



House of Helden

THE MUSIC WAS BOOMING, feet were moving, and the booze was *always* flowing. But best of all, the small dance floor was filled to capacity with sweaty bodies moving to thumping basslines—another Saturday night at the Wave Waikiki. A quiet month had passed since the last big-name DJ—San Francisco's Mark Farina—came through town, and people just needed to dance. That's probably why, a fortnight ago, they came out in throngs a fortnight ago—the crowd redefined standing room only—there wasn't even room for that.

But one makes do with the space he or she has, and despite the inevitable occasional elbow in the back and spilled cocktail, it was a proper night of—and bonus points to those who know where this quote comes from—"house music all night long."

The headliner of the evening (and the producer who came up with that snippet on one of his more successful records) was, of course, the bad boy of house himself, Armand Van Helden. Warming up the dancefloor before him was fellow New Yorker DJ Whatt. The crowd, a pretty eclectic mix of aging Aussie rug burners (they were dressed for the Hanohano Room, but moved like limber 19-year-olds), token military dudes on the prowl, and of course, the dolled-up divas who always seem a bit out of place in a grungy place like the Wave, ate up Whatt's mile-a-minute mixes of funky acid breaks and ravey house. He must have gone through what seemed like 50 records in his 90-minute set, and like a good set-up man, by the time Van Helden took to the decks, the sweaty crowd was buzzing for more.

The scene was like something out of a gladiator movie: The emperor steps up to the balcony and the crowd goes berserk. When Van Helden entered the elevated DJ booth—sans his trademark doo-rag—the reaction was much the same. But there was no time for long-winded speeches... a simple drop of the needle onto the record is all it took... and then a roar from the direction of the dancefloor that may have been felt at Diamond Head. Bodies moved, liquid spilled. There was no room to walk around, but there was just enough space to dance. And that's all that really matters, right? —Wing Ho

The Wave Waikiki

1877 Kalākaua Ave.
(941-0424)

Getting in: It depends on the event

Dress Code: For women, low rise jeans, strappy shirts; for men, low rise jeans, T-shirts

Soundtrack: Whatever Mr. DJ plays—house, hip-hop, mashup

Sightings: Richard Cheese, who else?

Signature drinks: Nightly specials