

AK1200

CONTINUED FROM D1

figure out what to play next and so on. I play for the people that come to see me; I never play for myself. That's why I am always looking at the crowd. ... I try to give my all when I am playing, and sometimes it means I am just throwing as many tunes in as possible, or sometimes it means I am being very deep and concentrating on how well things blend. Either way, it is always for the people that have come for a good time. ... When everyone is going mental and I can see the joy in their faces — it is why I do what I do.

Q. Do you consider yourself a pioneer in this genre of music? What influenced you to pursue DJing and producing as a career?

A. Yes, I would consider myself a pioneer within my genre. I am the longest-running drum 'n' bass DJ in North America. I started DJing in 1989, and I owned a record store in 1990. Then I started getting all of these obscure white-label records in from the U.K., and they sounded like hip-hop sped up real fast with loads of samples, and I have followed the music through every course of its evolution to what it is now. So yeah, I have been here from the beginning and plan on being there through the end, or as long as you will have me.

Q. Tell us about Planet of the Drums — how did that come about? How is it traveling with the top drum 'n' bass DJs? Do you ever feel like there is a competition?

A. Well, the three of us were all signed to a label called Moonshine Music, and we would do these label tours, and the three of us (Dieselboy, Dara and myself) would get the little side room while the rest of the label's talent were in the main room or bigger rooms, and we had so many people coming up to us saying they came just for us, and we all kind of talked about it. We knew we were the three highest-selling and biggest-draw DJs for drum 'n' bass in the United States, but no promoter would ever book all three of us at the same show, so we either had to wait for the label to do its tour and stay in the side room, or come together like no one before us has ever done, and try to show

the clubs and promoters that with the three of us together can fill any main floor in any venue.

We decided on the name Planet of the Drums, and we demanded to be put in the main room with the real sound systems, and we set out to prove to the world that drum 'n' bass has just as much appeal and worth as any other form of electronic music. That was the year 2000, and we are still going strong. ...

Through the years, we have fine-tuned our show and created a unified performance. ... We usually have two people playing at the same time, with the other in rotation, and we always have our man Messinian on the mike, commanding the crowd. We have our own little variants of competitiveness. It's all friendly, though: We try to get special tunes that the others don't know about and drop them right when the other would notice, or maybe we will play little tricks on each other, like leaving someone with a very difficult song to mix out of or maybe only leaving them less than a minute to line it up and mix it out, little things like that.

Q. You've released a new album; tell us about that.

A. This last album, "Weapons of Tomorrow," was more of a concept album. I basically went on a very popular drum 'n' bass message board and asked for demos. ... The response was phenomenal — I received over 300 tracks from all over the world, and I had a long journey selecting 20 of the ones I felt best expressed what I wanted.

Q. What can we expect to hear at this show?

A. A wide range of tunes. ... I will keep the energy up and the vibes strong.

Q. What do you suggest for people in Hawai'i who want to be in touch with more music.

A. For drum 'n' bass particularly, people go to Web sites and message boards that feature this music, like www.dogs.onacid.com and www.breakbeat.co.uk. ... Also, places like iTunes and Beatport have huge selections of dance music, available sometimes before it is released on CD, just do a

search for what genre or artist you wish to learn more about.

Q. Do you have any projects you're working on?

A. I have just wrapped up my latest project. ... I teamed up with Gridlok, who is one of the premier drum 'n' bass producers in the world, certainly at the top of the U.S. list. We have known one another for a very long time, and we both feel the same way about the music, and we personally feel that drum 'n' bass has been stagnant. ...

We feel the best way forward is to go back and deconstruct everything and rebuild it using the key elements that drew us into the music to begin with, and trash the rest. Get rid of the noise and the artificial drone sounds, and make the music real again — bring back the soul, the break, the rolling bass lines and the melody.

The only name that fit our project was "Autopsy." The new album, "Autopsy," is a double CD. The first CD is mixed by Gridlok and I, and the second CD is a CD-ROM that has some bonus tracks that have never come out and also some stems (isolated tracks) of one of the songs for producers out there to use for making their own remix. We plan on launching a remix contest ... and the winner will ultimately have their remix featured on a 12-inch of one of the singles from the album.

This is a very exciting project for us, and we hope to change the world of drum 'n' bass, one album at a time. The release date is Aug. 5, on "Project 51" recordings.

Lacy Matsumoto is a freelance writer on music and pop culture.

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