



Sultry r&b solo artist Harriet Brown is back with a new batch of fully-realized future funk, a slow-burning dispatch from a dayglo dance floor.

The Los Angeles by-way-of-the Bay artist honed his musical chops in church, the birthplace of so many soulful sirens. His first project, New Era EP came out in 2014, setting off a firestorm of critical and fan adulation. Who was this bowl cut rocking, falsetto dropping, shiny suit man?

He followed up with a bombastic debut album, Contact, an expertly crafted, extraterrestrial soul rumination on the ways we fail to connect, restart, and try again. It was also a transitional album. Made between the Bay and LA, it's about the electricity of new connections, the distance of old friends.

Mall of Fortune is his second full-length album, an airtight meditation on anxiety, paranoia and indecisiveness - decision paralysis and the free-flowing guilt that follows. The bowl cut is gone, but the shine is intact.

It was written and recorded entirely at his home in Los Angeles, and in many ways is about Los Angeles - the instagram sinkhole of jealousy, the warm but filthy air, the constant waiting, waiting waiting. Your thoughts and your ride stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic.

The album was produced, arranged, composed and performed by Harriet Brown. He plays every note of every instrument, sings every come-hither falsetto flight - save for two felicitous features from singers Ana Roxanne and Felicia Douglass. Pressing play is stepping into a damn-near singular vision, a world apart.

And what a world it is. This album is 14 songs of meticulous and introspective soul from LA's foremost funk documentarian. Where his debut album was more cosmic, more spiritual, this follow-up is grounded and personal, driven by day-to-day experiences and self-imposed solitude. The best albums sound like emotions registered in real time, then rendered for maximum impact.

Album opener 'Window Shopping' lays it out clear - 'Baby what you want, what you spend your life on / when it's time oh what kind of fortune are you bringing back home?' The weight of each decision can cause conniptions, but choosing nothing is no choice at all.

'Shower Up, Saddle Up' is a bucket of water in the face, the moment you shake it off and find peace with your dime piece, new cologne and a time piece - you stop worrying what people think and hit the town for some me time.

As personal as the album is, its also a rumination on the deep murky macro

mess we're all in. 'Cinnamon Sky' wonders how LA can be this beautiful and this polluted, a sun-soaked biohazard.

'Hardwalkin' takes on our growing police state, surveillance and the fear we feel around people who are supposed to protect and serve.

This is a sonically and emotionally eclectic album, a 'Sign O' The Times' for our times. It's a stew of r&b, soul, funk, and free experimentation, both dense and expansive. Repeated listenings rewarded.

Harriet Brown's live show mirrors the themes of each of his releases. At first he was a one-man orchestra, self-contained fury - a solo artist playing multiple instruments, cueing machinery and selling it with sweat and aplomb. He was a man apart, making contact through song, behind emotional plexiglass.

With the release of Mall, his live performances feature a rotating cast of dynamic singers, rhythm players and melodic instruments. The songs breathe and wind, tumbling forward with Harriet at the helm, the mid 90s Bulls with Jordan on the boards. He's reached out to the world and found himself closer to others, closer to the muse, closer to that 6th ring.

You'll walk away from Mall of Fortune craving the smell of the food court, the stickiness of the arcade. But no matter what you're in the mall for, pull your check out, hit the checkout, we close in five minutes.

Pioneer of romantic funk - **The FADER**

It's funk music for a new generation, for all of us worried about saving the world while having a good time - **LA Weekly**

Harriet Brown should be seen live. He's a luminous avant-garde beacon. The sounds are plush, the visuals are wavy, it's little goofy, elevating, funny.
- **i-D Mag**

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LP \$20.99
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ITEM ID (CAT#): IL2050

Release Date: 2/1/19

For Fans Of: Prince, Janet Jackson, Jodeci, Serpentwithfeet, Dam Funk, Blood Orange, Mykki Blanco, Cupcakke, Nite Jewel

Genre: R&B/Soul