



Stepsun/Interscope signs *Fat Bag*, a revolutionary jazz-funk-rap-soul band from Boston. Back Row (l-r): Sam Lopez, and Vic Steffens of Horizon Music Group; *Fat Bag* members: Dave Feusi, Adam Smirnoff, George Thomas, Sam Kininger, Adam Deitch, (Julie Grant, Marketing Director for David Connelly Productions), Jeff Misner, Atticus Cole. Front Row (l-r): Bill Stephney, CEO of Stepsun Records; Alexander, *Fat Bag* founder and lead singer; his Personal Manager, David Connelly, Sr.; and his Business Manager, Al Flamer, Sr.

INTERSCOPE
RECORDS

Stepsun
SUN

Calls	Format	Fa '95	W '96	Sp '96	Su '96	Fa '96
WRKS	R&B adult	1.9	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4
WBLS	R&B adult	1.3	1.4	1.0	2.0	1.3
WPAT-FM	Spanish	1.5	1.0	.8	.7	1.3
WQEW	adult std	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.3
WEZN	AC	.7	.8	.9	.8	1.2
WLUX	adult std	—	.7	.9	.9	1.2
WLIR/WLRI	modern	.9	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.2
WSKQ-FM	Spanish	1.0	.9	.9	.8	1.1

WHAT'S ON TAP

(Continued from preceding page)

debut album, is due the third week of January. Another Jay-Z single, "Only A Customer," is due in March and will preview the compilation "Roc-A-Fella White Label Album: The Soundtrack Of The Streets," which also features Source Money, Memphis Bleek, Akinyele, and Tone Hooker.

• **STEP SUN:** Funk/jazz/R&B band Fatbag will release the single "Flow Betties" in the first quarter. New York hip-hop outfit Troubleneck will drop "Street Life" in February. And comedian/social satirist Paul Mooney will release a third album. In addition, the label will continue to work Washington, D.C., divas Pure Soul.

street, like many indies, national director of publicity McGill. "To compete, we to go straight to retail size point-of-purchase," Street Life uses a street team, often college kids ate best to their peers p. "At radio, it's more Street Life is not only baby acts, but we are unknown producers as McGill.

(19)	24	24	14	CUMBA ALBUM THE MOMENT AR STA 13260
(20)	27	29	16	DANCE INTO FACE VALUE 8704
(21)	29	—	2	FOR THE FIRE COLUMBIA ALBUM
(22)	28	25	15	LOVE IS THE COLUMBIA ALBUM
(23)	30	—	2	DON'T SPEAK TRAUMA ALBUM
(24)	NEW	1	1	THROUGH THE REVOLUTION ALBUM
(25)	NEW	1	1	SEND ME A MM 6400

Adult

(1)	1	1	12	DON'T SPEAK TRAUMA ALBUM CUM
(2)	2	2	18	HEAD OVER FI MAVERICK ALBUM C
3	3	3	27	I GO BLIND REPRISE ALBUM CUT
(4)	4	4	16	WHEN YOU LO COLUMBIA 78428
5	5	6	23	IT'S ALL COMIN 550 MUSIC 78345
(6)	6	5	18	IF IT MAKES YC A&M 581874
7	7	8	30	I LOVE YOU ALI ATLANTIC 87072
(8)	8	7	12	FLY LIKE AN EA ZTT/WARNER SUNSET
9	9	9	28	COUNTING BLU A&M 581462

Real Day

Gigolo Aunts Amazing Royal Crown

And Also Featuring
Ex-Real World
Cast Members' Bands
Unilever (Neil - London,
and Midnight Voices
(Mohammed - SF)

Cast Wrap Party!

Tuesday, June 17th
@ Avalon

Meet the Real World Boston Cast!
Get There early! Music starts at 8pm
Raffle of items from the show!

1017 WFNX

Event Proceeds Benefit:

- Parents United for Child Care
- Wellesley School Age Child Care Project
- The East Boston Social Center

Call TicketMaster at
617.931.2000 for tickets

Tickets only \$18

18+



A penchant to preach

Fat Bag's music is the message

By **STEVE MARLOWE**

Staff Writer

Fat Bag. It's more than a listening and dancing experience. It's a learning one, as well.

Fat Bag — headlining Saturday at Wetlands, 161 Hudson St., Manhattan — is much more than eight guys playing along with the hip-hop and jazz-funk movement. Fat Bag is a movement, using top-notch musical grooves to reach, teach, and preach its way of life.

From the group's press releases and stories written about its members, it's hard to tell if these guys are religious fanatics or a new breed of positive-vibe cultists. The band leader — who goes by the moniker Alexander "Optimus Prime" — sounds more like a preacher predicting the downfall of the establishment than a soul-inspired lead vocalist who also can wail on the saxophone.

Consider this sentence in Alexander's biography: "Knowing that there was already a growing number in the resistance to the commercialized, prefabricated bubble gum that was being force-fed to the world in the form of 'entertainment' through multimedia and television, Alexander's prime objective was to ignite the resistance and give this audience of open minds a place to congregate and

exchange ideas and a band to represent them."

Listen to the band and you'll witness the emotion, the passion, and the conviction that stands behind this statement, as well as this pronouncement: "Optimus Prime's goal is to unite the positive forces of this world through the most powerful and accessible catalyst for change known to man — music."

And the music is good. The eight extensively trained musicians, fresh out of Boston's Berklee School of Music, come together flawlessly to produce a smooth yet spontaneous sound similar to that of Groove Collective and The Grey Boy All-Stars.

Alexander is backed by Samuel "Shazam" Kininger, alto sax; George Thomas "Flavius Walker," bass; Atticus Shadrock Cole, percussion; David Feuis, saxophone; Adam Smirnoff, guitar; Adam Deitch, drums; and Jeffrey Misner, who spins the vinyl.

Fat Bag recently released its debut album, "Hydroactivism" on Stepsun/Interscope Records. Wetlands is the band's first Manhattan appearance since that release, which was celebrated with a huge party in Boston.

Also appearing at this all-ages show are Schliego and Moon Boot Lover. The music begins at 9:15 p.m.

The Merge Tour — featuring

three of New Jersey's best original acts — stops tonight at Maxwell's, 10th Avenue and Washington Street in Hoboken. Clifton's AKP (All Knew Program) kicks it off at 10 with ATL (All Time Low) piping in at 11 and Sect. 8 at midnight.

Sunday, over at Coney Island, High, 15 St. Mark's Place, Manhattan, it's the never-say-die show by those 1980s hipsters of MTV infamy, Modern English.

Only lead singer Robbie Grey remains from the original group that many thought would be a one-hit — "Melt With You" — wonder. But Grey and the new lineup continue to tour before satisfied crowds, mixing Eighties material with songs from "Everything's Mad," released in 1995 on Imago Records.

Another big show this week features the Sneaker Pimps, playing Wednesday at Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Place, Manhattan.

Before U2's latest disc "Pop" introduced techno-hip to the rest of the world, there were bands and artists like Prodigy, the Chemical Brothers, and the Sneaker Pimps, a seductively simple British trio.

"Hopefully we don't fit in anywhere, and a new hole will have to be made for us," said Pimps keyboardist Liam Howe.

Indeed. The two-man, one-woman band has dug a very new and interesting hole, somewhere between indie, alternative, dance, sci-fi, and voodoo.

The Pimps' debut album, "Becoming X" on Virgin Records, is loaded with inspiring lyrics and fantastic melodies.

Boston GlobeMusic Review

Jamiroquai survives early-set funk

By Clea Simon
GLOBE STAFF

As timely as bell-bottoms, and as dated, London's Jamiroquai has captured the hearts and feet of hip young clubgoers, and despite a slow start, the band translated its pop-funk ear candy to a nearly full Harborlights last night.

Think Kool & the Gang. Think Average White Band, and you'll understand the appeal of Jamiroquai, an 11-member group that updates the dance music of the '70s with polyrhythms, ancient instruments, and ecologically correct lyrics. Led by the diminutive, energetic Jason Kay, Jamiroquai opened the final night of its US tour in the chill open-air pavilion by praising the sunset, and the neo-hippie vibes continued, with grooves that circled aimlessly through the first four overlong numbers. Blame the band's size, in part, for the early numbers' disconnected feeling, as in songs like "Too Young To Die" (off the band's first, 1993 CD) in which the three-piece brass section seemed to strike out on its own, virtually leaving the snap-and-pop bass and guitar in another tune. Sometimes the ensemble just sounded as if it was trying to bring too many sounds into the mix: In the

pro-pot "Space Cowboy" (off 1994's "The Return of the Space Cowboy") a fruity flute solo was as misplaced as a tacky movie soundtrack in what should have been a clublike atmosphere.

Either the vibe or the band warmed up soon after, though, and as the 90-minute-plus show neared its halfway point (with "Mr. Moon") Kay gained control of his band. With a voice - and vocal phrasings - that sound uncannily like Stevie Wonder's, Kay makes an arresting frontman. Dancing around like the former Prince, he captured the eye and ear, as he swung, Wonder-style, from soul croon to sexy caterwaul with ease.

It took a non-vocal number, however, to really reset the pins. "Didjital Vibrations," essentially a solo on the yiddaki (didjeridoo) by Wallis Buchanan, seemed to center the band, and perhaps the crowd, as well, giving everyone a break from the syncopated frenzy. The number started slow, but as the long, low booming of this Aboriginal instrument built, keyboard tinkles and chimes began to play against it. From another millennium, the space-age swoops of the synthesizer and, soon after, the rhythm section's renewed funk urged Buchanan into

JAMIROQUAI
with Fat Bag
At: Harborlights Pavilion, last night

his own harmonic convergence.

From that point on, the band picked up the pieces - bouncing and popping in tight funk format behind Kay's seductive voice. Focusing on tunes from the band's third and latest (and most successful) CD, "Traveling Without Moving," Jamiroquai brought summer in early. "Cosmic Girl" percolated as a frothy dance hit should, and "Use the Force" played up Kay's Wonder-like mannerisms, matching the now reined-in brass section note for note in sass. By the time the band hit the obligatory tribute - Kool & the Gang's "Hollywood Swinging" - it mattered little that nothing in the mix was original. The beat was strong, the sky purple, and this summer's sound cocktail in the blender.

Although they lacked the power - and crowd attention - of the too-similar headliners, local octet Fat Bag opened with a tight funk groove and high energy. The band's hip-hop sound particularly heated up when the rap-vocals gave way to twin saxophones that squealed and squeaked with skittish abandon.

A penchant to preach

Fat Bag's music is the message

IN THE CLUBS

By **STEVE MARLOWE**
Staff Writer

Fat Bag. It's more than a listening and dancing experience. It's a learning one, as well.

Fat Bag — headlining Saturday at Wetlands, 161 Hudson St., Manhattan — is much more than eight guys playing along with the hip-hop and jazz-funk movement. Fat Bag is a movement, using top-notch musical grooves to reach, teach, and preach its way of life.

From the group's press releases and stories written about its members, it's hard to tell if these guys are religious fanatics or a new breed of positive-vibe cultists. The band leader — who goes by the moniker Alexander "Optimus Prime" — sounds more like a preacher predicting the downfall of the establishment than a soul-inspired lead vocalist who also can wail on the saxophone.

Consider this sentence in Alexander's biography: "Knowing that there was already a growing number in the resistance to the commercialized, prefabricated bubble gum that was being force-fed to the world in the form of 'entertainment' through multimedia and television, Alexander's prime directive was to ignite the resistance and give this audience of open minds a place to congregate and

exchange ideas and a band to represent them."

Listen to the band and you'll witness the emotion, the passion, and the conviction that stands behind this statement, as well as this pronouncement: "Optimus Prime's goal is to unite the positive forces of this world through the most powerful and accessible catalyst for change known to man — music."

And the music is good. The eight extensively trained musicians, fresh out of Boston's Berklee School of Music, come together flawlessly to produce a smooth yet spontaneous sound similar to that of Groove Collective and The Grey Boy All-Stars.

Alexander is backed by Samuel "Shazam" Kininger, alto sax; George Thomas "Flavius Walker," bass; Atticus Shadrock Cole, percussion; David Feuis, saxophone; Adam Smirnoff, guitar; Adam Deitch, drums; and Jeffrey Misner, who spins the vinyl.

Fat Bag recently released its debut album, "Hydroactivism" on Stepsun/Interscope Records. Wetlands is the band's first Manhattan appearance since that release, which was celebrated with a huge party in Boston.

The Fat Bag members, sometimes viewed as religious fanatics, take a sermon-like approach to their lyrics, promoting unity and change through music.



**Bill Stephney & StepSun Music
Present...**

FATBAG



**WORLD
PREMIERE!**

PERFORMANCE ON

Chris Rock

New **HBO SHOW.**

Performing "Possible Love"



Contact: 212-366-7200

e-mail: StepSunmusic@msn.com

