

requiredaudio.dept.02.interview.RastaRoots.BY JOEL MARASIGAN



I met Rasta Roots at one of their performances in Los Angeles. Not only was he down to earth so were Jerobi and Phife. Back then we were supposed to do a second round of the Required Audio CD and Rasta Roots was supposed to rock it. Well I guess you could cop the RA album that should have been from L-R-G Clothing. They got a dope album.

NAME Dion Derryck Miguel Liverpool. **ALIAS** Dj Rasta Root. **AGE** dirty one. **HOME TOWN** Atlanta, Ga. **YEARS SPINNING** 13. **AWARDS** Creative Loafing dj of the week 2000, Blast magazine & Front magazine mixtape of the month. **CURRENTLY ROCKING (CLUBS, EVENTS)** Beatz & Lyrics show on 89.3FM (wrfg.org), Wreckroom Renaissance on 91.1FM WREK, The Bomb on 88.5FM WRAS. **CONTACT** Dj Rasta Root Smokin' Needles Records, 3131 N. Druid Hills Rd. Suite 10106, Atlanta, GA 30033, smokinneedles.com. **FAVORITE DRINK** chocolate milk. **FAVORITE MEAL** Fellini's Pizza & Salads (ATL), Roscoe's Chicken & Waffles, and any of my mom's home cooked meals.

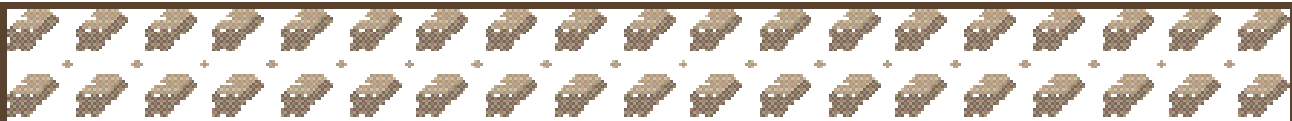
HOW IS IT THAT YOU SPIN IN JAPAN? Well, I used to live in Japan—three years—I maintained my connections. I get to spin there once or twice a year.

DO YOU SEE A DIFFERENCE IN THE JAPAN/U.S. CROWDS? There is definitely a difference. In Japan, when you spin at a hip hop event you can pretty much play decent non commercial joints and they will go crazy. In the U.S. it is a little hard to get away with that without just getting head nods. In Japan, everyone faces the dj, whether you are dancing alone or with your girl; djs face the crowd as if it is a concert of something. It is kinda weird, but pretty dope! In Japan there are a lot more spots where you can spin good music and not have to play a lot of the radio stuff we hear over and over. Radio is not as powerful in Japan so it's the club djs that tell people what's hot.

HOW DID YOU HOOK UP A TOUR WITH PHIFE DAWG? I have met him throughout the 90's at shows and stuff, but he doesn't remember me. I actually dj-ed for him at an impromptu show in ATL before we officially met, which was a strange foreshadowing. Then in like 2000 I did some scratches on a record he was working on with my man Khalifani, and I gave him my card. About six months later, I got a call from him saying that he needed a dj for a show at University of Maryland...the rest in history.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED FROM PHIFE? I have learned a lot from my man—the importance of stage presence, and how important competitive-ness is when you perform. I see how it's possible to have worldwide recognition, and still be humble.

DO YOU THINK COLLEGE TAUGHT YOU ABOUT THE BUSI-



NESS? Since I was a business/spanish major, I learned a lot about business and networking. My grades may not show it, but everything that was theory in class, has become practical in this business we are in. It has helped me to plan and establish Smokin' Needles Records. The most important thing that college taught me is how to establish, nurture, and maintain relationships. For those who know me, I always answer emails, sometimes as soon as I get them. I want people to know that they can rely on me and that that I am a man of word.

SINCE YOU ARE WORKING ON SOME NEW TRACKS FOR HIM FOR HIS UPCOMING ALBUM WHAT SHOULD WE EXPECT? You can expect to hear the first sounds of our production company, Riddim Kidz. My production has various styles, so you won't hear the same shit from me. On Phife's next project you will hear him on beats that you might not be used to hearing him on, so that will be really refreshing. I want to add on to his career, not necessarily just follow. You can get a little preview on the L-R-G mix cd, and on the Dexter's Laboratory: A Hip Hop Experiment with De La Soul, Coolio, Prince Paul, Wil.i.am, YZ, and Phife Diffy introducing Slick & Rose.

YOU JUST DID SOMETHING FOR L-R-G? Yeah, I just completed the Fall Line mix cd for L-R-G Clothing, with Phife having hosting duties. Earlier I spoke about relationships. When I went out to LA and met with them, I saw how progressive and dope their clothes were. I am not really a fashion dude, but I felt like their clothes looked and felt like how I thought my music sounded. Good quality, innovative, well put together, and diverse. We had been vibing for a while about me doing a mixtape for them. About two weeks before the Magic Convention we started working on it. We got all the artists to submit exclusives and drops, and with Phife on the mic, we made it happen. I also have my man's Jax from Binkis Records on it, a Phife track with dancehall great Hawkeye, and newcomers, Slick & Rose. It came out pretty dope, and by the time this prints you should have a copy for review. Shouts out to Jonas, Scott and the rest of the crew at L-R-G.

WHAT'S THE FORMULA FOR A HIT RADIO RECORD? UNDERGROUND RECORD? I don't know if there is necessarily a formula, but right now making people dance is what sells records, if you have an infectious beat, dope hook, crazy video you are winning. I think an artist would be shooting his self in the foot if their aim is to make a hit underground record. Lately I have been asking myself what the hell underground is. A hit record is a hit record. I think if your goal is to

make a good record, then it will appeal to the masses, and it could be a hit on the radio or on the 'underground.'

WHAT WOULD BE THE ULTIMATE ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR "RASTA ROOTS"? My ultimate goal is to be a successful dj/producer, make music that people love, and also to be a successful businessman and take care of my family. My ultimate accomplishment would be walking down the street and hear someone pumping a track that I pro-

duced in their ride off of a dope mcs album...That shit would feel so good....

IF YOU DIDN'T TAKE THE PATH TOWARD MUSIC WHAT WOULD BE DOING? Well, most people don't know, but I have a regular job as a Spanish teacher. I also am translator/interpreter in Spanish, Portuguese, and French, so I would probably go full steam ahead with the language thing.