

# Music Review: Black Spade- To Serve With Love



Once a member of the St.Louis R&B group Soul Tyde Black Spade's dissonant keyboard pieces from Worrell world, doleful belting and earnest rapping has pulsed since the '90s. To Serve With Love is his first proper album hip-hop version 3.0 for a prominent triage of soul, R&B and funk that take sonic favor. Rapping in a pitch part Common, part Q-Tip and a drowsy Busta Rhymes Spade appreciates women, moans about complex love affairs and nonchalantly talks about the brunt of being an emcee. Marching band tromps and harpischord funk keyboards on the half-beat filter the aural environment.

Quirky and self-sufficient Spade performs and produces all the songs under the moniker of Stonyrock which emulate some classic sounds from the past. The drums are understated until a flashback of Jam Master Jay's volume-heavy cardboard box beats energize "Not For The Bullshit." The album's title song bytes the melody of Bob James's "Feel Like Making Love" keyboards and then Lynette Brown sings Roberta Flack's line as a trudging pulse dissolves the song with Spades' verses for an old love. Sharp meters of G-funk fall down on the sides of his words for "The Half That's Never Been Told" that ends with a female voice and piano rant about the ghetto. "Evil Love's" funky claps swing in time with Spade's reflections on love in a raw sing-rap style that hollers less than Ja Rule but kicks game like any old wise bluesman. [To Sir With Love](#) is one of the first movies to challenge teenage angst in a school

setting. Spade's co-opting of the movie title is his antidote for the black veil-wearing hip-hop-is-dead-team.