crooked I and Joell Ortiz, all of whom are highly regarded for their lyrical abilities and saw major label deals and partnerships crumble in the last few years. The four-some's debut self-titled album, released independently, is a musical slap in the face to the industry that they feel abandoned them.

Although known independently for street-savvy raps, Slaughterhouse is surprisingly mainstream in its sound. With a chorus preaching "sex and drugs and dirty money," the catchy first single *The One* is a satirical look at the perils of seeking A-list fame, replete with celebrity references and a beat inspired by Lenny Kravitz's *Fly Away*.

Musically, Slaughterhouse is no slouch, either. The four MCs show that they are still worthy of their former industry support on songs like *Not Tonight* and *Onslaught 2*.

The only major misstep is *Cuckoo*, an over-the-top ode to violence and drugs over a sloppy synth backdrop, which is reminiscent of early shock-value Eminem. But with a balance of strong lyricism, some radio-friendly tracks and introspective songs like *Pray* and *Rain Drops*, Slaughterhouse serves as a perfect reintroduction to Royce, Joe, Crooked and Joell.

— ADRIAN RUHI
entertainmentweekend.com