

Music Review: Thundercat + Ron OG & The Chopstars Present Drank



Drank is the chopped and screwed version of Thundercat's *Drunk* remixed by DJ Candlestick of Houston's Chopstars. It first appeared online last year and Thundercat heard it and gave it his approval. *Drunk* gets its musical high from alcohol but

Drunk is the sonic equivalent of a drink laced with codeine. The instrumentalist and songwriter has always been open about his admiration for George Duke's jazz fusion and it shines through in all of his work. *Drunk*, however, comes across like a lo-fi version of George Clinton's Funkadelic band melding with sleepy hip-hop. Thundercat's quirky lyrics and carefree vibe matches well with the lethargic tempos. "Them Changes" is an affable walk of the bass but the screwed treatment makes it feel dizzy from all the repetition and intermittent scratches. Thundercat literally sounds like a ghost of himself as his intonation is lengthened and lowered by the slower speeds. "Friend Zone" compresses the funk and the fluttering keyboard figures seem to bubble over the entire arrangement.

DJ Candlestick makes Thundercat's bass sound like a boat engulfed in comfortable waves inside "A Fan's Mail (Tron Song Suite II)." The weight of his bass becomes heavier and floats until it fades. Kenny Loggins and Michael McDonald being heard within the chopped and screwed method is one of the most unexpected things in music. "Show You The Way To Go" arranges both of their voices into a psychedelic dream state. Their missing vocal range and subsequent placement into lower registers is borderline scary as if both singers are trying to escape a place opposite the heavens. The mood gets brighter on the danceable remix of "Tokyo." Faster-moving beats and glowing tones generate a lighthouse effect to help the imbibers of drunk to wake up and rejoin the party.

Remix albums are not always successful and coherent but The Chopstars have essentially given *Drunk* a second release with *Drunk*. The original album stands on its own as the next distinctive chapter in Thundercat's catalog but *Drunk* claims a different kind of pleasure by continuing DJ Screw's legacy with a palette of complementary colors and bleary-eyed soundscapes.