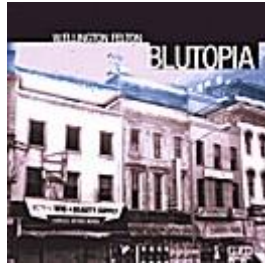


Mp3 W. Ellington Felton - Blutopia



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This avant-garde project dabbles in Funk, Jazz, Drum and Bass, and Latin rhythms 14 MP3 Songs
URBAN/R&B: Soul, HIP HOP/RAP: Alternative Hip Hop Details: It's tempting to describe W. Ellington Felton with slashes: "He's a singer/poet/actor/emcee." Crowned the "future folk-soul hero" by Complex Magazine for his vocals on Prince Paul's Politics of the Business CD, Ellington is using every weapon in his arsenal to resuscitate soul music. "He's a real talented brother, a Renaissance cat, who paints, writes, does books. He's one of those Sammy Davis, Jr. types, but on kind of a millennium style," Prince Paul says of W. Ellington Felton, or "Dub Ell," as he's known in his native Washington, DC. Ellington knows that poems often make the best songs. His hip-hop rhapsodies paint vivid images that engage, and sometimes unnerve listeners. He croons lazily in a dark, almost operatic baritone. He emcees with ease, spitting shrewd rhymes in which compelling tales unfold. "I make it a point to put down everything that I feel, that I think, and that I see," says Ellington, son of legendary jazz pianist Hilton Felton. Whatever is on his mind, he dissects on wax and on stage. One night, he ruminates over finding out that he's a father-to-be. At another show, he recounts hours spent at the DMV, trying to get the boot taken off his car. "Always pay them makes," he warns the audience about parking tickets. "It's not worth it." A former student activist, Ellington slips in socio-political jabs between beats-an effort to shake things up a world he calls "so predictable." "The world is just so obvious right now," he says. "There's no element of originality, or surprise, or spontaneity. The only thing I try to consciously do with music...is try to figure out ways to push the buttons." And of course, he writes lots and lots of stories about love-falling in it, getting over it, and making it work. Rather than the sappy, clich-ridden variety, Ellington's songs address the complexities of love in real life. On the track "Love is Somethin' More" from his 2002 CD Soul Sonnets he admonishes, "Love is somethin' more/Than love songs, love poems, and temporary highs." People are

taking his music to heart. "I get very specific comments in terms of the individual," Ellington says of his fans' reactions, which range from "you saved my marriage" and "you helped me get over a divorce" to "how did you know what I was thinking" and "I don't ever want to make you mad, because I don't ever want you to talk about me in a song." Having performed on the Lollapalooza tour and at the Apollo Theater as a teenager, Ellington is as comfortable on stage with Mos Def, De La Soul, and Meshell Ndegocello as he was in the smoky, candlelit cafs of his open mic days. He quickly gained a following on Washington's poetry circuit with his confessional lyrics, quirky pitch, and spontaneous style. He plays a modern-day Lord Byron on the album Soul Sonnets, spilling his guts over rollicking hip-hop beats laced with classical and jazz loops. He breaks from the romance long enough to reflect on his post-9/11 existence on "Human Beacon," and to join Jive recording artist Raheem DeVaughn in ridiculing a girl from his past (or present?) nicknamed "Ms. Smartypants" on "Poetry," before getting back to exposing the relationship that's got him open. Ellington ventures beyond hip hop and soul for a sonically expansive experience on his latest release Blutopia. The avant-garde project dabbles in Funk, Jazz, Drum and Bass, and Latin rhythms while he explores his heart and soul at a deeper level. On "Equally", he sidesteps baby-mama drama, opting to build a loving future with his expectant lady. "Let's act like grown folks," he demands. He taps Persian-French singer Lou Lou, of Thievery Corporation fame, for help on the bosa nova "Noitulover". He scores with the underdog hip hop anthem for nerdy kids everywhere, "Definition One": "We're the weirdoes/Slash major zeroes...Quietly we were your heroes." When he's not making music, Ellington commands the spotlight as a classically trained actor. He studied theater for four years at Carnegie Mellon University. In 1999, he starred in the critically acclaimed hip-hop play Rhyme Deferred, performed at the Kennedy Center, the National Black Theater Festival, and the Nuyorican Poets Caf. Ellington also graced the silver screen in Breakfast at Ben's, part of Spike Lee's 2000 Afrocentricity compilation of short films by aspiring African American directors. In 2002, Ellington played the starring role in Source Theatre Company's production of Amiri Baraka's The Dutchman. Whether rhyming, singing, or simply reciting lines, Ellington's emotional vulnerability is what makes him both human and powerful. He wields rhymes and soul lyrics like a sword, and then shows us battle scars, fully living up to his personal motto "Art! Hurts."

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