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06-03-2002
RESIDENT IN GOTHAM

RES-I-DENT ('REZ-D&NT)

N. : ONE WHO RESIDES IN A PLACE : A DIPLOMATIC AGENT RESIDING AT A FOREIGN COURT : SERVING IN A REGULAR OR FULL-TIME CAPACITY

Live from Gotham. New York City clubbing has been through some hardships this past year. With a flagging economy, high unemployment rates and the clubbers' hibernation that sets in during the winter months have all contributed to a somewhat lackluster scene. The big one-offs have failed to attract the masses, so we survive on smaller weekly parties with the dedicated clubbers. While the clubbers of Twilo yore are aging gracefully and still representing, the newest generation of clubbers have been flocking to the bigger, commercial venues in masses. They don't quite get it. There was a certain level of musical education that happened at Twilo. It was the diversity of artists and the regular residencies that helped us explore and expand our horizons. During their four year Twilo residency, Sasha & Digweed brought new music to a fledging crowd in the early days, which grew to massive proportions by the end, when S&D was a buzz word in the mainstream nightlife of NYC. There's something that happens during a residency, a relationship develops and evolves between DJ and clubber. There are certain expectations from the audience and the need for the DJs to bring it each month fresh and new is vital to its survival. It becomes a symbiosis, as world traveling DJs come to experience the scene in New York and the clubbers experience a sound that has traveled through countless numbers of cities and countries until it comes back to Gotham. The worldwide DJs help create my own idea of dance local, think global.

Fast-forward to today - Danny Howell's monthly residency at Vinyl. While we dance to the tracks of Danny Howells, his sound has already been influenced by his most recent travels in Istanbul (not Constantinople), Athens, Budapest and London, only to return to New York on a monthly basis. Danny is the current ambassador to Gotham. He is the premier "diplomatic agent" bringing his blend of sounds that defies definition to foreign courts all over the globe. We know he is dedicated to New York and we show him the same dedication right back. His most recent February visit to Gotham was no different. After a seemingly disappointing set in January, Danny knew and brought it back full force to his fans. In DJ we trust. This is one place where the scene will certainly grow. The word is out and the gospel is spreading, similarly to the S&D phenomenon and their impending grandiose Delta Heavy Tour (Spring 2002). I believe in the residency, "if you build it, they will come."

Shortly after 9-1-1, the mayor Rudy Guiliani asked New Yorkers to heed the call "go shopping" to support the current sentiment; I "heart" NY. Today, there's a different call. In order to sustain the underground scene and watch it grow and evolve, clubbers need to mind the directive to "go clubbing!" There's a certain exchange of energy on the dancefloor that is void elsewhere. Whereas athletes have joined together in Salt Lake City for the Olympic games, clubbers need to come together on the dancefloor to help build the scene once again. Come contribute and take some away. Dancing is indeed just the thing to cure the winter doldrums. Spring and Winter Music Conference are just around the corner, but in the meantime I hope to see you on the dancefloor. To the global community - we'll see you at WMC 2002 in Miami! If only for one incredible week in Spring, we shall truly be global in mind and on the dancefloor.

Cheers
Betty Kang

ALL COLUMNS
BETTY KANG
(NYC)

Looking Ahead 2
30-12-2002

Gotham Summer
13-07-2002

The DJ as Artist
05-06-2002

Destination : // W
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16-04-2002
DESTINATION : // WMC 2002

**ALL COLUMNS
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 (NYC)**

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It has been a few weeks since I've been back but I still have thoughts of conference dancing in my head. It was an undoubtedly insane time of parties, DJs, media and networking. The global dance community was representing in force and I even got to meet my Xpander.nl counterparts for a wee bit. There were too many parties to recount here, but I'll bring my high points of conference to light:

FRIDAY, 3.22.02 - ARRIVAL :// MIAMI

Upon a late Friday night arrival besieged by New York City airport delays and security breaches, we arrived near 1am to our hotel and after a bit of decompression, we set out to start our WMC adventure. A closed guestlist deterred us from the Hooj party @ Opium Garden, so instead we rendezvoused with what appeared to be all of New York at the Balance party @ Billboard Live. After Anthony Pappa's long-winded mixes tantalized the masses, by all accounts Mick Wilson stole the show with a great set with tracks including Bkork and Liz Fraser Underwater. Beautiful! Meanwhile, within the vast space of Billboard, we found Gotham clubbers gathered in the back room on the top floor dancing to the brilliant tag-team set of Sander Kleinenberg & Lee Burridge. The duo was partying up with the best of the Gotham revelers. It was the vibe of an intimate house party with our superstar DJs. That's super in caliber, not attitude. This was a great party to set it all off. We walked home along the beach, which was the last time I'd see the beach for the next four days.



SATURDAY, 3.23.02 - ULTRA4

A massive outdoor festival in downtown Miami. I have never seen a production this huge for the dance music scene in the US and it bodes well for the future of America and hopefully will help pave the way for last year's failed endeavors of Creamfields and Mekka. Bigger than last year, I spent most of my time running around to arrange press for various artists. In the midst of all that, the two highlights of the event were Kosheen's live show and Paul van Dyk's closing set. As far as Kosheen goes, this group is far more than just a 'Hide U' one-hit wonder (on a side note: they did win Best Record of the Year for 'Hide U' at the DanceStar USA awards held at WMC). The breadth of their sound with Sian Evan's sultry vocals and the energy of their live performance is truly a diamond in the rough of the dance music scene. To cap the 12+ hour massive event, PvD brought the massive crowds to frenzied heights of energy at the end of a long day with his signature sound. He is well-loved in America and it showed.



DELTA HEAVY TOUR

Afterwards, I walked the couple short blocks to the Miami Arena for the launch of the Delta Heavy Tour featuring Sasha & John Digweed, plus mastermind Jimmy van M. This trio brings it on full-force with a production unrivaled in the dance music scene. As they embark on their 35-city US tour, I implore you to go see them at the closest venue near you. You will not be disappointed. Sasha and John are both on the cusp of releasing new albums and after a long hiatus, their sound is most welcome. Plus, the visuals and lasers make this a must-see. Watch out America!

SUNDAY, 3.24.02 - SASHA & DIGWEED BOAT PARTY

This was a highly coveted invite as the guestlist turned into a who's who of dance music. We inked that if the



...and the boat went down it would serve a major blow to the industry. It was the creme de la creme of artists including Jimmy van M, Chris Fortier, John Creamer, Sandra Collins, Sean Cusick, Sander Kleinenberg et al. and of course our gracious hosts Sasha & John. Also on board were friends, promoters, label and media heads and in true egalitarian fashion, all those milling about the dock without invites were eventually let on board to join in the fun. I spoke with a team of street marketing folks who were at the dock to hand out flyers and they could not believe their luck of landing on the boat. There was something magical in the air as we cruised along Biscayne Bay with the sounds of Jimmy, John and then the masterful Sasha to close the night along the shore. I think Tye Comer, Associate Editor of Mixer magazine summed it up best with the heartfelt sentiment of everybody on board, "I never want to get off this boat." True that.



SAW.RECORDINGS * WMC PARTY @ LOLA



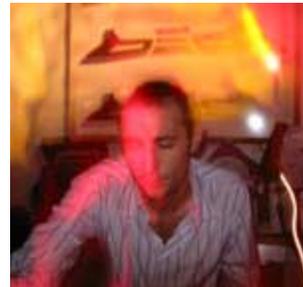
After a long deserved disco nap, I made my way over to the SAW.recordings * WMC party @ Lola. I missed Hector Romero's set which was said to be a blend of masterful skills, to already find Satoshi Tomiie on the decks rocking it out. This party turned into a who's who as well, as Ali of Deep Dish, Digweed, Sasha and Trendroid made the rounds. This was one of the finest sets I heard all conference, as Satoshi is a master of mixing and programming. It's no wonder he has been chosen for Global Underground's next NuBreed 6 compilation. He has chartered new territory with his sound and deserves the accolades and recognition. He may even rival Digweed for "nicest guy" award. Whether in Gotham, Miami or Ibiza - Satoshi manages to keep his sound real and underground.

MONDAY, 3.25.02 – URB MAGAZINE AND ESSENTIAL PRESENT AQUATHEQUE:03 BOAT PARTY

The boat was at capacity with hundreds of people with invites denied access to the boat. One can definitely not get enough of the boat parties, where the food is fine and the liquor flows freely and the talent is always top-notch. There's the intimacy of the boat where all are held captive and the openness of the bright Miami sun. A respite away from the dark, smoky clubs and this one was no different with Sander Kleinenberg and Pete Tong rocking the decks for a three-hour tour. A moment for the books was a conversation between Sander and legendary Grandmaster Flash – a true meeting of the global dancefloor minds of past, present and future.

MADE IN BED

Another disco nap and off to Made in Bed with Danny Howells. Always a Gotham favorite, he led the party into a frenzy amidst club kids jumping on beds. Anthony Pappa, Satoshi, Hector Romero, John Creamer & Stephane K, Lee Burrige were all in house to represent. In this intimate party space, Danny does it again by creating one of the best party vibes I witnessed during the week. Cheers Danny!



DANNY TENAGLIA @ SPACE



Then we're off to the other Danny. Danny Tenaglia's legendary party @ Space. The hype for this party was gargantuan and I can only imagine the craziness that preceded our 8am arrival. This was the quintessential who's who. Too many industry sightings to make note. Whoever it is, they were probably there. The darkness of the mainfloor was near-blinding, but we found shiny, happy people on the terrace rocking out to Danny's beats and his deck-side chats amidst the global theme of international flags and doves hanging amidst the terrace crowd – dance local, think global™ - YES! For a moment I thought I was back on the terrace at Space in Ibiza. We lasted 'til 4pm, while the party was rumored to have gone 'til 6pm - only for the hardcore.

TUESDAY, 03.26.02

After a quick stop to check in at the Bullitt Bookings Party @ Spin (read: industry party). Behrouz set the dancefloor off, while we spotted the Xpander team (Hi Arno & Patrick!) Ali & Sharam, Ashley Casselle, Trendroid et al. before heading off to the Essential Party @ Opium Garden. A beautiful outdoor venue with Sander Kleinenberg already rocking out on the decks. This flying Dutchman flew to our rescue as my friend Taj slipped and sprained her ankle in the club. A security guard carried her out and Sander followed suit in true gentlemanly fashion. We chatted curbside and the sprained ankle was replaced by a bright, smiling Taj as we grabbed a cab home. Back at the hotel, we put Taj to bed with an ice pack and again we set off to go to the Satellite Records Party @ Steam. We missed Dave Seaman and Parks & Wilson, but heard killer tracks, as I guess only the boys at Satellite would be privy to. A lackluster crowd was indicative that the party people were losing steam, but we stayed to catch the last tune to support.



WEDNESDAY, 03.27.02

The last dance at Nikki Beach with Steve Lawler, Dave Ralph, and Carl Cox. Although I was told Lawler left in a huff when his slots got switched and Taylor proceeded to close out the night. Regardless, Coxy banged it out with some merciless techno beats and my partner could only mutter "WOW!" as Coxy pulsed the beats harder and faster. What a way to end the week's festivities.



So another conference comes to an end and the frenzy that is Winter Music Conference leaves me gasping each year, but the beauty of the global gathering is truly remarkable. The synergy of the week-long party where DJs, producers, media, publicists and the requisite clubbers come together has been inspiring if not tiring. The biggest news of the conference for me was Trendroid's signing to Kinetic Records to do Transport 6. The release is scheduled for July 2002 and Trendroid will join the prestigious ranks of Paul Oakenfold, Dave Ralph, Sandra Collins, Max Graham and Quivver. Nary a pair of talented, hard-working blokes are more deserving of this high honor. As the conference gets bigger and bigger each year, 2002 is shaping up to be a year to look for up-and-coming DJs and producers and a nod to Gotham as we eagerly await Trendroid's Transport 6 and Boxed's Nubreed 6 by Satoshi Tomiie. It was a good time at WMC 2002 and it's going to be a good year in Gotham, you just wait and see...

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05-06-2002
THE DJ AS ARTIST

**ALL COLUMNS
BETTY KANG
(NYC)**

Looking Ahead 2
30-12-2002

Gotham Summer
13-07-2002

The DJ as Artist
05-06-2002

Destination : // W
2002
16-04-2002

Resident in Goth:
06-03-2002

The Chemical Brothers recently played a sold-out concert to Gotham on a Tuesday night. They've come a long way since their days in Madchester and this is their first live show in NYC in three years (since Sept. 1999), right on the heels of the release of their latest album 'Come With Us' in January 2002. Ed & Tom did it again, crafting another exceptional album; studded with songs featuring vocalist Beth Orton & former verve front-man Richard Ashcroft plus, instant dancefloor hits 'It Began In Afrika' and 'Star Guitar'. The first hour of their performance brought on a slew of songs written for the dancefloor, 'Out of Control', 'Block 'Rockin Beats' and 'Star Guitar'. The people definitely were up for it, shaking their booties in concert-fashion.

What interested me was the comparison of the Chem's show to the Delta Heavy tour with Sasha & Digweed. They both had visuals projected across massive screens, enveloping two men twiddling knobs and playing records in the dark to bring their sound across and a crowd that goes mad for it. Hmm... The Chems production was only a step away from the recent Delta Heavy show in NYC (04.13.02), but on further examination I saw that the two were culturally worlds apart.

The Chem's audience was not a clubbing crowd but touching on a mainstream American concert audience. The typical American breed of concert crowd for whom, curiously, dancing is rarity; often consisting of alcohol influenced and induced bobbing up and down. Why Americans have such inhibitions about dancing is sheer wonderment. Isn't this the home of individualism and self-expression? Where freedom of expression is a constitutionally guaranteed right? Where endowments for dance artists is a carefully preserved trust? You'd think that dancing wouldn't be the esoteric fringe recreation that it is. We'll just have to chalk it up to those puritans for their legacy of chastened sensibilities. The irony of America's schizophrenic attitude on dance music continues when you realize that here it's considered acceptable for the Chems to play through their historical hit list, while DJs are berated if they decide to play the same songs in sequence or exhibit a perceived lack of originality in track selection.

But there's another consideration to all this: the perception of DJ as artist. The Chemical Brothers have long been producing original artist albums showcasing their talents as composers and musicians, which many consider something more than just "somebody playing other people's records." Is this the missing link? As more and more DJs shy away from compilations and mixed CDs, is it the artist albums that will separate them from the herd? Maybe, but then I hear what is sure to be a timeless classic like Digweed's MMII and all bets are off. You also see the mix of both worlds as DJs go back into the studios to remix songs and tracks to create original sounds, not always identifiable as the original. In the world where everybody wants to be a DJ, producing seems to be the surest deal-maker.

Of course DJing is much more than just playing other people's records. We know that. There's the basic skill of beat matching, but there are elevated skills of pitch and tonal control and set programming. This is Digweed over the course of a solo 8 hour set where the entirety of the night may seem like one uninterrupted, continuously evolving song. Then, there's Sasha who always manages to bring me into a higher state of consciousness with his melodies of sheer beauty. Their respective DJ sets have moved me countless times on the dancefloor, as much if not more than any performance of original material.

This September 2002 Sasha will expand his role as DJ-Artist / Artist-DJ when he releases his long-awaited first artist album Airdrawdagger. In the works for the last 1 year, we've been privy to select songs during the Delta Heavy tour and during the course of the night they take a-hold on you and help create the most memorable moments of the night. Surely this will up Sasha's ante as global superstar and the American mainstream will take

notice. I hope so. The global underground can bear a little mainstream recognition. At the same time we have DJ-cum-producer Paul Oakenfold bursting out with his debut artist album Bunkka. For all the ridicule, Oakenfold serves his purpose and has pushed forward dance music in America by leaps and bounds. The running joke now is that the only thing more tired than Oakenfold is bashing Oakenfold, but he's a necessary break from a landscape of disposable teen pop stars like Britney and N'Sync. Tranceport (Kinetic) will always remain a classic for a generation of clubbers. I recognize his statue as that of gateway DJ to the masses, or at least a gateway to Sasha and maybe to better dancing.

We should all take note on how to push the scene forward. Spread the word and support an underground scene that can use a little push above the radar. Sasha & Digweed's Delta Heavy tour was an attempt at this. I bet those folks in Boise, Idaho are now dancing to a different beat. Meanwhile, across the pond the UK festival season is starting to heat up this summer, the US clubbing cognoscenti should take note and support their local scene. The dance music scene was not built in a day. Although, we may not have Homelands or DanceValley, but there's so much fertile talent in our own backyard. If they bring it, will you come? I sure hope so. See you on the dancefloor!

Cheers
Betty

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Betty Kang New York
www.bettykang.com
Dance Local, Think Global™

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13-07-2002
GOTHAM SUMMER FUN

**ALL COLUMNS
BETTY KANG
(NYC)**

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The dog days of summer are upon us in NYC with temperatures hitting 100F / 40C and sticky with humidity. It's been hard to find one's summer groove in the midst of such heat. At this time last year, I was dancing on the sunny beaches of Bora Bora in Ibiza and partying with the masses of punters on the white clubbing isle. This year there are no sandy shores and superclubs in store, so we'll have to scour Gotham's concrete jungle for the summer spirit. Lo and behold it exists, even on our tiny, overcrowded island, we find our own summer fun.

BE YOURSELF FRIDAYS WITH DANNY TENAGLIA



On a recent Friday night, Danny Tenaglia beckoned me to be myself. In usual form, he belted into the microphone announcing that he had just returned from Ibiza on the same day. Visages of the planes flying overhead on the terrace at Space resurfaced and the magic of the shiny, happy people dancing in blissful unison - a true global clubbing community. While sitting on the edge of the DJ booth, Danny told us that (we) his second family was there in Ibiza with him. He takes the true Be Yourself spirit of New York with him, and brings some of Ibiza's back, filling the newly-designed ARC space (the club formerly known as Vinyl) with what he deemed to be the Ibiza tune of the year. Wicked! Danny definitely thinks global.

SATURDAY WARM UP SERIES @ P.S. 1

The most unique and forward thinking summer clubbing in Gotham is the ever-popular P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center's Warm Up series – an annual music festival in its fifth year that celebrates each Saturday with a fusion of political & social conceptual art and the cutting edge of electronic music amidst futuristic architectural installation. P.S. stands for Public School - a forgotten elementary school that's been converted into an outlet of the Museum of Modern Art in a desolate strip of Queens. This year's installation incorporates wave-like structures made of PVC tubing that wind throughout the courtyard, while reflecting pools and showers provide a bit of relief from the heat and a hot tub(!) to ease muscles sore from dancing. The dancefloor has been moved from previous years to make it the focal point of the party. A grand staircase overlooking the newly-positioned dancefloor let's day-time partiers get their groove on and the chatter of hipsters fills the sandy chill-out area. Appropriately enough for P.S.1 the too-cool-for-school mentality lingers, as all too often New Yorkers wear their attitudes on their sleeves. This is a party for the masses though; clubbers, hipsters, families, come one-come all. As the summer warms up, so will the attitude of the hipsters. P.S. 1 helps bring it all together because when the sun is shining and the beats are banging, all you have left to do is groove and smile.



OVERBOARD - MATTER:/FORM SUNDAY BOAT PARTIES



Three years running and the Matter:form crew does it again with a series of boat parties cruising along the East and Hudson rivers. Though the skyline has changed since last summer, the spirit of the seas prevail. On a recent Sunday, Brooklyn's newest resident Richie Hawtin threw down some serious techno, while the newest high priestess of techno (and newbie NY-er) Magda joined in

techno tandem. Party people were all in the wind. Stellar line-ups throughout the summer including Mr. C (July 21st) , Layo & Bushwacka! & Dave Hollands (Aug 11th), and Terry Francis (Sept 15th) Just be sure to bring your sea legs, as the combination of open bar and open water can make it difficult to keep your feet aground.

BEDOUIN BRUNCH & BEATS SUNDAY SESSIONS @ LE SOUK

Only a month old and this party has fulfilled my summer intentions. Word of a good party spreads like wild-fire in these parts, but when I first hear word about this party I was incredulous of its location. Although I've actually eaten at this Middle Eastern eatery in the heart of the East Village before, I had no idea of the summer paradise lurking behind the tenement buildings. Then I ventured near the back into a courtyard and discovered the party people in full-effect. The minute I walked in a smile crept up on my face and the vibe had me captivated. This was The Party I had been looking for. A covered tent area with velvety



couches and hookahs gave shelter and respite overlooking the grassy dancefloor. Meanwhile, Jason Swamy (Shame promoter, our host & DJ) and the DJ duo Astroglyde - James Bem & Gaby Dershin - were well on the course of lubricating the dancefloor (hence their namesake). They had the revelers in an uproar on this quiet Sunday afternoon in the middle of nowhere and at the same time, in the center of the universe. You'd never know the rambunctious going-ons from the restaurant front, but once inside you were immersed in another world. It could have been Ibiza, it could have been Morocco – all we know was it was our own green patch of paradise in the concrete-laden city of Gotham.

Summer fun abounds in Gotham, but if you can't be with us, go seek out your own summer groove, smiles and dancing in the sun. There's nothing quite like it and it'll be winter soon enough, so go out and make the most of these summer days drifting away...

Cheers
Betty

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LOOKING AHEAD 2003

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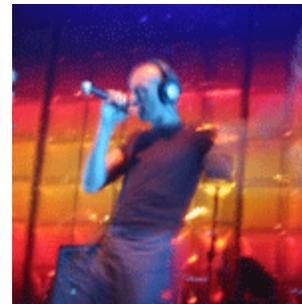
Destination : // W
2002
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Resident in Goth:
06-03-2002

My sincere apologies for my outrageously outdated column on Xpander. Sean Cusick's diligent articles are putting me to shame and my last article "Gotham Summer Fun" feels like a lifetime ago. Plus, there have been new developments in Gotham that deserve proper attention. My reluctance to write was partially due to just being busy, while the other reasons were a general disappointment and lack of inspiration by "the scene". Often times I read through the online dance music message boards and I'm left with a distaste in my mouth. The complaints about this DJ or that, the scrutiny and awful rumors that sometimes surround artists, empty dancefloors and the general lack of enthusiasm for what was a brilliantly vibrant and inspirational culture has left me in slight despair. On another note, reading Sean Cusick's column over the past few months, has left me alternating with feelings of shock and apathy and at the same time, rekindled inspiration. His honesty is quite brutal and his pugnacious optimism inspired me to write again - particularly from the heart. As the year comes to an end, there are always the inevitable "Top 10" lists (or "Top 100" as Sean repeatedly pointed out), "Year In Review", "Best Of", "Looking Forward To" - plethora of categories and classifications to understand where we are and where we're going. So here I am doing the same, reflecting on what I've seen and what I'm looking forward to next year. As 2003 approaches, I am again hopeful and I see promise in New York and the people in the industry that are really going to make it happen.

2002 - THE BAD NEWS

New York is still in a recessing economy. We're continually experiencing layoffs, unemployment is still on the rise and the transit strike that was just averted in the 13th hour was overwhelmingly frightening to imagine. The chaos that would have ensued during this holiday season was almost incomprehensible. In the midst of all this, dance music labels have been hard hit with the closing of 10 year veterans Strictly Rhythm, layoffs at V2 (on the same day Underworld rolled into Gotham for the Best Live performance of 2002 to 3,000 people going mental) and Kinetic Records downsizing (Transport series) among the casualties. Club attendance and record sales are staggering and the last few months have been particularly hard as disposable income dwindles and clubbers just aren't getting excited anymore. Virtually, jaded clubbers and music snobs abound on message boards like NYC online dance community NaughtyBooth.com. Where has all the love gone? Where is the unbridled enthusiasm, and the butterflies in your stomach? When was the last time you were on the dancefloor and you opened your eyes to see the people around you and knew everyone was feeling something in unison? Like we were all were at the forefront of something magical or historical or both; and each person knew everyone else felt it.



2002 - THE GOOD NEWS



We've definitely had our moments and the year has certainly had its highlights. You just had to look harder, have patience and learn to enjoy what you've got. Over the summer, Sunday parties at Le Souk brought a little bit of Iberian magic to an East Village tenement backyard. Together with DJ-production outfit Astroglyde, Jason SWAMY the promoter, DJ and host of Shame< (pronounced Shameless) brought Gotham an entirely new mindset and vibe that revitalized us for a few summer months. It was something all of us needed and would soon not forget. This Sunday soiree is already on everybody's list of top parties in 2002. Swamy continues his Shame< magic at Le Souk's Sundays Winter Sessions, where more often than not weekend warriors are found dancing until 5am Monday morning. Truly, the



are found dancing until 3am Monday morning. Truly the best Sunday night in our vast city. Also, Shame< presents Habit-at Saturdays at Sullivan Room in NYC and we're looking forward to getting Shame< in Miami at the Winter Music Conference 2003.



Then there are the DJs and producers to look out for. New York has a disproportionately high number of aspiring artists in addition to veterans of the scene that keep it going. Yet so many times, New York DJs don't get any love. The big clubs fly in the international DJ superstar, while the homegrown talent picks up the opening slot. But living and working in New York should give you international credibility. If you can make it here, you can make it anywhere... New York is a launchpad for the global stage. My own party Plexi's mission is about New York. It's about artists who live, breathe and work in this gritty urban environment. The energy here is world renown and the people who seek out New York, well, they have something special going on. Maybe it's just a fire in the belly or a hunger of sorts or the fact that no other city can whet the appetite once you've had a bite of the big apple.

So the DJs and producers to keep an ear out for next year - Satoshi Tomiie & Hector Romero of SAW.Recordings. This label is releasing the new sound of dance music. Every month each release astonishes me. The consistent quality and production are a testament to the label heads. Satoshi always mentions that the tracks on SAW are the ones he'd be playing out. In that case, run to go see Satoshi at a club nearest you. We just happen to be lucky that he lives here. Balance Promote's young protégés (Steve Porter, James Zabiela & Tim Skinner) are picking up what the big boys (Sasha, Digweed, Chris Fortier & Jimmy van M) started and hope to continue. With Chris & Jimmy already settled in Gotham, we'll have to see what transpires when Sasha moves to New York next year. The Low End Specialists are leading a Thursday revival at Centro-Fly. Recent nights with Jody Wisternoff (Way out West), Parks & Wilson and Tom Stephan (Superchumbo) have been top-notch in regards to music, lights, sound and the much-improved space (now if they'd only get rid of that center stage). Maybe they'll even successfully convert a bit of their clueless crowd to quality music. Isn't that how it all starts anyway.



Meanwhile clubland in Gotham is readily expanding. In the last few months new clubs like Estate (the club formerly known as Limelight, where I received my first clubbing education nearly 10 years ago), Powder (designed by aesthetically pleasing designer Karim Rashid), Capitale (an addition to the Marvisi empire that includes Exit, Estate and Spa) and B'low are opening all around town (for the record Crobar is still rumored to be opening up in the spring). There's more out there than I've mentioned but you get the idea.

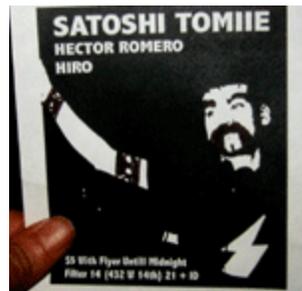


As New York faces an economic downturn it seems our new business-minded Mayor seems intent on issuing permits, generating revenue and sparking capital investments, but then turns around and issues noise ordinances, proposes smoking bans and starts raiding clubs. Maybe it's just a ploy to fine everybody up the nose and close the budget gap at the expense of NYC nightlife. Just something to make you go hmmm...

Meanwhile a small club in the meatpacking district's westside has been quietly stirring things up. Filter 14 has played host to the forementioned monthly Blister/SAW residency with Satoshi Tomiie (GU Nubreed 6) & Hector Romero to much local fame and acclaim. The Blister promoter Craig Higgins keeps the spirit alive with wicked decorations and theme parties week in and week out. Craig is another one of my nightlife inspirations.



Thursday nights at Filter play host to my own Plexi nights with





Chris Fortier, Rob Di Stefano (Twisted), Astroglyde, Trendroid & Low End Specialists (before they landed their Centro-Fly residency). Can we say I * heart * New York talent. And most recently on a special Tronic Treatment Monday night, Richie Hawtin (newly minted Brooklyn resident) & Sven Vath celebrated their CD release "The Sound of the Third Season" (Novamute) to the throngs gathered and to those queuing down the block. All of this in a box-sized club with big room sound that holds the true heart of the underground. Nowhere else in Gotham are you going to get the intimacy and intensity of music and clubbing that Filter 14 affords. If you find an alternative, please let me know.

Another club that is embodying the underground ethic at heart is Arc. The club formerly known as Vinyl has seen headier clubbing days but alas, Twilo was not built in a day. Is Arc the new covenant for underground clubbing? Is it the passageway to the promised land after 40 days/nights of rain? Recent nights there have been sparse on attendance but big on talent. DJ Vibe, Mr. C, James Zabiela, Funk D'void and the mother of all parties Circo Loco (Ibiza) recently pitched their tent in town. Arc is definitely one to watch, especially in the midst of the burgeoning superclubs, VIP rooms, \$350 bottle service and no trainer policies that may signal the end of the underground.



THE TIES THAT BIND

So where does this all lead us to in 2003? There are massive changes going on in New York and I think the tide is turning. 2003 holds much promise for those who believe and are striving for something better. Music scenes tend to be cyclical and in regards to the electronic dance music scene the ebb and flow is expected especially in concurrence with the current state of the economy. Over the last couple of months I've had numerous conversations with DJs, producers , promoters, managers, labels and various other people in the industry about the state of dance music. We all feel the lull but we are forging ahead with optimism. The year 2002 has left us stronger, smarter and closer together. I don't mean that in a "can't we all get along" hokey sorta way. It's about seeking out quality people who share the same vision, desire and passion to see this through. Everybody I've mentioned above shares those things. They are all contributing to the scene with their talents. What can you contribute? Whether you're a DJ with a record box, a producer with still warm CD-Rs, a promoter with a burgeoning party, or a business man with a club or just a clubber with a penchant to dance, then do it! Find the spark that ignited you in the first place. Find the impetus that makes you move. Seek the music that touches you. Make it happen and bring originality, creativity and energy to everything that you do. 2003 will be about the synergy that attracts and binds people together. Many of whom have plans of action and the fortitude to see them through in 2003. The people that I've met over the course of the last year, these conversations about the industry and where we think we're heading, I think the discourse has just begun, but time will only tell. 2003 is definitely going to be a wild ride.

Cheers
Betty Kang
 Dance Local, Think Global™

