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THE RUB

BROOKLYN, NY / UNITED STATES

Described as a 'dive bar on steroids,' Brooklyn's Southpaw is home to The Rub, founded by DJ Ayres as a classics/hip hop night back in 2002. First DJing on college radio in upstate New York, the Rub has snowballed into well... everything:

The Rub is a night.

The Rub is a DJ collective.

The Rub is worth experiencing.

Rewind to the late '90s and we find DJ Eleven back in San Francisco trying all possible routes to make a living in music. After several radio show gigs and club nights galore, he eventually traded in the San Francisco hills for the concrete jungle of New York City in 1999. Ayres and Eleven met at a loft party in the city and Eleven was a guest at the very first Rub night along with Darshan Jesrani (of Metro Area fame).

Meanwhile, Cosmo Baker was busy running a tremendously successful Philadelphia Monday night hip hop weekly called "The Remedy" with good friend Rich Medina. The graffiti-loving teenager was then discovered as somewhat of a prodigy by King Britt. Cosmo went on to play alongside folks like ?uestlove of The Roots. Cosmo knew at that point he wanted to dedicate himself entirely to music. By 2000 he was well-travelled and even

held down a residency at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, yet eventually burned out. In search for some added inspiration, Cosmo picked up from the Philly scene and high-tailed it to the Big Apple.

"When I first moved to New York in 2003, I was working for a newspaper selling ad space and I had pretty much retired from DJing. It's crazy how things can change just that quickly," recalls Cosmo.

Cosmo was one of the first guests at The Rub, and the three DJs quickly bonded musically and with like minds. They began slowly building what is now one of the freshest acts to come out of New York.

"We did regular stuff like print flyers, posters and put them everywhere. Southpaw would list us in the 'Village Voice' and all that and we would email all our friends to come. The door price was cheap (\$3 the first year), the drinks were cheap and the DJs were good. But the main draw was that it was a really fun dance party," recalls Mississippi-native Ayres.

In addition to their promotions, the three DJs continue to consistently release mixtapes to keep their growing fan base happy with new music. They currently have dozens of mixes and they continue to make new ones each month (all available for digital download on The Rub's website and TurntableLab.com).

In the midst of churning out the music and doing what they love, the track that put The Rub on another level was *It's the Motherfucking Remix v.1*. "That was the first official thing with our name on it that hit hard worldwide," says Cosmo, "It made enough impact for people to start checking for me and



my crew. That was the key, because you can be as dope of a DJ as anyone, toiling day and night to make a name for yourself, but it's not until you release product that people start to take you seriously and start looking at you differently."

The live performances are chaotic and grooving at the same time. They all use Serato Scratch Live, so at any given time they can choose from over 10,000 songs to play (bending and manipulating them to their liking). Sometimes they each play for 20 or 30 minute stints and sometimes they tag song for song. It's all a game with the crowd: a teaser here, a big bassline there. In the span of a single set, you may hear a Jay-Z track, followed by a heavy reggae tune, followed by your favorite rave anthem

from the mid-90s. Top that off with a dash of disco and a fresh B-more track and you've got the beginnings of a night with The Rub. There's something for everyone no matter what you're into.

This genre-defying sound has sent them to clubs in Europe, Asia, South America, the Caribbean and dozens of cities in North America. All three of The Rub gang spent 2006 touring and making new fans.

In their off-time, if you can even call it that, The Rub run several radio shows; the newest of which is their show on Scion radio that just started in May. The next show will feature an interview with Jazzy Jeff, a tribute to hip hop in Philadelphia, and of course, jokes and smack talk from our Rub residents. Then there's the Hip Hop History show for BK Radio; they

dedicate one show for every year in hip hop, starting with 1979. They also have a show on BrooklynRadio.net that has been running since last Summer.

Another side project the guys manage is the "Rub Remix" EPs. "We're up to seven EPs, in addition to the four 'It's the Motherfucking Remix' CDs. We have one rule for these releases: only those who have DJed at The Rub can send remixes for release consideration," says DJ Eleven, "but we encourage folks to send us new remixes any time and periodically we'll have amassed enough that we all really love and we'll put out another volume."

This year The Rub will continue to tour and simultaneously assault their fans with mixtape after mixtape. DJ Eleven plans to devote more time to being in the studio. Cosmo Baker is tying the knot this year.

DJ Ayres will be working on his T&A Recordings label with Tittsworth while pushing the Baltimore club sound. The Rub will continue to be held at Southpaw and the guys have plans to play several park parties in Brooklyn, surrounding areas and at worldwide tours.

Named the best party by the "Village Voice" and "New York Press," The Rub is a staple in New York City nightlife. In retrospect Ayres says, "After the first few years, it got to the point where the night was sold out every time without us having to do any flyers or posters. It has been a natural growth. We didn't sell it too hard or force it down anyone's throat. We let people find us. I think it's better that way."

Source: itstherub.com.