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Seriously 'Unserious'

BACH REMIX GETS REMIXED AT THE DISTRICT by Suzi Steffen

Andre Sirois believes in community, and he misses it in Eugene. Even though he comes from Maine, the Ph.D. student in journalism—better known in the hip hop scene as DJ Food Stamp—says it's much harder to get anything going here. When he watched the second Bach Remix, run by the OBF a couple of years ago, he found himself feeling the lack that much more. So he did something about it.

Sirois says, "I thought the performances, the whole overall aura was really bad, so I went home and wrote George Evano and let loose and spoke my mind." Problem 1: Someone from the Bach Fest picked one Bach sample, and all of the DJs in the Bach Remix competition had to use the same music. Problem 2: The DJs, Sirois says, "were like, 'Oh, there's this much prize money. I go, do my thing, get my money, go home.'" Problem 3: "DJ battle are completely played out at this point." Problem 4: The judges? Not really trained in hip hop. Like, at all.

Sirois' explanation makes sense. Though the Remixes were a good try for the OBF, things never seemed quite authentic. He adds, "If you asked me to plan a Bach concert and book talent and get everything that those musicians need, I would fuck it up horribly. You ask people that deal with classical musicians to deal with turntables and DJs and hip hop stuff, you're out of your world."

This year, things are different. For one thing, the Remix is at The District (formerly the Indigo District) at 13th and Oak, and the event starts at 10:30 pm. Sirois is familiar with The District from years of DJing there, and he says, "Take away that bias, and I think that it's the

dopest place in town in terms of space." He's working on getting multi-camera projection feeds so that the audience, some of whom will be dancing, many of whom will be drinking, can see what the DJs are doing with the turntables onstage. "These are kids that really focus on the turntable as an instrument," he says. "When you can see the hands moving close up, you can see what's going on."

The "battle" has turned into a performance with DJs who, Sirois says, use turntables as instruments and maybe don't get to perform that often. Two of the Corbin brothers from Raging Family and OBF chorus soprano Lori Lewis will judge. Sirois called in favors and got DJ Shrapnel to host. One DJ (Celsius, last year's winner) drew Bach at a turntable for the flier. Bascially, Sirois says, he's asked people to donate their time, even for finding prizes through local businesses. He says most of the DJs will perform at the Remix to let people see what they're doing. When that's over, local rock band Medium Troy takes the stage to change up the musical atmosphere. "I want it to be a party," Sirois says, and at the close of Medium Troy's set, he takes the stage himself. "I'm going to do rock and old school funk, break, hip hop, get some B-boys to come in and do their thing," he says.

The OBF is committed to getting some of its musicians there, and Sirois is committed to bringing in people from the scene in Eugene. How will the OBF musicians like the remix? Sirois says, "Those people are trained in classical notation, and the idea of music to them is different. I want people that do 'serious' music to see how serious 'nonserious' music can be." ♦

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