



dj stylus

Washington, DC's DJ Stylus has set a high standard of excellence as a DJ, journalist, radio broadcaster and producer in his twenty years in the DC area. A jack-of-all-trades, he understands what it takes to be a top-tier selector in the nation's capital in the 21st century. "It's very important to bridge genres. Being a 'style chameleon' has been good for my brand. People appreciate it. I like breaking people's self-segregating tendencies and bringing audiences together. It's good for music in DC to not have that."

37-year-old Rhome Anderson, aka DJ Stylus' journey to respect actually began in the Netherlands, during hip-hop culture's "classic" era. A high school aficionado of dance and vinyl, he gained an interest in something more. Retelling the story to On Tap Magazine he says, "In that era, everyone in hip-hop had a prominent DJ. There was [The Fresh Prince (Will Smith) with] Jazzy Jeff, [Public Enemy with] Terminator X and DJ Scratch with EPMD. That interested me, so I came to the club before it was time to "wreck shop" and paid attention to the DJ and watched exactly what he would do. One night, this DJ, DJ Physique, heard that I was a DJ, and asked me to open for him, playing hip-hop and swing beats. I had

studied how to do it, and I didn't even have equipment or records of my own yet, so I played out of his crates."

Anderson's evolution as a DJ is intrinsically tied to his love of hip-hop. "I came from an era as a hip-hop DJ where you had to be able to play everything. A true party rocker had range. In developing my craft in DC, I was able to access various scenes where people are extraordinary. The city has a really amazing community of house and electronic music people. The era around 2001 was an amazing time with U Street spots like Andalu and State of the Union, where you had hip-hop in the front and folks like [local legend with a major international reputation] Sam "the Man" Burns and [globally renowned producers] Deep Dish spinning house in the back.

Furthering his creative evolution is his relatively newfound ability to solely focus on being a DJ. A long-time Washington Post writer, Anderson is two years removed from the post and wizened from the experience. "Serving two masters for...many years was really hard. I couldn't be excellent at either while managing both. I'd see my peers at the highest level, then I'd have to disengage. That was hard to manage. I'm fortunate to keep the bills paid while having more

freedom and the ability to pick and choose."

Collaborations have highlighted Anderson's 20+ year DJ career and have now provided him with commercial success. Stylus' career has been buoyed by the talents of the Soul Controllers, a tight knit group of then University of Maryland college radio turntablists who regularly spin at everything from monthly funk parties to inaugural galas. His work with DJs Meistro and Deep Sang as the soul, funk, and Afro-Caribbean inspired Sol Power All-Stars developed from regular bookings alongside them into a monthly residency (now at the U Street venue Tropicalia) and a 2012 debut EP on GAMM Digital.

When asked exactly how he would classify his style and his aims, Stylus summed up a career spanning hip-hop, house, and a globe of sounds" with succinct, rap influenced precision: "I'm a specialist of party rocking." Creatively free and hugely talented, DJ Stylus continues to exemplify DC's standard of classic yet progressive excellence.

*Catch DJ Stylus with Sol Power All-Stars on February 15 at **Tropicalia**: 2001 14th St. NW, DC; 202-629-4535; www.tropicaliadc.com. Learn more about DJ Stylus at www.vibeconductor.com/blog/about*