

TMOTTGoGo

Take Me Out To The Go-Go

MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2001

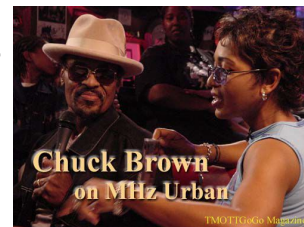


First Touch

The Saga Continues
(Page 6)

Chuck Brown Meets Michel Wright

(Page 10)



Rare Essence Invades Richmond's Powerfest

(Page 21)

A Little Sumthin-Sumthin About Submission

(Page 17)



Uncalled 4 Band on Mhz Urban

(Page 14)

True Go-Go Confessions from Outta-Towners

(Page 4)





**You do know
that you can always
take us where you go,
right?**

TMOTT is now right at your fingertips. App includes all the greatest articles, funniest interviews and hottest photos.

TMOTTGoGo

Summer 2001 Issue
www.tmottgogo.com

Publisher / Editor In Chief

Kato Hammond

Featured Writers

Eb

Jennifer Angellatta-Moore

Kato Hammond

Photos

Eb

Jennifer Angelatta-Moore

Preston Blue

Sir Buggs

Thomas Sayers Ellis

Special Thanks to:

Andre Johnson

Chuck Brown

EMI

Michael Muse

Michel Wright

Rare Essence

Shack N Da Pack

Submission Band

Tom Goldfogle

Uncalled 4 Band

True Go-Go Confessions from Outta-Towners



This is a study of the lives of Outta-Towners who's perception of Go-Go changed after seeing it "Live".

- * The Setting: Club U
- * The Band: Rare Essence
- * The Date: "All Star Weekend 2001"

These Outta-towners have been exposed to go-go mostly by old PA tapes while in college dorms. As you will see some hated it and some grew to like it.

Well, enough rambling let's get to the results. The interview questions are as follows:

- (1). What was your impression of Go-Go music prior to seeing it live(from listening to tapes and CD's)?
- (2). What is your impression of Go-Go music now?
- (3). What did you expect a Live Go-Go to be like? (positive and/or negative) | (4). What did you find unique about the Live Go-Go you went too?

Results Below:

Perception of Go-Go from a Native of Delaware:

(1) well from the times when i do come down.....and just riding with y'all it grew on me after a while....so it was kool anyway.... (2) I got luv for it now.. (3) Alot of girls freakin.. (4) Just how much chicks luv go-go....and that no one dances to the DJ...

Perception of Go-Go from a Native of Detroit:

(1) It was a different/neat concept. Having been to different types of concerts from rap to country, I know that music is almost always better live. I

imagined that it would be tight, especially when they played original lyrics. (2) Opinion confirmed (referencing his opinion about live music is better) | (3) like a concert with more RE and less DJ (4) Just like I imagined. The broads was live(good lookin) though

Perception of Go-Go from a Native of California:

(1) hated go go prior... honestly, shit made me sick to the stomach. (2) don't hate it...wouldn't pass up a live go go concert. (3) bunch of noise, like sean's (in reference to his college roommate's pa tapes of "JYB") walk man; very negative. (4) the way girls wanted to dance... totally different out here.

The Californian also had this to say (prior to the questions asked above):

Eb:

I have to honestly say that my attitude about GoGo has changed. I can't say that i'd buy any cd's of it, but i very much so look forward to coming up there again to party "GO GO" style. I enjoyed the live band....this might sound weird, but it sounded very different from what i heard out of sean's walk man and cheap stereo at Skegee... I was feeling how the crowd was all up getting their grove on... those essence cats were throwing down... to get people hyped up like that was cool... I didn't know what they were saying during some of the songs, so i felt corny when everyone knew what to say and when the females i was dancing with thought it was cute and tried to help me....I loved that all the women basically dance with their butts on you... one babe i met (had on an orange tank top with black tight pants) goes to UDC and teaches grade school... her friend's pants split, that's how into it she was... dude, that's something else... to sum it up: I won't knock go go anymore.

Do or have you taken your outta towners to a Go-Go? If so, ask them the above questions and feel free to post them on the TMOTTGoGo Bulletin board.

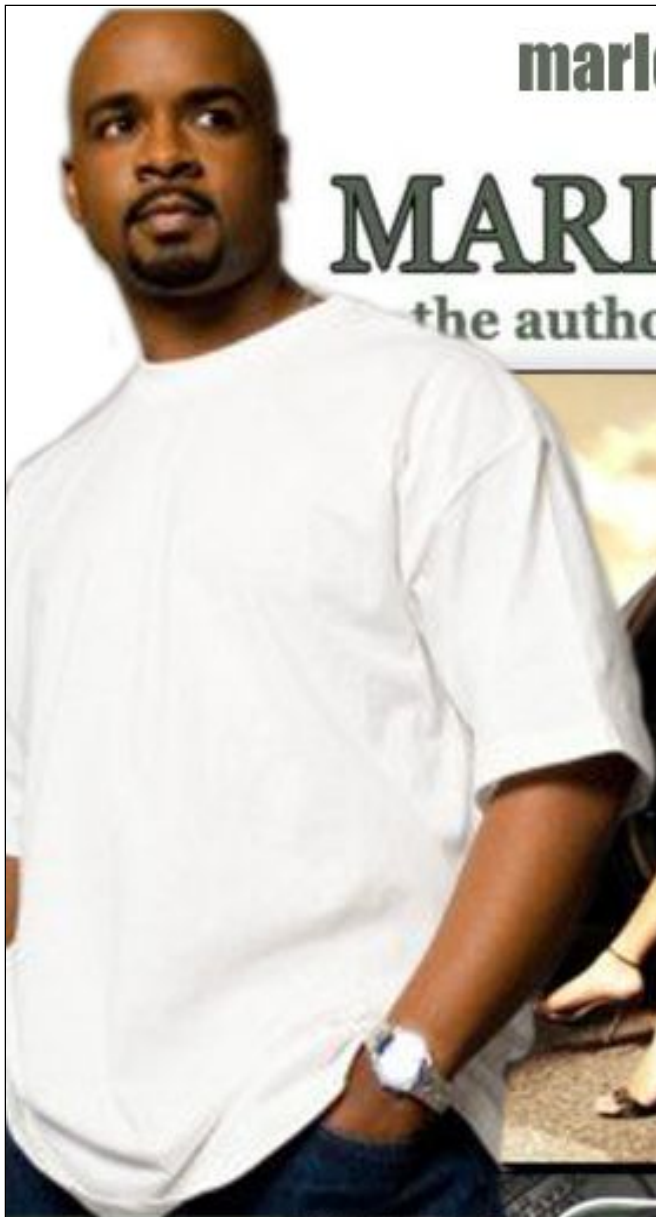
I make it a point that every outta-towner who visits me gets a unique Washington DC experience. Lets not cheat our guests! Take them out to a Go-Go!

~Eb

marlongreen.com

MARLON GREEN

the author of BUTTER presents



GET MONEY

the novel

**IN A WORLD OF FAST CASH AND
FAST CARS, SHE ENDED UP
MAKING A KILLING**



The band originally started as A Touch of Essence . an idea that was formed by former management building upon former members of Rare Essence; Michael Muse, Lawrence West, Scotty Haskel, Jungle Boogie, Markie Owens and Shorty Dud, then later Stinky Dink. That's where it started. Members who came on board after that were female vocalist Kimise Lee and Keyboardist Antwan "Tony" Green. Originally, the majority of the former RE members left, with the exception of Mike Muse and Stinky Dink, due to disagreements with management. Later came

There was an old RE pa tape that I used to listen to vigorously back in the day whereas Jas. Funk made a statement, "There are times in life when you are going to have your ups and downs. When you're down, that's when you gather all your thoughts together to get back up." That was a statement that I have since held as one of my personal philosophies. Sitting and talking with the band First Touch, that statement must have rolled through my mind a hundred times.

Although as a band practically new on the music scene, First Touch are by no means new to the business of music. In fact, these cats are not even new to the scene. There is no doubt that you may have even heard of them before they went through a process of changing their name. The original name that they were known by was A Touch of Essence.

Is this the same A Touch of Essence that you have been hearing about the past two years? Yes and no. First Touch was a name derived from the original name Touch of Essence. Getting a bit confused? That's nothing new. It has been quite confusing to people for quite some time now. Therefore, we must actually take this from the beginning.

members bassist Gary and lead guitarist Andre Gyles. Eventually, not even these artists could tolerate management's practices, and again with the exception of Stinky Dink, the others finally decided to leave from under the management as well.

"It basically boiled down to creative freedom," stated lead vocalist Mike Muse. "The guys that were managing us were trying to do everything but manage. Basically telling us how to play our own music, and neither one of them were musically inclined. They didn't know that in the music world, artist hire managers, and not the other way around. Then it came down to where they wanted to have say as to who can come and go as far as the members in the band, no matter what we all thought about it."

Simple as that may have sounded, it actually turned out to become more of a problem than anticipated. The reason for this is because although the group's decision was to keep the name of A Touch of Essence, the management, whose plan was to simply build a new band with a new group of people, also shared the desire to keep the name. And the dispute as to who would keep the name began.

%We were going to go the legal route,+stated Muse. %But then, physical threats against individual band members were actually taken.+

The band, who shared the same conclusions that they were all adults, as well as all have families and responsibilities, decided that taking the chance of even getting into it with their former management was not worth it. They renamed themselves First Touch.

%Since we were the %first+Touch of Essence, we went on and adapted that name,+stated Muse. %And, I think it's a much better name.+

Another problem that had arisen was since the group left the name A Touch of Essence, and another Touch of Essence was born, people were getting confused. First Touch again found themselves back into the start position of basically rebuilding their crowd following. Which is almost equivalent to the level of starting over.

%A lot of people don't even know about First Touch,+explained Kimise. %So, it's about us putting that name back out there and trying to make it work.+

Making it work for them is exactly what First Touch has been doing for the past year. Picking up members Flea on congas, Juan on drums and Stephanie & Jawana who make up of the background vocals, they continue to not only rebuild a crowd, but also a unique sound as well.

When performing, First Touch does have the understanding that their crowd plays a big part in the type of music that they perform. The people there are both young and old. Therefore, the material that they produce for their audience ranges from a little bit of R&B, some jazz, and of course they top it off with go-go, the music of their roots. It really depends on the venue they are performing.

Kimise explained it as such, %The last show we did, there were people in there damn near 40. They were up there hollering and feeling it, you know. Yelling where they are from and all that. They want us to take it to that next level.

So, maybe we'll throw in some go-go around the closing part of our show. The crowd wants you to play certain songs. They have request to play such and such. So, they play a very important role in what you do too.+

Just as the material of music that they play range from one end to the other, so do their individual past experiences.

Antwan %Tony+Green, also know as Macaroni grew up in go-go playing with many small groups, including Hot Profit, Superior Funk and High Performance.

Flea started out playing with a band called Third Dimension, a group from the Potomac Gardens area. He then played with Perfect Image for about 10 years, as well as Raw Nation.

Gary, who has been playing since the age of 13, started with a band called Una Funk. He also played with Petworth, Colors, Groover Masters, Little Benny & The Masters, and then Pure Elegance. Gary has also been out on the road where he performed with the tour band for Intro. He has also set in with groups such as Superior Funk, Chance Band and Perfect Image.

Kimise Lee came on the scene at the age of 18. A graduate from the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, she started her stage performance sitting in on gigs with Chuck Brown & The Soul Searchers as well as with Bits & Pieces.

Michael Muse, who may probably be the most recognized voice in the band (not to mention the history of go-go period), started out singing with Rare Essence while still in high school. From there he went to Little Benny & The Masters. Muse has also started a band in Norfolk, VA while his tour in the military. The group was called the DC Bad Boys. He has also studied in college under the mentoring of Dr. Leroy Dorsey, as well as worked with Nancy Wilson and appeared at Harlem's Apollo Theater. After the military, Mike began singing again with Rare Essence, then again with Little Benny & The Masters, before moving on with Proper Utensil, then the Legends.

The Business of Music & Your Role In It

via TMOTTMedia



Andre Gyles, who is no doubt the oldest member of the group, started out in a different era. Getting into music at the age of 8 years old, Gyles grew up getting into groups such as Rare Earth and Jimi Hendrix. Growing up in Northeast, DC, the first group he played with was a band called Kyro Funk. He has also played with Masterpiece Band & Show, Arrow, and 30th Century Man. From there, Gyles went on the road and toured with George Clinton and the P Funk All-Stars throughout the entire 80s. He still works on occasion with Clinton, as well as Gary Shyder.

When asked of their vision regarding the future of First Touch, their responses regarding the struggles are coincidentally shared with many other bands in the area. That DC can be a very hard place to please.

Explains Mike Muse, "It sometimes seems as though we are brought up to hate each other. And so, anybody that has never had something is not willing to help his brother and pull him up -- not in this city. People don't trust each other. Too many back stabbers. But, we were brought up and conditioned that way. It's always something negative, you know what I mean. If you aren't doing good, why do you want to stop somebody else from doing good. Even if you might have something that they may need. It's just an urban black mentality that is a cancer in our culture. That's what it is in a nutshell.

If you think about it, there is never really more than four bands, out of all the bands in the city, at one time making money. You will always have Chuck and Rare Essence, and you have Backyard for the young people, then you'd have that one hot band. But you would think

that there's enough money out there for everybody. Again I will fall back on the mentality of us black people. Nobody wants to be caught at a show and say, "Like that" and discover that nobody else likes it. But I'm going to be an individual and go see First Touch because they sound good. When we were playing under the name of A Touch of Essence, we had a show at Club U with Suttle Thoughts. The management at the time was passing out flyers. One girl looked at the flyer and said, "Uk! Touch of Essence. I don't like them!"

I told her, "You know, you are the same broad that went to see Maiesha & The Hiphuggers two years ago and now you are all up here in Suttle Thoughts' face." You know, it's the "I don't want to be a bama and go see what I like" mentality. Even though I don't like such and such, I'm gonna go ahead and go because everybody else is going. We are so faddish."

Still with the feeling of that over their heads, First Touch does believe in opportunities and that there is a right and wrong time for everyone. The people that come to see them, do find themselves loving them. And therefore, they do believe that it's just a matter of them continuing out there and allowing the people to know exactly who First Touch is.

Explains Kimise: "It's about us getting out there and promoting First Touch and obtaining more shows where we can showcase ourselves. Then, I think everything will be okay. Because even though we are not playing that much right now, and we're just doing shows here and there, we're doing something that is unique. The people love us and the feedback we get is good."

~Kato

THOMAS SAYERS ELLIS: PHOTOGRAPHER



A Good Lead Talker Uses the Mic "on" the
Stand, TSE 2008

Two minutes!+one of the stage managers shouted, as we all scrambled to swallow our last bit of eats provided by Henry's Soul Food Café. That gave us 120 seconds to find our

places to party and prepare for the Godfather himself -- Chuck Brown. This time, the place was really tight and full of familiar faces and warm greetings. It was more than just a viewing of a live performance.

It had become more of a celebration for the man who actually laid the foundation to what we all know now as Go-Go.

With one minute to go, Michel Wright stepped into place, along with her co-host Shack N Tha Pack. The momentum greatened. The cheering and applause began to rise. As the count down approached zero, it grew even louder. Finally, the cameras rolled and the show began.

This was not my first time witnessing the swift maneuvering operation of MHz Urban -- DC's only and hottest live entertainment program. However, I will have to admit that it has been one of the ones that I have enjoyed the most. That was because not only did we feel comfortable with Michel's friendly hospitality to every one who entered the studio (which is always the case), but also the simple fact that everyone in the place seemed to share a common fondness for this show's musical guest.

Michel has always seemed to be one who puts 100% in whatever she does, and the energy

that she produces gives you the sensation that whatever she is talking about is something special. That's because it is. Therefore, when she announced that Chuck Brown would be on

her show performing live on her show, we knew right then and there that we were in for a treat. Not that we didn't know that Chuck would be performing (after all, he and the Soul Searchers were standing in the same room we were). But the spirit generated simply resonated. This was, of course, just one day before the

release of his newly awaited CD, "Your Game - Live at The 9:30 Club."

The first thing that she did was allow us to view video of Chuck's performance of Barry White's "Your Game", which was done at the 9:30 club. The video was definitely a treat, and for those who missed attending the show in person (due to the snow), it was a chance to witness the event. Still, it was a tease that worked.

As the video was ending, I heard Michel calling across the set, "Where's Kato?" No doubt, I ran over to see what she had wanted. And, that's when she put a microphone in my hand. She had invited me to go live on the camera with Shack and her to share in a little discussion about what Chuck Brown means to the go-go community. I don't really have to say how honoured I was to be able to go on camera and share my feelings about Chuck, and I thought that it would be a cinch to do. But, when the camera stuck in our faces and I realized that we were on the air, I've got to admit that I caught a case of the camera nervousness. We talked for a moment, and I



and remember what exactly I muttered, but when the cameras went off, she gave me the smile that said I did okay.

Finally, the moment that everyone had come out for arrived.

Two minutes! the stage manager yelled.

Chuck, Glen, Milton, Cherie, Foxy Rob and the rest of the Bits & Pieces began to take the stage and pick up their instruments.

The stage manager yelled, Six five four three +

The crowd began to applaud.

Chuck Brown began his signature chucking of the guitar strings.

Two One! The cameras began rolling again.

With Shack bouncing to the excitement behind her, Michel announced, You all are going to love this. Get ready for some neighbor flavor. Give it up for Chuck Broooooooooowwn! +

The party began.

As we began to rise with the calls of Wind me up, Chuck, the band picked up on the vibes. The first song they hit was Moochie Coochie Man. They opened this one up starting with the bridge of the song, which was performed with a little more flavor than you might be usually accustomed to. This was do to the fact that the horn section of Bryan Mills, Brad Clemments and Greg Boyer were toping it off with a P-funk style arrangement. This actually gave the bridge an even more Latin style feel. Let me just say that they were in there. The pocket was tight. The music was right. And, of course Chuck has that charisma and lyrical flow that gets a party rockin'. I also love the way Cherie grooves. Every time she played the chord parts on the keyboard, she would then set back into her little dance mode . vibing with her eyes closed. She was definitely in the groove.

When they finished playing Moochie Coochie Man the cameras shifted back to Michel brought Chuck over to the booth area and conducted a neighbor flavor style interview with him. I've always been intrigued when sitting down and having a conversation with Chuck because that's when you really get to comprehend just how much knowledge, wisdom and depth into the music industry that he has. It's kind of like talking to your . well, godfather. Although it was kind of hard to hear the interview in the studio due to the amount of people there, I did get to hear Chuck mention that he has recorded so many albums over the years that he really couldn't tell her just how many. This was due, he stated, to the fact that there were also albums he has done that has never been released.

Right after Michel's interview with Chuck, she introduced a new feature in the MHz Urban program called Your TV, where they allow groups to send in a BetaSP or VHS of themselves and obtain the opportunity to have it broadcast on the program. I found this to be rather interesting because it does provide another avenue for local performers to showcase their talent. She then introduced a video that they already had for this new feature. Looking at the monitors, I was surprised to discover that the four men singing on this well crafted music video was the local group called Lissen. For those who may not be aware, Lissen is actually the front line of the go-go group OP Tribe. Lissen is the name they go by when they are not performing with the rest of the band. The video production was really nice. The song they were performing sounded smooth as well. It possessed a Maxwell type appeal to it.

The second time Chuck Brown and the crew took the stage it became an all out jam session. Chuck first of all turned the mic over to The EntertainerqJas. Funk, who locked the crowd, then shifted the platform to Little Benny, who had the party people with their hands up. Before Chuck once again took the reigns, he turned the mic over to his daughter KK, who displayed a free-style flow that actually invited everyone to come and party with them on Wednesday and Friday nights.

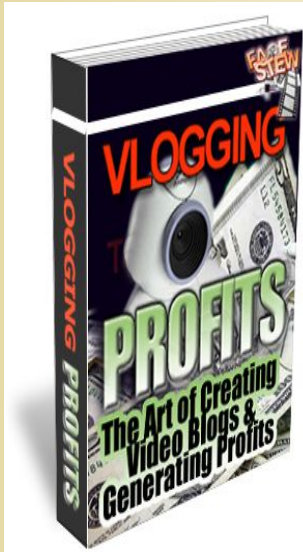
The band finally eased their way into %GoGo Swing.+ Now, that was the song that sent Michel Wright herself shooting like a rocket and dashing to party at the front of the stage. Along with Shack N Tha Pack with his straw party hat, the dynamic duos of Eb and SirBuggs, the joker style grinning of Soldya, the moving& groovinqantics of ByGSyD and POCKET, and the all around partying of a room full of stars and celebrities, we grooved well past moment when the cameras cut off.

Yo, Michel... Thanks for the gumball -- Hey Yourself!

~Kato

~Photo By Eb

Check this out:

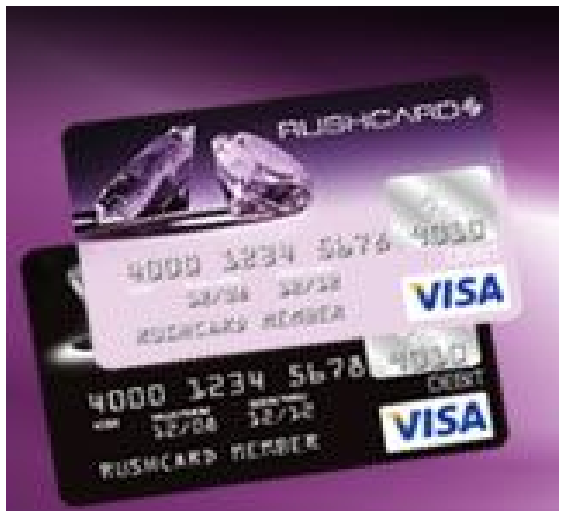


The ranks of the famous have traditionally been roles filled by movie stars, television stars, athletes and rock stars. The countenance of celebrity is changing to include a new, technology-oriented kind of superstar: The Vlogger.

A vlog is a blog (self-published online) with video. The vlog is trumping the blog as far as notoriety goes, and the public's love of the moving image hasn't seen this much popularity since the invention of the moving picture

in 1895. The difference being the technology necessary to become a vlogger, or to take the media into your own hands in the form of 'citizen journalism' as the genre is now touted, is becoming easier and easier. A camera, hosting site, software and content are the components needed to be a potential vlogstar.


With so many people enjoying videos uploaded by everyday people, why not use this growing phenomenon to make money. Imagine easily creating your own video and then actually making money with it!



FREE Diamond Card Activation

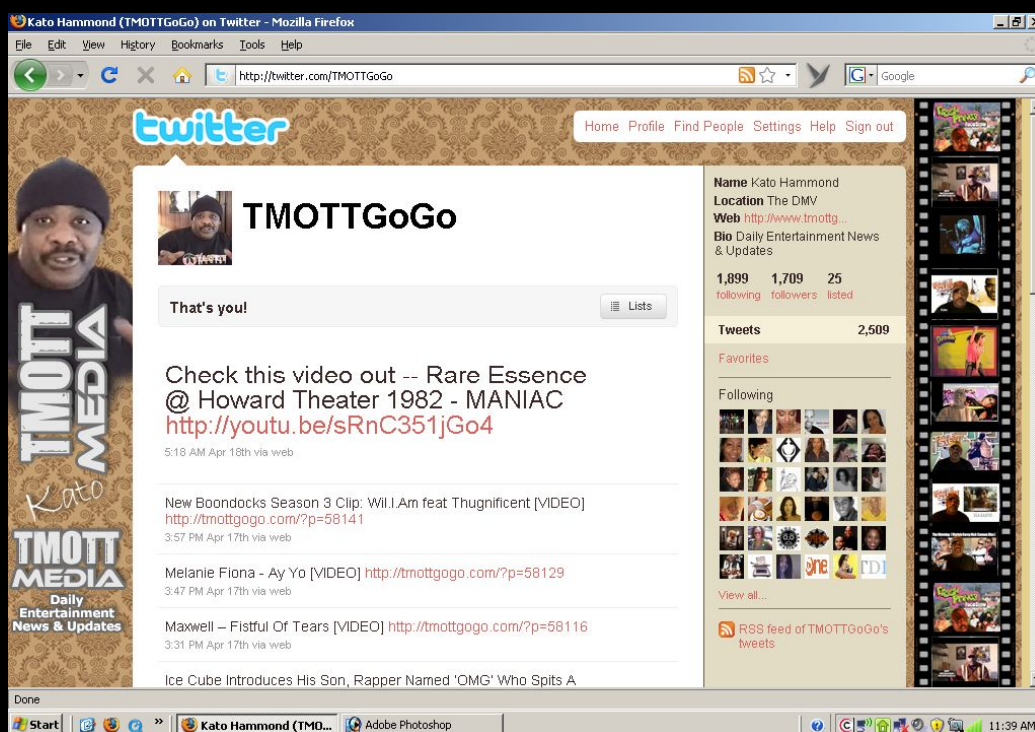
with direct deposit
by 4/15/10

RUSHCARD[®]
LEARN MORE »





Socially Networking,
of course...





I knew that I was headed in the direction of something special as I raced back up I-95 North. I saw the sign in the sky, and watched in amazement for about 5 seconds as a large fiery ball zipped across the sky. 20 minutes later, I was stand among a few of the TMOTTGoGo Fam and crew members waiting for the sexy Michel Wright to out and introduce the Uncalled 4 Band.

Yea, once again I found myself on the set of what I consider the number one television program showcasing some of the finest in local talent . the neighbor-flava's own MHz Urban.

5õ 4õ 3õ 2õ 1õ it was on. The smile of Michel in front of the camera along with the zany antics of Shack N Da Pack gave us the

cue that in just a few more moments we would be dancing to the sounds of UCB. And after the gazing glares females in the studio gulking at the Craig David video %ill Me In+, the party began.

Uncalled 4 Band, the 10 piece go-go camp started their first set by leaping into a tune called %dance Hall Hustler.+ This funky number carried a bass line rhythm executed by Rashad, which was driven by a bouncy beat on the drums delivered by Eric, and laced with chord riffs coming from Scooby on lead guitar. The percussion sounds came from Mookie and Slump setting the pocket in place, while Big Marcus and Peeps laid the carpet on the keys. Although I did notice that lead rapper, Mike, was missing in action this evening, the band still held the fort down. Some people may have even

recognized the multi-talented Scooby as the same cat who also plays with Optimystic Tribe.

After the first set, UCB all gathered in the booth to interview with Michel, where they explained their process of how they started by playing in the basement and basically grew with the guidance of manager, Carter. It was cool to hear them mention the likes of artist such as Chuck Brown and Stanley Clarke to whom they look up to for inspiration.

UCB opened up the second set with a favorite number that was requested by Michel herself. This tune is called "Summer 2G+", the first track on their We Got Next CD, which was released on Bag of Beats records. This all familiar tune allowed the band to showcase the music to Kool & The Gang's "Summer Madness", which they did an excellent job of re-vamping and locking it with original lyrics about life on the streets. No doubt Ms. Wright seemed to be pleased with this cut. She even came over and danced with me for a second and gave me big hug (Thanks for the gumball UCB).

By the time the third set arrived, UCB had gotten the crowd warmed up and on their feet as they jumped into a new soon to be released number called, "Holla At You, Boys." What impressed me most about this particular set was that the fellas, already uniformed in shirts that read "Can U See Beyond DC+", began the spicy tune with a nice choreography set that one might rarely expect to see coming from a band of the new school generation. Another thing that I liked about them was how they

possessed style and grace in their performance. It became obvious that the words written on their shirts weren't merely words. They revealed a message of the sights that these guys are setting their visions on. And, they are doing a good job of it, I might add. I was glad that MHz Urban gave the Uncalled 4 Band the opportunity to flaunt their stuff on camera. I was even more pleased that they did a professional job of taking advantage of it.

Without question, UCB gave us an evening of something special to remember, and my original inkling proved to be right. Thanks MHz, for continually assisting us in proving to the world that go-go music is definitely here to stay. And even though this was the next to the last show for the summer, I will be back next week to watch WPGC's DJ Flexxx and DJ Rico rock that Southeast Anthem joint, as well as my man Tony Terry croon the ladies. And I will definitely be tuning in next season.

Oh, and as far as the fiery ball in the sky I found out later that it was a meteorite that actually landed somewhere in Pennsylvania. The news stated that it was witness by many people from Virginia to New York. It's just too bad they didn't get to continue being amazed as I was. I don't know where they ended up that evening, but I was grooving with UCB.

~Kato

~Photos By SirBuggs

When urban fiction meets GOD...
All HELL breaks loose!



GOD LAUGHS, TOO

Incidents in the Life of a Black Chick

by Tahira Chloe Mahdi

"In-your-face... groundbreaking and unprecedented."

-Washington Afro-American Newspaper

"Will have you laughing out loud... Mahdi steps on the scene with an amazing gift to tell a story."

-AMAG Awareness Magazine, New York

God Laughs, Too

Incidents in the Life of a Black Chick



Tahira Chloe Mahdi



Na'imah just wants to be a good girl and have her name pronounced correctly, but the cold and cruel world just won't cooperate.

With friends like Amber, who wears her jealousy better than her tacky outfits... and Aaron, the boyfriend who prefers weed over intimacy... Na'imah needs no enemies. Add that to her lust for dangerous places and addictive substances, and you get a tale that boils over with hardcore humor and biting reality.

Believing that her conscience is the voice of God, she gives hilarious, jaw-dropping accounts of what happens when she doesn't take His advice.

"Fiction with punch... A kind of modern, urban take on Judy Blume..."

-Washington City Paper

ISBN: 0-9740591-0-2

\$12.00



Jumping in my car with directions in hand, I started off. I was a woman on a mission. I had been trading phone calls and emails with Submission Band's promoter for a while; now the time had come to do the interview. I was going over my questions as I maneuvered through the beltway traffic. What would the people want to know about Submission?

When I arrived, I was met with warm greetings as the guys carried their equipment into the studio. This was their scheduled practice time and I was grateful that they had made time to talk with me. A go-go band who practices in a studio? Hmm. Looks like they're running a first class operation. I found out, after talking with Mr. Anthony Thompson, Submission's manager, that is definitely the way he handles business. I sat down to talk with the fellas, and they wasted no time in getting right to heart of things. Let me introduce you to Submission Band, also known as SMB.

Shannon Moore "Worm" on keyboards, Gregory King "King" on drums, Andruw Wilson "Drew" on lead guitar, Dana McWhirter "Double D" and Sam Wolde "Little Sam" handle the percussion, DaMont Wood "Two" is

the lead rapper, Jason Jones "Jay" is the singer, Alphonzo Hampton "Phonzo" is on keyboards, Hopeton Mair "Hope" plays bass. Anthony Thompson and Chris Moore manage Submission Band. Promotions are handled by PCJR Productions (www.pcjrproductions.com).

TMOTTGoGo: How did Submission Band get started?

SMB: We (Shannon, Chris and Alphonzo) started out as a secular go-go band, but the Lord brought us His way, to do gospel go-go, and brought us to praise His name. It wasn't until 1996 with the collection of guys that we have here now that we 100% realized that this could be a powerful thing that we could use to reach young people in this area. That's not to say that we weren't serious about it before, but we really never thought about how big this could become.

TMOTTGoGo: Where was your first show?

SMB: At Mt Calvary Baptist Church in Rockville, Md. It was on October 15, 1995. The program coordinators for that evening were Ms Rhonda Walker and Reverend Keith Battle. He was one of the founding youth pastors in the area who

has really been behind us 100% from the start. Since our start, he's been sticking his neck out for us, allowing us to come into churches and perform. So, we're definitely, truly blessed to have him as a part of our lives.

TMOTTGoGo: What kind of responses have you received from churches as far as being a go-go band?



SMB: When I (Anthony) came along in 1996, we had a lot of negative responses as far as a go-go band coming in. They didn't see the vision of what we were trying to do and what we're trying to accomplish in reaching young people. Within the last three and a half years, churches have gotten behind us and they're constantly ringing our phone asking us to come out to different youth programs, retreats, outdoor outreach events. The list is so long, I can't even begin to go into it. It's just been amazing what God has allowed us to do.

TMOTTGoGo: What makes you not just another gospel go-go band?

SMB: We incorporate a lot of different flavors. Mostly, all of us are big go-go heads, we go back far into the history of go-go so we bring a lot of that into our style. Every body in here likes a different band, and we've incorporated everything into the mix.

TMOTTGoGo: I would consider yall definitely more new school.

SMB: Oh, definitely. It's definitely new school, but we do have a twist of old school in the flavor. We try to please everyone, but first we put forth the message of the Lord Jesus Christ. We just use the go-go as an instrument to get forth God's word, so we use a lot of different styles. We have new school, old school. We try to incorporate everything and come up with a new style no one's ever heard. We love to appeal to the people, so we put on a show while we're up there so everyone will be entertained.

TMOTTGoGo: Who were your musical influences?

SMB: Rare Essence, Back Yard, Northeast Groovers, a lot of jazz, John P Kee, Kirk Franklin, Hezekiah Walker. We've had the opportunity to meet some of them and that's really helped us too.

TMOTTGoGo: There's been a lot of discussions lately about why people would or wouldn't come see a gospel go-go band. What do you think about that?

SMB: You have to value everybody's opinion; everyone is not going to like what you do. We just have to invite them to come. If they wanna come, they do. If they don't, we'll just keep on inviting them.

TMOTTGoGo: What about the point that was made not to talk about Jesus?

SMB: A lot of people said, "I'd come see the go-go, but I have my own opinion about Jesus." It's there for whoever wants to hear it. The invitation is there. The word we want to put out is about Jesus Christ, not God the creator. We want to put out the word about Jesus Christ. We're Christians. We live the life, at least we try to the best of our ability. People may not want to hear it, but if they come to the shows, they're going to hear it. Period.

TMOTTGoGo: So, there's no compromise?

SMB: No, no compromise at all. In the go-go industry, they don't water down what they say.

They are not going to water it down, so why should we water down what we believe in? We'll be doing what we feel as Christians our job is, and that's to win souls for Christ. True, people have different religions, and we are not to force our religion on anybody. But, if you want to hear it, you can hear it.

TMOTTGoGo: What kind of things do you have planned for the summer?

SMB: I'm going to highlight a couple of events. (Anthony says as he pulls out the calendar) We're scheduled to play at an alternative prom in June sponsored by Love International Church. On June 23, we'll be going to Norfolk, and on June 30, we'll be part of an outreach in front of the FBI building downtown. July 5, at the Glendale Multicultural center we will be performing as the special guest of a gospel talent showcase sponsored by Purpose Entertainment, Peace in Heaven Promotions, and PCJR Productions. All the events are posted on the website, www.SubmissionBand.com.

TMOTTGoGo: What is the response that you get from out of town to go-go?

SMB: A lot of people look at us like "What? What are they?" Some people look at us like "All this banging," but they're not actually listening to the words. They'll first hear go-go and be like "Man.D.C..fights," because we often get introduced as Submission Go-Go Band, so when other people hear that they would be like, "um, go-go? That's not allowed here." So, we have to put it in our words and stress to other people we have to literally explain to them where we're from and what we're gonna do. Once they hear the Word, the response we get is phenomenal. Once they really see what we're doing and hear what the message is bringing forth, it's powerful.

TMOTTGoGo: Who writes your music?

SMB: Lyrically, most of it comes from DaMont. Musically most of it comes from Alphonzo. Everybody comes in and we just get around the keyboard... and that's the hammer right

there (pointing to Dana). So if it don't get past him it don't make the show.

TMOTTGoGo: What do you think about flipping cover tunes?

SMB: That's how we started. Basically, our whole show was cover tunes.changed over. Then, gradually... well, I (DaMont) didn't really listen to gospel music, so I didn't know any gospel music.

Then, we started to listen to more gospel music and we started to incorporate gospel music into the go-go. But now, since we will be recording artists, we're trying to come up with original everything.

TMOTTGoGo: Is your mission to reach people or to perform to people in the church?

SMB: It's twofold. Number one, of course, we do a lot of outreach ministry within the community. Our goal there is to spread the message of God to (people) through a style of music that they're familiar with.

As far as the second fold-- the church. This will allow youth in the church area a place where they can go and have fun. Give them a new school flavor where they can come and have a good time in the Lord. Just give us a chance. Respect our music, just like you would respect anyone else's. If you're walking down the street and we're outside at an outreach, stop by. We love all the go-go bands that's out. It's all love.

~Jennifer
~Photos Jennifer





Lights, Camera,



Where words are literally put into ACTION!





With such a show consisting of the likes of Master P, Lil Romeo, Silk The Shocker, Musiq Soulchild, Jahiem, The Supafriendz, Lil Mo, and Ray-J, we entered the amphitheater expecting to see Rare Essence playing first on the card. However, this was not the case. The first act to come on was Ray-J, who came on the stage

Gradually, people began filling Richmond's Classic Amphitheatre, despite the threat and even occasional attacks of rain showers. One thing about the people of Richmond is that they love to party, so the announcement of WCDX Power 92.1 showcasing some of the finest talent that the music industry has to offer apparently more powerful than the threat of rain. This event, which was called Powerfest 2001, is equivalent to the same type of musical showcases that the local urban stations here annually put on. The only difference that we noticed may be that fact that Power 92 is more apt to showcase local as well as national acts more so than the stations here.

The reason we attended the show in the first place was due to Rare Essence being one of the acts scheduled to perform on the show. In fact, this is the same radio station that has been playing RE's 'Hey Buddy Buddy' on daily rotation, which in turn had become a popular hit in the area. And since we already know how they rock a crowd in DC, it is always interesting to see the techniques they use when out of town. Besides a recent trip to see Backyard and New Dimension play at a club called Alley Kats, I had almost forgotten just how much Richmond really loves to party.

carrying a large Gucci bag and performed 'Wait A Minute' while a group of young girls danced to his beat. Next to come on the stage was a local rap group from Richmond who also rapped through their set while females danced. In fact, RE didn't hit the stage until fourth, right after Lil Mo performed a few of her cuts, including 'Super Woman,' which also featured two females performing choreographed steps while she entertained.

Before Essence hit the stage, the MC of the show began asking the crowd if they knew anything about DC Go-Go. Many in the crowd screamed back with a mighty roar. As Lil Mike thumped the signature heartbeat on the base drum, Mike, Kent and Roy began running the lines to the beginning part of 'Push' from the RE-2000 CD. All while this was going on, Jas. Funk, Lil Benny & Shorty were off in the wings talking smack to the crowd through cordless microphones. Along came Mickey smacking on the congas, which prompted Lil Mike to bring in the socket. Finally, the front four strolled onto the stage with Funk strolling a pimp style walk that I haven't seen since the first Go-Go Live at the Capitol Center. As Benny, Shorty and Whiteboy followed him on, the party soon began with the crew yelling, 'Um-um, Yea Push! Ah-ah, Yea we Push!'

You could tell that this crowd was not all too familiar with this type of show opening because the looks on their faces were like, "What the hell." They were into it, but in a state of wonder all the same. Okay, now starts the experience and technique. You see, not only has the generation changed in DC, but also the same in Richmond. This was a different crowd from the one we used to rock at the Ivory Nightclub with Proper Utensils.

Although this crowd seems to have a good time partying to go-go records, I'm not sure how familiar they are when it comes to seeing the bands perform live. In other words, how the relationship between the band and the crowd works. Therefore, this was my opportunity to see just what 25 years of experience has taught some of these RE vets.

After playing the melody of "Bush" for a while, Essence shifted the beat and jumped into "Hey Buddy Buddy." This one had the crowd in the groove. This was no doubt due to the fact that they were familiar with this tune. The same kind of reaction was received when they hit "Overnight Scenario," which was rapped by Whiteboy. Still, the crowd was not where they were supposed to be. That meant that the front line was going to have to put in some extra work, which is what they did. Before we could realize what was going on, Benny and Funk had jumped off the high stage in order to pump up the crowd on their level. That was the climax where the show began to pick up. Running back and forth among the crowd, the dynamic duo extended their mics throughout allowing the predominantly ladies in the front row to get their shouts on. Now, this isn't anything new at home, but to this crowd it literally got them pumped. They loved taking the opportunity to actually being part of the show. I took notice at how the ladies were



falling for Benny's excitement and grabbing his shirt trying to pull him further into the crowd.

When they finally did get back on the stage the band broke it down. This was the time that Funk used to talk to the crowd. He talked about how long Rare Essence has been together. He talked about and explained how that go-go thing is supposed to work. Then with a mighty roar, he yelled to the crowd, "Now, where y'all from?" They ate it up. One thing that is universal is that people love to shout and represent where they are from. And after a wicked solo from Go-Go

Mickey on the congas and a pretty interesting one from Lil Mike on the drums, the fellahs jump into "Project Chick" with Roy and Benny capping the top with the horns. Yea, this one really got 'em. Just about every gold tooth in the house was grinning from the audience. Now, that's a lot of gold. Giving them more of what they are probably most used to, RE then rocked "Chicken Head."

Before leaving the stage, Whiteboy gave the band a cue and they jumped into what was probably the funkiest tunes I heard RE hit in quite a long time. When I say funky, I mean lead guitar funky. And while leaving the stage I had to stop Whiteboy and ask him what that last tune was. His response was that it was a part of "What Nigga What" that we never get to hear. What?! This tune is already vicious as it is, and now they want to hit my head with the thought that there's even another part to it.

Isn't that a trip? Rare Essence invaded Richmond and even gave them a little something that they don't even hit here at home. Next time you see them, tell them to hit it. I know I'll be expecting it at the Classics next Sunday. It's funky as hell.

-Kato

-Photos: Preston Blue



GET CONNECTED

Google™ Custom Search Search

TMOTTGoGo Magazine Archives

TMOTTGoGo
Take Me Out To The Go-Go
Magazine

You feel like
Bustin Loose?



