



## SHORT SYNOPSIS

When the first beat drops and the dance floor starts to fill; people will begin to dance as the d-jay takes them on a journey. For one given moment it's about connection through a communal experience. Welcome to the network; the Global Groove Network. This documentary is a look at how the past can reflect the present; how music can shape your identity. This is a story of music in culture and community and how that helped me find purpose. My name is Courtney James; I want to take you on a journey...

## LONG SYNOPSIS

Since the beginning of time music has been an expression of the human spirit. Through music and dance, society has used the power of rhythm and beat to create community, identity, and a soundtrack for our lives. For the lucky few that have had the chance to be shoulder-to-shoulder, sweat drop to sweat drop, and find a connection to their fellow species on the dance floor, it truly is euphoric. Connecting from such a primal place is something that doesn't happen as much anymore due to our societies need to evolve and become efficient. The human species is becoming more and more like the machines that we've created to help push us into the future. Even though we can reach out to every inch of the globe and communicate through the power of the Internet, we've lost that need for face-to-face interaction. Communication and connection has become sheltered.

This 90-minute documentary will be examining the sociological aspects of the electronic music scene from its early beginnings and evolution through the 70's disco era as well as its underground growth as a community to the present. The communal tribal experience in music has been something that has shaped people for many generations, including myself. Before I left to go to university my life had fallen apart through my parent's bitter divorce and a personal struggle to find family and direction. I was a member of generation X and music, much like the sixties, became something of an identity for its youth. It's been 10 years since I was first introduced to my first rave experience and it shaped the person who I've become today. This film is my exploration into what music can truly mean to people and how they identify with the world.

As we follow my personal story of reflection we also breakdown the walls of how this underground culture became compromised. The d-jay, the traveling minstrel for the ages, is examined on many different levels. We look at the d-jay as an artist, performer, and music god to many. How does a person, who many consider not to be a true talent, inspire a community of partygoers to congregate for hours on a dance floor? Along with the performer we look at the people who make up this community. This music revolution has become a haven for the outsider. A community made up of straight, gay, mixed races, different religions; all come under one roof, one melting pot, for a mutual love. This is truly a family affair for individuals to have a communal experience with one another.

This documentary is a trip into the subconscious of music and tribal healing. The myths and the realities of this culture will be exposed. Prepare yourself for the journey... Welcome to The Global Groove Network.



## GENERAL OUTLINE • THE FILM

The documentary The Global Groove Network is a first-person expedition deep into the heart of the global d-jay culture. Filmed between 2006-2011 in locations across Canada and a variety of locations in Spain, Great Britain, the United States and Mexico, it features interviews with both the stars and the rank-and-file inhabitants of this world—from globetrotting superstar d-jays, to their adoring fans, to promoters and the historians who put the scene into cultural context. In a unique slant, it also features interviews with the politicians who seek to police the suspect morality of this subculture where recreational drugs are both the norm and plentiful. Breaking the scene down from a sociological perspective, it explores the tribal sensibilities of the scene, as well as the system of interpersonal connection and communication engendered by this primal musical expression and its performance.

While any underground culture always faces more challenges when it comes to finding its audience, connectivity has never been higher within the electronic music culture. Prior to the Internet the underground “dance culture” fans were regionally segregated, but that changed with the advent of social network sites. Sites such as Facebook, My Space and Twitter have served to unite aficionados of electronic music and the d-jay culture, expanding the scene exponentially.

The Global Groove Network is also a love-letter to this community, narrated by a filmmaker who knows it from the inside out. The film wraps around a ten-year reunion organized in 2009 with six friends who shared the same rave experience. In looking at the effect that electronic music culture has had on their lives, past and present the film highlights the “community aspect” of the d-jay culture—perhaps it’s most important aspect.

As the filmmaker, I explore how electronic music changed a city through its impact on youth in the nineties – the same period that I was first was exposed to the RAVE culture. Toronto was one of the biggest cities in the world to embrace this culture. Music has always had a defining role in the way youth culture finds its identity with the friendships they make and the beliefs they share with individuals from all walks of life. Music is something that is expressive and allows people to see one another’s commonalities. Nothing shows us this more clearly than this underground culture’s past to present experience in Toronto and around the world.

## THE ROOTS OF ELECTRONIC MUSIC

Music has had a powerful impact on the human spirit since the dawn of time. Throughout history it has comforted, soothed, and celebrated mankind during moments of pain and moments of triumph. In every genre of music, one common thread exists: expression. Expression of self, through music, transcends race and religion, bridging disparate cultures and defining moments in popular cultural history.

In order to understand what this scene represents, one needs to understand the musical climate from which it was born. The d-jay culture began its evolution in the 70s, when the club culture truly began its descent into the global consciousness. During the upheaval of the late 60s and early 70s—Vietnam, Watergate, a gas crisis—the notion of “protest” moved to the forefront of political consciousness as it was then defined. An awareness of the need for some sort of change was in the air.

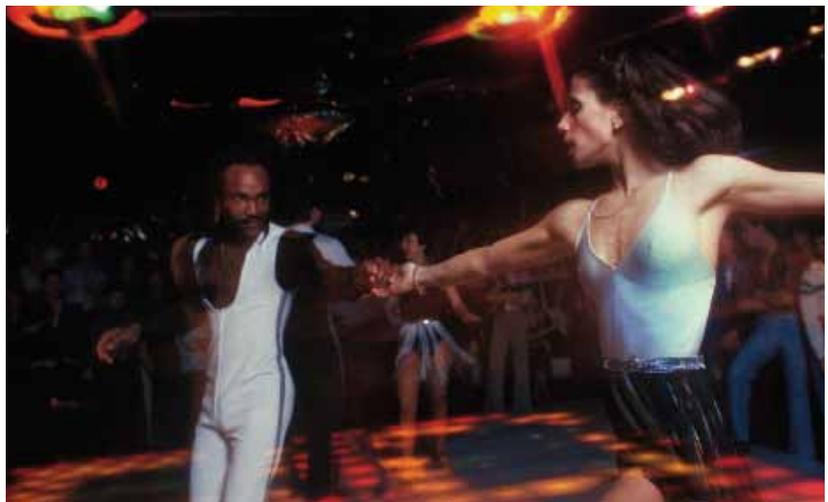
Music led the way in expressing these issues of social change, heralding a previously unknown concept: the notion of not taking ourselves so seriously.

The 70’s became a time of hedonistic individualism and no environment really catered to this the way the new club scene did. The disco scene had become a haven for the cultural outcasts of bourgeois society—blacks, Hispanics, hippies and gays formed the foundation of this scene, centered as it was in eastern urban centers in the United States like Philadelphia, New York City, Detroit, and Chicago.

The disco environment promoted acceptance, freedom, community, and sexuality and people embraced this. Dancing to upbeat music under the strobes with one’s fellow rebels was a new and invigorating form of rebellion.

As the 70’s progressed and disco became more popular, a little movie called Saturday Night Fever hit theatres, skyrocketing the scene to new commercial heights. The Bee Gees became superstars, Studio 54 became the ‘it’ place for celebrities and a new movement had taken over the musical landscape. The disco phenomenon was the last movement that was built and driven by the baby boomer generation. The d-jay was finding a new appreciation through this process and became an underground celebrity of sorts. People were beginning to be aware of d-jays and what they brought to the process. It was one of the defining moments of the art of the “mix,” embodying the idea of programming the expression of a journey as music for a dance floor.

Any successful musical movement can become its own worst enemy. An angry backlash against disco music and its values evolved concurrently with disco’s ascent to the pinnacle of the charts. Part of the blame for the hostility can be laid at the feet of mainstream musical artists like Rod Stewart, Kiss—as well as a variety of one hit wonders coming out of the woodworks during that era—for those who recorded disco tracks in an apparent attempt to cash in on its popularity. The listening public grew impatient and disgusted.



With the help of radio personalities around the United States, a Disco Sucks campaign began, resulting in 90,000 people burning disco records in protest in Chicago at Comiskey Park. Disco was officially dead as of the 80s, but as with any powerful music phenomenon, it went back underground to evolve into the electronic music that I would be exposed to, House.

By 1988 the House music movement was about to burst forth, with innovative sounds being created by means of new electronic technology affordable to basement musicians. Synthesizers, drum machines, sampling vocals, and creating the d-jay mix tapes craze of the eighties allowed a new breed of artist to express themselves.

While the disco craze had self-immolated in North America, Europe clung to it tenaciously. Disco music, which evolved into House music, was embraced overseas. It opened doors for the youth of that era to embrace a neo-hippie mentality much like the original variant embraced by North Americans in the 60s, during the psychedelic counterculture movement.

Electronic music represented rebellion to the Thatcher-era youth in the UK. The original "Summer of Love" was in 1967, when as many as 100,000 people converged on the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood of San Francisco, creating a supernova of cultural and political rebellion. The hippie was born.

The second "Summer of Love" refers to a period in Britain during 1988-89 that heralded the birth of Acid House music and the euphoric explosion of ecstasy, drug experimentation and raves. It was a seismic event for UK adolescents during the late eighties and dance music was the root of its existence.

The music of this era fused dance beats with a psychedelic, 1960s flavor, and the dance culture drew parallels with the hedonism and freedom of the disco era and original "Summer of Love" in San Francisco two decades earlier. The "smiley" logo is synonymous with this period in the UK and the demand for this music as well as new breed of d-jay was at a fever pitch. D-jays such as Frankie Knuckles, David Morales (USA), Carl Cox, Pete Tong and Paul Oakenfold (UK) were just some of the names that began to reach global recognition for their musical programming and productions. This label that represents 'music artists' was truly being redefined by the d-jay during this music revolution.

Music led the way in expressing these issues of social change, heralding a previously unknown concept: the notion of not taking ourselves so seriously.



## TORONTO: THE CITY WHERE I FOUND MY OWN SOUNDTRACK

When I first moved to Toronto in the mid nineties I was going through a lot of questions with my life, as most people do at the beginning of their adulthood. I was twenty years old, questioning higher education's importance and looking for my identity. The music generation of the nineties was going through a real revolution with amazing new voices in the Seattle alternative scene, east coast- west coast rap wars, and this amazing new electronic sound that had d-jays evolving into artists.

Toronto has always been a city that embraced music – likewise its youth opened their arms to embrace RAVE events that held 15-20 thousand people. The city became a hot spot for d-jay talent to perform as well as travelers flocked to the city to participate in our multicultural scene. The RAVE's primal expression of music was addictive and provided a place to connect and build our friendships. This would be an important aspect to the soundtrack of our lives.

As Toronto's youth embraced this underground culture in a big way, the mayor and police chief at the time declared its war on the rave scene. A few unfortunate deaths relating to drugs gave these two political powers a reason to center out this booming music movement as a political platform for re-election. Raves were banned and the youth decided to fight back protesting through a major rally held at City Hall. The I-Dance rally brought together 14,000 people to dance in front of city hall and show the politicians that we were a peaceful but powerful force united. The rally led to the rave ban being lifted and the people had spoken. It was a big victory for my generation; it showed the power that young people could demonstrate when they believed in something.

I would never forget this impact of music and community on my identity. I was excited to revisit it at a new place in my life 10 years later and see how it had evolved. As I re-look at dance culture its come full circle and is making a comeback...

## **FROM PAST TO PRESENT – THE DIRECTORS JOURNEY**

Five years have passed since we shot our first interview for this film. On a personal note, as I've gone deeper in to this culture and met the people that create it, I've found my passion and connection in my own life once again. As the narrator of The Global Groove Network, as well as its Director, my own story comes full circle with this realization.

Music is a powerful form of expression that can connect people globally no matter what race or religion. The electronic music scene and its primal ability to unite its followers, through rhythm and beat is the essence of the culture it represents. The study of it has ramifications for the larger definition of community.

The message that this scene is, the outsider has been always welcome to find a home when the real world wouldn't accept them. This community is a melting pot of like-minded people who have found an opportunity to find family and friendships here, much like I, myself did. Through the course of this film the audience will see the effect this ethos has had on the participants.

This journey, for the viewer, is to a much deeper place than the concept of dance beats and d-jays mixing music for a crowd. The film celebrates the meaning of passion, expression, family, and the power of what a culture can bring to peoples lives.

This film is my love letter to a community, a city, and my Canadian ideals that reminds me everyday of what life can be when you choose to live it.

Welcome to my network, The Global Groove Network.



# THE STORIES IN THE FILM

## PORTRAIT OF THE FILMMAKER AS RAVE CONNOISSEUR: THE BACK STORY

In 1996 I was a 21 year-old ex-competitive swimmer trying to decide if I wanted to finish university. As a teenager, I'd made it to the Olympic trials, but a shoulder injury had forced me to quit the McMaster University swim team. My world had been the pool, and my teammates were the most important people in that world. My parents' ongoing war at home having yielded to an inevitable divorce, the swim team had become my de facto family.

That said, my departure from McMaster had resulted in an even more painful severing—from my ex-teammates. Sports teams in general don't support ex-teammates once they leave the fold. It's very much a tight, exclusive unit that has membership rules. Once you give up that membership, the other members tend to give up on you.

My girlfriend tried as best she could to cope with my subsequent depression, but our relationship didn't survive. I needed an abrupt change. I decided to leave Hamilton and move to Toronto. A definitive geographic change seemed mostly likely to elicit the effect I craved. Toronto was just an hour drive. I figured I could finish my last two years of school from there, even if it meant sleeping on couches a couple days a week and decreasing my workload by spreading it out over the summer semesters.

This new direction was exciting for me and I was truly doing it solo. I rented a room in the downtown core and raced to find a job that would pay my rent before my student loan ran out. It took me about a month but I was lucky enough to be referred to East Side Mario's by a friend who was already working there, and they hired me.

East Side Mario's is an Italian style restaurant for the family-friendly customer. The slogan was Badda Boom, Badda Bing. The food was not geared to an overly discerning customer. Still, the people I worked with were a colorful batch of characters. They became the closest group of friends that I ever had. We all got along brilliantly and we complemented one another. We were all growing together. We were all the same age and we were all looking for the next chapter in our lives. Even as we were getting to know one another better, Toronto was itself evolving in new ways musically...

I had grown up in the country and was exposed to a lot of classic rock, which evolved into alternative music as I graduated from high school. I had never really gotten into electronic music other than listening and dancing to random commercial dance tracks the d-jays played at the university bars. It was really minimal exposure, but I knew I liked it.

My friends at the restaurant had been out a few times to random raves and parties and suggested we all go to one and experience it as a group.

This event, a rave called "Connected," was billed as the ne plus ultra of the Toronto electronic music community. The scene in Toronto had been growing through the 90s, catching a tailwind from the electronic music movement being exported from the UK and growing throughout the States. Toronto was becoming a hot spot for this new sound and culture and it was about to truly show its popularity, and was about to host 14,000 of its loyal subjects at an all-night party.



## CONNECTED, OR LAST NIGHT A D-JAY SAVED MY LIFE

When we arrived at the automotive building at the CNE I didn't know what to expect. The d-jay lineup was an all-star list of names in the electronic community, including Carl Cox, Armin Van Helden, DJ Sneak, and the d-jay that would change the way I viewed this music, DJ Dan. The line that trailed in to the CNE grounds was at least 2 kilometers long. The music echoed through the entrance as 14,000 people waited patiently to get inside. The lineup represented a wide array of race, religion, age, and gender.

The moment we went through security and made our way through the sound curtain draping the entrance, we realized that we were congregants in a church of sound. The automotive building had been spilt down the middle with "Drum" and "Bass" on one side and House music on the other. The House section became our home base.

The sound was deafening but, after our ears had adjusted, we were able to give ourselves over to it. By coincidence, we had arrived just as the legendary DJ Dan had taken over as conductor.

Dan was very distinctive in his look, always wearing a ball cap, black shirt, and jeans. He had grown up on the west coast scene, starting in Seattle, making his way through San Francisco, finally settling in Los Angeles where his popularity was peaking. This was Dan's first visit to Toronto and he didn't disappoint over the next two hours of his set. I suddenly understood what was meant in the title of the song, "Last Night A DJ Saved My Life."

The party ended at 10 a.m. As we left the complex, we were struck with a profound sense of disorientation: the sun was shining, it was daytime, and we'd lost the concept of time. We felt bonded by the music. Over the course of the next year and a half, we dedicated untold hours to the dance floor, as well as following our favorite d-jays, like DJ Dan. As for me, I'd found a new community and a new "family" to replace the one I'd lost when I left competitive swimming. I'd found my tribe at last.

## THE REUNION

In 2000 I had graduated from McMaster and was at a personal crossroads. I wasn't alone. One by one, our tight-knit group began to unravel as we began to leave the restaurant and start to pursue new interests. The friendships remained, but we were all acutely aware of the fact that we were ready to grow up.

The electronic music scene in Toronto seemed to be feeling the same growing pains direction as we hit the new millennium. The biggest dance club in the city, Industry, was about to close its doors forever and the big raves had become political targets for city council concerned with rampant drug use.

The emphasis on drugs, big sponsorship dollars for clubs, commercialism, and greed by promoters, had ultimately sucked the life out of the underground scene we loved by bringing it too far above ground.

In 2005, on the verge of turning thirty, I broke up with my girlfriend and moved in with my friend Chad from the restaurant. I had been working in the film industry as a PA, AD, background player, and occasional doing stunt work for a pay cheque. My life was reflecting another change and this is where the next chapter of my life would begin.

As I began to unpack my things, I found a shoebox full of old pictures and memorabilia. The memories came flooding back. Like any great flashbacks, a great soundtrack was required. I dug even deeper into my packed belongings and pulled out some old CDs that I hadn't listened to in a long time, CDs by Fat Boy Slim, Carl Cox, Crystal Method, Chemical Brothers, Daft Punk, and my all time favorite, DJ Dan.

The genesis of The Global Groove Network occurred in that moment...

Several months later, there was enough distance, both emotional and temporal, to properly break down the components of this story from a perspective of maturity that only distance and time provides to turn it into a documentary. The journey began and I was ready to embrace this story I wanted to tell.

The first order of business was finding my former East Side Mario's crew. To me, a reunion would provide the essence of the story—family, community, and connection. Except for Chad, I had lost touch with the core group. The adventure of tracking them down excited me. Facebook was still in its infancy, so I had to rely on more time-tested ways to track

down names and addresses. The reach-out process took a total of five months.

I managed to find Solomon, Chad, Richie, Grant, Eric, and finally Mike who had moved to Newport Beach CA. The rest of the group had been scattered throughout the outskirts of the city, as well as small town's hours away. While tracking them down, I was able to have one on one time with everyone and get the full update on their lives. Chad had just had a baby girl, Richie had gotten a radio d-jay position at CHUM FM, Eric was about to open his first dance studio and hair salon, Grant was renovating his first home, Solomon had just gotten engaged and was about to declare bankruptcy, and finally Mike was married and had opened up a Chiropractor Clinic in Newport Beach, CA. As we reconnected and reminisced we couldn't help but get emotional. The friendships were still intact and our mutual love for the scene was intact.

All we needed was a reason and I was happy to give one. When I told them my idea of getting everyone back together for a 'One Night Only' event with DJ Dan in order to make this film, they all agreed immediately.



## IN PURSUIT OF DJ DAN

Following my decision to make a film exploring the dance music culture, using our reunion as the prism through which it was to be projected, my first thought was to reach out to the one person whose music inspired it in the first place, DJ Dan.

I made several attempts to get in touch with him, to no avail. I was about to give up when I happened to run in to Dan in Las Vegas. By complete coincidence, I'd happened to get away for a weekend in January and happened to be staying at the Mirage hotel, where JET Nightclub was based. Dan happened to be doing a night there. I called a number that had been given to me by a promoter friend. This time, after about the fourth ring, he answered. I gave him an outline of what I hoped to accomplish with this film. He seemed intrigued, and invited me to JET that evening.

Dan proved to be an interesting character in his own right, and has become a significant focus within the documentary. He just celebrated his 20th anniversary as a professional d-jay, and just got back from his busiest travel schedule yet, and has his first concept album coming out which is a celebration of the last 20 years of his career.

The album is a heavily influenced retro type album that pulls the sounds of disco, new wave, and old-school House samples into the future. Growing up in the disco era, partying in the 80's early House scene, and beginning his global d-jay career in the early 90s, Dan has seen it all and has a lot of great insight to the scene of past and present.

Over the course of the film, we examine the impact Dan had on my personal life as well as understanding the "Day in the Life" of a d-jay as we follow him around Winter Music Conference (the professional d-jay's Super bowl) in South Beach, Miami. Along with our reunion event, this examination of Dan's life and career provides the general audience a deeper understanding of why these performers do what they do and the chaos that can exist being an underground rock star.



## PEOPLE I'VE MET ALONG THE WAY

### YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD: RITA'S STORY

Societal pressure to follow an age-appropriate lifestyle, is pervasive and persistent. Young people are schooled to believe that they need to go to university and sow their wild oats with random experiences, then settle down get married, have children, and become "responsible" people who should naturally gravitate to different activities as they grow older.

While researching "the scene" for this film, I encountered an extraordinary woman who turns this expectation on its ear. One night, I was on a dance floor, and I couldn't help but notice her from across the room. The energy she gave off with her smile and her kinetic dance moves was something unique. Fellow dancers stared at her as she tore up the dance floor with a group of friends half her age. This extraordinary woman was in her fifties, enjoying the moment like she was twenty. I needed to meet her.

Rita is a fifty five-year old hair salon owner who rediscovered the scene at a late age. Rita was a product of the disco era. During the mid-70s, before Saturday Night Fever brought the disco music and disco dancing to international attention, the dance scene was finding it's identity with the baby boomers. Rita loved to dance. As these new clubs and musical sounds became available to listen and participate to in her twenties, the dance floor became her home for many years. She couldn't get enough of it until, as all good things go, inevitable changes occurred. The disco bubble burst, and everything changed, especially for Rita.

She decided to hang up her dancing shoes, get married, have a child, open her business, and begin the "white picket fence" lifestyle that seemed preordained. Rita was on her way to the next stage in her life and her love of this dance culture became just a memory from her youth. Music was still a part of her life but the hands-on dance floor experience wasn't something she felt she could indulge any longer, given the exigencies of her new "grownup" life. What Rita couldn't have known at that time was that would she would revisit this scene in its evolved form thirty years later.

By 2002, Rita's life was a success by any objective standard: she was a business success, she had a good group of friends and associates, and she was a proud mother, even though she had divorced from her husband back in the 80s. Life was good, but like many people before her, Rita realized she was at a crossroads. There was a nascent conflict between her sense of responsibility to her life, and her dawning awareness that she missed the passion of her younger years. At the time, Rita had a young gay assistant named Jeff. The two instantly hit it off and developed a strong friendship during his time at her salon. Jeff and Rita had similar interests in music but Jeff had a real passion for the electronic scene, specifically house music. Jeff would tell her stories about his outings to the clubs, what current d-jays really brought the house down, as well as gave her mixes to listen to. Rita shared her experiences of the disco era and mentioned that she had hung her dancing shoes some time in the past, due to the direction her life required her to take her at the time.

Jeff insisted that she come out with him and his friends one night, and before she knew it, she was on a crowded dance floor at the Guvernment in Toronto—at age forty-eight. The people at the club were young enough to be Rita’s children but to her, it was like coming home. The music, the atmosphere, the d-jays performance, and the crowd gave her feeling that she hadn’t experienced in a very long time. It was as though she had discovered an old love, one that had invited her to reclaim a lost identity of her own, and identity that she’d filed away with age.

It’s been seven years and counting since this reintroduction. Today, she still makes time for the dance floor. She may be less frenetic about it as she was twenty years ago, but she feels it’s important to her soul. The experience is not without its challenges, given the perceptions associated with her age. Rita can feel the eyes on her, in both a positive and negative way, when she goes out. Some people can’t believe that she is out on the dance floor keeping up, while others are inspired by the “never too old” attitude that she wears as a badge of honor.

I decided to follow Rita to one of these events and capture her in action...

## The D-Jay: Fraud or Authentic Artist?

One of the most persistent criticisms snapping at the heels of the professional d-jay is that he’s not actually “an artist,” but instead simply a cipher who plays other people’s music and calls it “his.”

In opposition to that criticism, The Global Groove Network explores what a d-jay actually represents. A talented d-jay is, in fact, an artist, one who understands the deconstruction of melody, rhythm and beat. Along with this understanding of music, he is able to focus and create, from scratch, a new way to present. Attending these events, the d-jay’s effect on the audience is immediate and apparent. In this particular setting the d-jay is not out to play “the hits.” He or she is out to create mood with offbeat selections that are carefully chosen to represent the d-jay’s unique signature. The art of ‘digging’ to find the perfect track for the audience is, for the d-jay, something on par with a quest for the Holy Grail. Along with this process, d-jays today have started to aggressively create their own music thanks to the evolution in technology. Moreover, d-jays consider themselves to be artists, so any accusation of “fraud,” when describing a d-jay, could be considered fighting words!



## IBIZA, THE HOLY LAND

Ibiza, the Mediterranean island 79 km off the coast of Spain, is considered “the holy land” for electronic music and the birthplace of the international “d-jay superstar” label. The island has been a haven for the “almighty bass beat” since the 70s when disco began to hit its peak in the international music scene. Love, peace, rejuvenation, hedonism, and spiritual awakening were the basis of this island’s atmosphere. Hippies were the mainstay of the island during the sixties and

it never lost that spirit of its community's purpose and beliefs for the decades to come. Global travelers from far and wide would come to the island to relax and experience this evolution of electronic music that was worshipped by the inhabitants and vacationers. To truly understand this phenomenon I decided to pack my bags and make my way overseas in order to bring this place and what it means to the electronic music community to the audience.

When The Global Groove Network film crew traveled to the island, we interviewed international d-jay sensation Sander Kleinenberg as he played the Pacha club. In the interview, he discussed the island, the scene, and the role of the "superstar" d-jay. The "superstar" d-jay now signs autographs, has an international travel schedule, and a paycheck that would rival any top rock or pop band. The d-jay had become an artist, a superstar, and a brand. Ibiza is the birthplace of this glamorous variation on the garden-variety club d-jay. The dream of most d-jays is to make it to the island and play for the crowds that come from all over the world. Connection and community was never more apparent on the dance floor than they are in Ibiza, as witnessed by the filmmakers when we were there.

Over the course of the interview with Sander, the filmmakers were able to meet Lenny Ibizarre, a local d-jay/hippie. Lenny moved to the Ibiza 15 years ago, after his first experience on the island. He fell in love with the community, the dance floor, the beats, and the spiritual healing forces that the island is rumored to possess. Lenny became a fascinating interview, guide, and example of how people are truly affected by the island, the dance culture, and the sense of connectivity it is known for.



## A HISTORY OF TRIBAL TENDENCIES

Since the beginning of time, every culture has used music and/or the power of rhythm and beat to unite their people in one way or another. From the most elemental—a baby connected its mother through heartbeats—through to tribal drummers leading their fellow tribesmen in spiritual worship, to a sports events home crowd clapping in unison to inspire their team, to a d-jay leading his flock on the dance floor; collective rhythm and beat is something that is universal and unique to this culture.

The underground culture associated with House music has had an interesting evolution since its inception in the late 70s. The disco boom opened up the door to the d-jay as the performer and, as the bubble began to burst on disco, a new sound was born. House music came alive, with new clubs, artists, and producers creating music in their bedrooms with the new technology available, paving the way for the sound that would define the 80's.

It was the first time that big studio associations weren't necessary to be creative, musically in a commercial sense. The idea of becoming your own "studio MacGyver" had been introduced. The hedonistic disco days hit a huge wall by the beginning of the eighties and a real backlash had begun. With the burning of disco records at Wrigley field in 1978 and a new conservative majority dictating the demands of popular culture content, House music began its underground descent in order to stay alive. The community known as 'House heads' had no complaints—the vast majority of people

who were drawn to this scene were already thought of as outcasts, in a sense, from the general masses. They embraced this scene because of its sense of belonging and lack of discrimination. They could be themselves and not be judged as long as they remained within its walls. Experimentation, sexuality, and happiness were always on the menu and the time that each person spent there would be an oasis. This idea of the community, being "a tribe", was true in the most important sense of the word. Initiates knew that it was something special, something that not everyone in the outside world would understand. The tribal "trance" that this environment created was very special to its participants. The music gave them an identity.

Identity is what we tend to associate with culture. Every race or religion has culture in its own unique way. Culture tends to create communities and individuals usually find their identity through that. One culture in particular I wanted to examine with more detail due to its historical significance within the electronic community is the gay culture. House music and the community that was born from it owe a lot of its personality to the gay scene. If one word were to describe people at a rave or an event it is equality. Participants are there to associate with like-minded individuals, to dress the way they want, to dance to the d-jays' beats without being judged. Everyone is equal. Since the early disco days, the gay culture as well as the cultures of other minorities, has taken refuge within the dance culture community. This positive, non-judgmental atmosphere represented by the scene was something they could embrace. The music is energetic; the crowds are excited to blow off steam on the dance floor. Society may not have been ready to accept them as equals, but this tribe had no membership clauses, or dues.

The Global Groove Network will examine the interconnectivity between the evolution of the gay culture and the evolution of electronic music. The annual gay pride event in Toronto is a four-day celebration of being gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, and not feeling ashamed by it. In the film, I attend the Toronto Pride festival, where over one million visitors come every year to participate and watch the parade, and sit down to interview several couples active in the electronic music scene, as well as d-jays and promoters for the events. Through the voices of promoters, d-jays, and participants, the audience will come to understand the degree to which a segment of the gay community venerates the various d-jays behind the decks who guide them in an ecstatic dance of rediscovery at the various dance parties highlighted during Pride Week.

Over the course of exploring the roots of electronic music I couldn't help but note the similarities of tribal rituals in native cultures, specifically the way rhythm and beat are used to unite a community. I wanted to observe this from two extremes and had the opportunity to participate in two different yet similar experiences.

My first trip took me to northern Ontario where I attended a POW WOW with my father. During my childhood in a small town in the region, I was exposed to the local Native culture. One experience stands out: a class trip that involved visiting the local reservation and experiencing a POW WOW. I was struck by the pounding of drums as the community prepared to dance in unison. The dance was subtle; involving a repetitive sequence of chant, drum pounding, and movement between its participants. Hours would go by and this would continue day to night for two days straight. People from the tribe would come in and come out of the dance circle and this trance like sequence would continue. It was a true organic celebration of their culture and community and it felt very familiar after my own experience with my tribesmen.

Following this exploration of tribal tendencies I wanted to experience the present day interpretation of dance music and its tribal powers. This part of the journey took me to an event in the Nevada desert known as Burning Man. The Burning man experience is something of a spiritual event that combines the power of music and ritual. Since its inception on a small beach in San Francisco to its evolution and journey to the Black Rock Desert, this event has grown to the size of 50,000 in attendance for a four-day communal experience. The Burning Man represents the idea of keeping the fire in your daily life alive and connecting its community through expressing themselves and relying on one another for a period of time. This tribal affair is spiritual for its participants.

In the film, we examine these events from both past and present and experience Burning Man first hand through the d-jays that perform and the founders and participants who keep this event alive through the power of dance and music. As a large effigy of a wooden man burns for all to see, the desert and the stars become the ultimate dance floor for its congregants.

The film also explores the locations where these congregations occur...

As with Burning Man, the second Summer of Love assembled itself from illegal parties in open fields before it settled in the clubs that would become its new sanctuary. From fields to clubs, the film examines the humble beginnings of great clubs like Ministry of Sound in the UK as well as the super club that started it all, Pacha, whose genesis occurred in Ibiza. These dance temples became places of worship for the electronic music community. In these new churches of the beat, the d-jay would become a superstar, the embodiment of a religion—even a god, to some. These sanctuaries were the new churches to be attended by its mass every weekend.

The concept of “tribe” is explored in other avenues as well. With the help of some professors from various universities and colleges along with attending and interviewing the local Toronto Drummer in Exile event in Toronto where over 200 people just show up with drums to pound together in unison, many levels of the tribal power of rhythm and beat are explored.



## DJS WHO PARTICIPATED?

The talent that has participated in this film has been a wide array of global superstars along with the working mans D-jay just emerging. As I traveled the globe I managed to collect a lot of great interviews. With over 60 d-jays lending me their voice it was an amazing collective of perspective. To give you a sense of how many people these maestros reach in terms of audience, the combined Facebook LIKES just tips the scale at 10 million followers. These underground rock stars have fans and their opinion matters.

Here are a few of the talents involved:

**ARMIN VAN BUUREN:** Armin van Buuren has been named number one in the prestigious DJ MAG Top 100 poll four times in a row, in 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010, as the first DJ in the history of the DJ Magazine and an indication of his prolific output over the more than 15 years he’s been dj’ing and producing. In 2011, he became second in the critically acclaimed popularity poll, taking in a Top 3 position for the 8th year running. Being one of the world’s most popular DJ’s is just one of his many achievements, but the driving force behind his success is an overriding passion for dance music.



**CARL COX :** A perennial favorite as the best DJ in the world according to fans as well as the major mixing magazines, Carl Cox has been a part of Britain’s dance scene from the heady days of disco through to the global clubland of the new millennium, with temporary pit stops covering hip-hop, the rare groove movement, and the immense rave revolution of the late ‘80s. That large span of time has undoubtedly affected his choice of records, since Cox routinely detours through breakbeat, Italian house, and the dance mainstream during his usual sets of hard techno. Perhaps the best testament to his mixing skills is his immense



popularity despite his focus on music much more intense than the brand of arena trance spawned by Oakenfold, Sasha, Digweed, and others. Carl's been there and done it, never losing sight of his passions – playing music, breaking tunes and celebrating life. Carl's 'Global' radio show is still breaking records, now reaching over 12-million listeners worldwide and syndicated across 60 terrestrial FM, Satellite and DAB stations throughout 35 countries, making him one of the most important broadcasters on the planet.

**PETE TONG:** As a DJ, Pete has been spinning beats since the late 80s and has graced the decks of the best clubs and festivals worldwide and produced some incredible beats that have topped the charts globally. As a producer he has assembled the music for movie soundtracks such as *The Beach*, *Human Traffic* and *24 Hour Party People* and has produced his own material under various guises. As an innovator, Pete has taken the world of Podcasts by storm and taking the #1 spot in the music podcasts download chart with the 'Tongcast'. Pete has also produced the world's first collection of TV-style music shows, aired weekly direct to mobile phones. And as an icon, Tong was the inspiration behind the film "It's All Gone Pete Tong". Pete's radio shows are revered around the world. 8 million listeners tune in every week to his show, *The Essential Selection* on BBC Radio 1. The man known for that distinct voice and style behind the decks is a man that gets his praise from club goers affectionately. He truly is an original and pioneer in the scene.



**STEVE ANGELLO:** As a small boy Steve was introduced to the wonders and delights of the Athen's club culture and underworld in which his father moved. Deeply enthused by all of this and, as it emerged, incredibly talented, Steve quickly honed his turntablism skills, fusing hip-hop, breakbeats and 70's classics until he won himself his first club residency in Stockholm. Under-age (16) and out way past his bedtime, Steve was earning a not-so-honest crust to support his family alone. Whatever, he was seriously rocking that club week in week out! At age 22, Steve has earned a reputation as a consistently fresh talent a vehicle that is his label Size Records, Drawing heavily on influences such as Daft Punk, Fatboy Slim, Armand Van Helden, and Carl Cox to name a few ... Steve's loaded sets showed him thousands of fans around the world! He D-jayed every weekend non-stop for the last 12 months and his popularity has grown from the underground to the mainstream through his original tracks and as a member of the D-jay trio known as the Swedish House Mafia. The Swedish House Mafia has charted in the top 10 consistently over the last several years on Billboard and BBC Radio 1. Their performances around the world have commanded crowds of 50,000 at festivals and have electrified club audiences all over the globe. Music is no idle pastime for Steve; it is everything he holds close. He truly is an artist when it comes to the music.



**RICHIE HAWTIN:** Artist, DJ, conceptualist and ambassador, more than anyone else in modern electronic music, Richie Hawtin has relentlessly proved himself to be a true innovator. Although he's technically a Canadian, Richie Hawtin will forever be associated with putting his beloved Detroit on the dance music map. Along with fellow Detroit pioneer Carl Craig, Hawtin helped break the second wave of Detroit techno. From north of Detroit in Windsor, Ontario, Hawtin has been a DJ, a producer, a record label owner, and a flag-waver for the underground Detroit scene is only now getting the respect it deserves in the United States. Hawtin started his career DJing at underground parties in clubs like Detroit's Shelter. There he met his partner, John Acquaviva, and together they launched the influential Plus 8 Recordings label. The one-man mogul behind acclaimed Techno imprints Plus 8 & Minus sends signals out all over the world from his HQ in an old fire station in Windsor, Ontario – just across the border from Detroit Techno City. The signals are constantly evolving, his Plastikman persona gave Techno a unique face with a series of four ruthlessly minimal albums of skeletal beauty, while breathtaking festival live sets at Glastonbury and Tribal Gathering helped invent stadium Techno which drew 100,000 party goers. His "Decks, EFX & 909" album released on novamute in 1999 expanded the concept of a DJ mix album beyond the imagination of



most DJs. As a pioneering DJ and beloved global superstar, Richie's love for his craft and the people he performs for is always apparent. The clubbers treat him like a priest of sorts. His shows and performance are his sermon... He speaks through his speakers as his flock gathers on his dance floors all over the world. Richie is truly a maestro in the dance music scene.

## OTHER PERSPECTIVE

Along with the talent perspective in the film there is also some great historical content that comes alive from some great music historians we interviewed. These people include Allan Cross (author/radiobroadcaster), Bill Brewster and Frank Broughton (Last Night a DJ saved my life – authors).

**ALLAN CROSS:** Alan Cross is a Canadian radio broadcaster and a writer on music. Alan's obsession with music began at age six. His parents gave him a transistor radio that he couldn't get enough of; his soundtrack began. In 1980, Alan got his start CKUW at the University of Winnipeg, which, at the time, was a closed-circuit station. The broadcast range was limited to one hallway and one cafeteria.



After graduating, Alan ended up at CJRL in Kenora, a 1,000 watt AM station that broadcast to the people and wildlife of Northwestern Ontario. From there, it was on to KX-96/Brandon and Q94-FM/Winnipeg before he ended up at CFNY (renamed The Edge) in October 1986.

After fifteen years as a CFNY/Edge in a variety of announcer gigs, Alan moved to program director at Y95 in Hamilton, overseeing, in part, a frequency change which made the station Y108. In 2004, Alan started a four-year stint as the station's Program Director (where he was named Canada's Program Director of the year in 2005, 2006 and 2008).

He then became Senior Program Director for Corus Interactive, the online arm of Corus Radio. His last project with Corus was as Head Curator of ExploreMusic, a truly unique online and on-air feature dedicated to music discovery.

Oh, and that radio show. The Ongoing History of New Music debuted in February 1993 and since then it's...well, it's taken on a life of its own. There have been over 700 one-hour episodes making it the longest-running music documentary in Canada and one of the longest in North America—if not the world!

This man is a great storyteller. He knows music and gives the GGN experience some authenticity.

**BILL BREWSTER AND FRANK BROUGHTON:** This dynamic duo of Brewster and Broughton are two of the most respected historians of dance music culture in the world. London England is their home base and both these writers have been living through the dance music scene since the 80s. Bill Brewster is also disc jockey that has been playing since the late 70s and actually had some success with some dance tracks including "Group Therapy" and 'Expanding Wallets'. Along with this DJ success he has been the editor for MixMag UK and USA as well has published several music history books with Frank. One book in particular, Last Night a DJ Saved My Life, became a huge global success and thought of as the ultimate history of this scene. Both Frank and Bill also run DJHistory.com since 2002, which gets over 2 million hits a month. Their perspective was welcomed and a great way to round out the authenticity of the film's message.



# THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

Along the way in making this film I had an opportunity to sit down with some professors and scientists and interview them. The reason I was looking to explore some questions on a scientific scale of how music affects us in our youth. We looked at how music affects brain patterns in infants and along the way convinced McMaster University to do a full-scale study on how D-jays brainwaves interpret rhythm and beat. Dr. Laurel Trainor, a professor in the department of Psychology, Neuroscience and Behavior at McMaster University, designed the study along with graduate student Blake Butler.

## Examining the role of training and movement on rhythm perception in disc jockeys using EEG and behavioural thresholds

Blake E. Butler & Laurel J. Trainor  
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**Introduction**

Professional club disc jockeys (DJs) engage in activities such as beatmatching (blending two songs together by adjusting the tempo of one to match the other) and beatmixing (playing the rhythm track of one song beneath an entirely different song) to engage a crowd and maintain a consistent mood state. Literature on rhythmic entrainment (e.g., tapping to an entrained beat) suggests that normal listeners are relatively poor timekeepers in the absence of an external acoustic stimulus while trained musicians are significantly better (e.g., Repp, 2005). Here we sought to determine whether the specific rhythmic experience of club DJs would yield benefits in rhythm perception similar to those of musicians. Also of interest is the role of movement in timekeeping, as similar brain regions have been implicated in beat perception and movement production (Grahn & Brett, 2007).

**Stimuli**

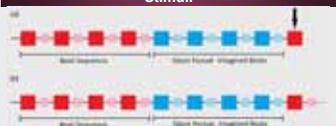


Figure 1. Beat sequences used in behavioural (a) and ERP (b) rhythm perception tasks. Acoustic beats are shown in red, imagined beats are in blue, large squares represent downbeats and small squares upbeats, and the arrow indicates the location of the target beat in the behavioural threshold task. Each beat was 100 ms in duration and beats were presented with a stimulus onset asynchrony of 200 ms.

**Methods**

**Participants**

- 10 professional disc jockeys (all male;  $31.0 \pm 0.91$  yrs)
- 10 non-musician controls (all male;  $28.2 \pm 0.61$  yrs)
- 9 drummers (all male;  $23.1 \pm 1.30$  yrs)

**Procedure**

Sounds were played through a loudspeaker 1 meter in front of the listener at 70 dB(A) over a noise floor of 29 dB(A). EEG was recorded with a 128-channel Geodesic® net.

**Behavioural Task** – Participants were asked to imagine the beat continuing through the silent period and indicate on a keypad whether a target beat was on-time or early.

**ERP Task** – Participants were asked to attend to the stimulus sequence, and imagine the beat continuing through the silent periods.

**Results**

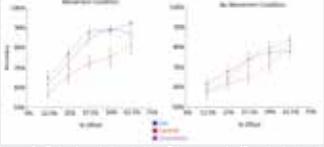


Figure 2. Behavioural thresholds. DJs were significantly better than control subjects at detecting deviations in rhythmic structure ( $F(1,18)=98, p=0.039$ ), but not significantly different than professional drummers ( $F(1,17)=0.32, p=0.58$ ). Allowing movement lead to better performance for the DJs ( $F(1,9)=5.27, p=0.047$ ), control subjects ( $F(1,9)=7.33, p=0.029$ ), and drummers ( $F(1,8)=22.68, p=0.001$ ).

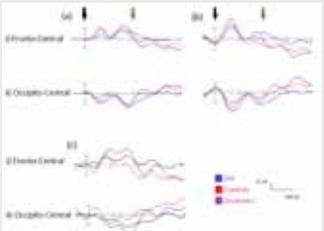


Figure 3. ERP results. In each panel, black arrows represent downbeat onset and grey arrows represent upbeat onset. (a) shows the average response to the first downbeat of sequences that start on time, (b) shows responses to downbeats that occurred 100 ms early and (c) shows responses to downbeats occurring 200 ms early.

**Conclusions**

DJs performed better than controls at detecting timing deviants in the rhythm pattern, and were no different than drummers. This advantage is likely experience dependent. ERP results indicate little difference between groups for an on-time downbeat; however, differences begin to emerge when the downbeat is presented early. Finally, all three groups performed better when allowed to move, in line with previous results indicating motor system involvement in auditory rhythm perception. Currently, we are completing a training study which will address the experience-dependent effect of training on a DJs ability to perform temporal discriminations.

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**DR. LAUREL TRAINOR – MCMASTER UNIVERSITY:** Laurel Trainor (Ph.D., Psychology, University of Toronto) is a professor and the Director of McMaster Institute for Music and the Mind. She has published over 60 pioneering research articles and book chapters on the neuroscience of auditory development and the perception of music, appearing in prestigious journals such as Science, Psychological Science, and the Journal of Neuroscience. Her research also has one of the highest media profiles of researchers at McMaster. Her studies show that young infants already have multi-sensory connections between auditory and movement areas of the brain, and that they are like adults in preferring consonant chords or dissonant chords. At the same time, Trainor and her colleagues have found that brain responses to sound do not reach adult maturation until about 18 years of age, and that the brains of music student mature differently than the brains on students not taking music lessons. These studies suggest that music can have a profound effect on how the brain gets wired up. Trainor also has a Bachelor of Music Degree in Performance from the University of Toronto, loves playing chamber music, and is currently principal flute of Symphony Hamilton.





## FILM MAKER BIOGRAPHY

Courtney James has been an active member of the Toronto film and television community for the last ten years. After graduating with Honors from McMaster University for film and drama, Courtney began his career as an actor. His first job was playing the lead in a Hootie and the Blowfish music video – The song was “I will wait...” From there: Beer and Phone commercials, television and film work as a stand-in, as well stunts and special skill jobs in Hollywood productions paid the bills. During these years Courtney realized that story telling from a writer and director perspective was his true passion. With this realization he decided to begin putting together his own body of work with directing music videos, commercials, TV pilots, and short films through his production company Admit One Productions.

The Global Groove Network (GGN) is the first feature documentary by this film maker. This doc is truly a passion project and has been the culmination of shooting, interviewing, and editing over 300 hours of footage over the last 5 years. Along with the film, sneak peek videos, web branding, events, and a television pilot for a spin-off DJ reality series have been developed through the GGN brand. This is more than just a film... it's a network.

“This movie is something that is personal and as a film maker; I look forward to sharing this experience with you...”