



At Home with Joan Jett Blakk

Ru, Wake Up, Girl

by Joan Jett Blakk

Ah, that Ru Paul. She's been everywhere this year, has she not? I guess it was as unavoidable as left-over turkey after Thanksgiving that Ru would do a Christmas song. And she has. Now, before I go any further, I must tell you that I absolutely loathe Christmas music. I absolutely refuse to go anywhere near a department store this time of year for fear of hearing Nat King Cole singing about Chester's nuts roasting, or whatever. So it was with great trepidation that I approached this new recording.

Stupid song aside, Ru can really sing. But this is not a surprise. We knew this to be true. His first clever release, "Supermodel of the World" inspired the diva in everyone who heard it. With this song, Miss Ru is following in the footsteps of yet another gorgeous diva. Anyone remember what Grace Jones sang as she climbed out of a box on the Pee Wee Herman Christmas Special of years past? Yes, my children, it was "Little Drummer Boy." Watching Grace sing "Par-rum-pum-pum-pum (or whatever) was

of a gospel-like flavor, with a lot of good old soul music feel to it. I mean isn't this kind of serious stuff? But, above and beyond that, like I said before, I *hate* this song. All of these damn Christmas songs have been done to death, and no one, not even the faaaaaaahabulous Ru Paul can make them sound better. I'm more excited about whatever she'll come up with next.

Speaking of new things, I also gave a listen to Me'Shell Ndege Ocello, a New-York based singer/songwriter. The last part of her name is Swahili for "free like a bird." Her latest effort is called *Plantation Lullabies*, one of the first releases from Madonna's Maverick label. Clearly, Miss Thing's got it goin' on. This is a collection of smooth jazz, hip-hop type rap songs and dancey-like numbers sometimes overtly sexy in style. "Dred Loc" and "Two Lonely Hearts (on the Subway)" were stand-out cuts for me. I'll tell ya though, this girl sounds real butch, so maybe there's some more fun up Me'Shell's sleeve. Good work, Madonna, for pushing fresh talent like this.

So Happy To Be Here

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But Ru, girl, I don't think you want us to laugh at this, do you? I mean it's got kind

of a gospel-like flavor, with a lot of good old soul music feel to it. I mean isn't this kind of serious stuff? But, above and beyond that, like I said before, I *hate* this song. All of these damn Christmas songs have been done to death, and no one, not even the faaaaaaahabulous Ru Paul can make them sound better. I'm more excited about whatever she'll come up with next.

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And speaking of fresh talent, I just want to say how thrilled I am to be here in San Francisco. There is so much talent and glamour and so many luscious boys and hot girls...well, you know, gush, gush. So if you happen to see me walking down the street smiling, that's why. The simple beauty of being here, in this town, in this time, well, I just can't take it for granted. But let me *just* say this, folks, if one more person comes up to me when it's, say, fifty degrees out and they're wearing mittens, a scarf and a knit hat, prepare to be slapped. It's not cold here, folks! Try campaigning for office in the street when it's twenty-nine degrees outside (which it was when I appeared in the Saint Patrick's Day Parade last year in Chicago).

Well, I'm off to a conference on what to do about these terrible religious right monsters who are invading my newly adopted city. So until next time, kiss, kiss. Love ya. ▼



Butch and bodacious:
Me'Shell Ndege Ocello.