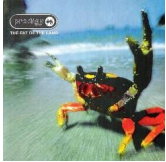


The Prodigy - The Fat Of The Land (1997)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 08 March 2019 13:59 - Last Updated Friday, 08 March 2019 14:26

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1 *Smack My Bitch Up* 5:42 2 *Breathe* 5:35 3 *Diesel Power* 4:17 4 *Funky Shit* 5:16 5 *Serial Thrilla* 5:11 6 *Mindfields* 5:40 7 *Narayan* 9:05 8 *Firestarter* 4:40 9 *Climbatize* 6:36 10 *Fuel My Fire* 4:18 + Japan bonus tracks 11. *No Man Army* 4:44 12. *Molotov Bitch* 4:51
Shahin Bada - Vocals Jim Davies - Guitar Keith Flint - Vocals Liam Howlett - Art Direction, Mixing, Producer Kool Keith - Vocals Maxim - Vocals Crispian Mills - Vocals Saffron - Vocals

Few albums were as eagerly anticipated as *The Fat of the Land*, the Prodigy's long-awaited follow-up to *Music for the Jilted Generation*. By the time of its release, the group had two number one British singles with "Firestarter" and "Breathe" and had begun to make inroads in America. *The Fat of the Land* was touted as the album that would bring electronica/techno to a worldwide audience (Of course, in Britain, the group already had a staggeringly large following that was breathlessly awaiting the album.) *The Fat of the Land* falls short of masterpiece status, but that isn't because it doesn't deliver. Instead, it delivers exactly what anyone would expect: intense hip-hop-derived rhythms, imaginatively reconstructed samples, and meaningless shouted lyrics from Keith Flint and Maxim. Half of the album does sound quite similar to "Firestarter," especially when Flint is singing. Granted, Liam Howlett is an inventive producer, and he can make empty songs like "Smack My Bitch Up" and "Serial Thrilla" kick with a visceral power, but he is at his best on the funky hip-hop of "Diesel Power" (which is driven by an excellent Kool Keith rap) and "Funky Shit," as well as the mind-bending neo-psychedelia of "Narayan" (featuring guest vocals by Crispian Mills of Kula Shaker) and the blood-curdling cover of L7's "Fuel My Fire," which features vocals by Republica's Saffron. All those guest vocalists mean something -- Howlett is at his best when he's writing for himself or others, not his group's own vocalists. "Firestarter" and all of its rewrites capture the fire of the Prodigy at their peak, and the remaining songs have imagination that give the album weight. *The Fat of the Land* doesn't have quite enough depth or variety to qualify as a flat-out masterpiece, but what it does have to offer is damn good. ---Stephen Thomas Erlewine, AllMusic Review

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