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KID KOALA BASIN STREET BLUES

At dawn, in a New Orleans alleyway, an old tramp is discovered having gone to meet his maker, and

immediately he is carried off in a box by a group of top-hatted pallbearers who stroll down Basin Street to the strains of Kid Koala's hip-hop-inflected revision of a jazz classic.

In time-honoured New Orleans fashion, they attract a crowd for a procession that is more celebratory than funereal. Only in this piece by Toronto-based animator Monkmus (aka Kenneth Wong), the mood becomes so lighthearted that the pallbearers start to become weightless, and soon everyone – bearers, bystanders, ballooning animals – are all floating away into the heavens.

This is all beautifully choreographed to the choppy, whooping sounds of Kid (Eric San) Koala's version, which is the result of the working bond and friendship between artist and director established since Wong worked on visuals for San's Fender Bender for the Carpal Tunnel Syndrome album three years ago. "Eric told Monkmus, as far back as the Carpal Tunnel Syndrome tour, that he wanted to do a turntable version of Basin Street Blues," says Ninja Tune commissioner Vez Hoper. "They had a good time doing Fender Bender, so it was obvious this would be a good project to collaborate on."

Even before he had heard a note Monkmus was working on storyboards. Once Kid Koala had seen the storyboards he started recording to suit the story and Monkmus moved his animation around the music. Here is the result, and it is clearly just the latest in an ongoing collaboration between the musician and the director, as Monkmus explains: "I'm now directing four short animated films that will air worldwide on Sesame Street in 2004, for which Kid Koala provided the music, and I've just completed some short films for Kid Koala's upcoming tour, Short Attention Span Theater, to promote the release of his new album in October."

Director Monkmus Prod Co Monkmus Record Co Ninja Tune
● Monkmus is represented by Soft Citizen in Toronto, Canada;
www.monkmus.com



BANG ON

ON DVD