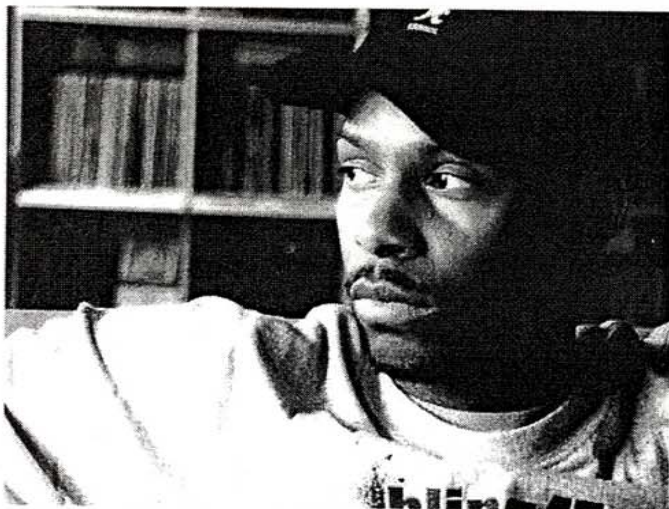


Precious mettle

Waaheed's Platinum Pied Pipers fight to keep the funk unfettered by glitz **By Tamara Warren**



LEADER OF THE PACK Platinum Pied Pipers' Waaheed blows into the Rude Movements bash to drop his high-grade funk beats.

In a dance-music industry bloated with gloss and glam, it's only a matter of time before *bling-free* becomes the mantra. That's Waaheed's mission—to make infectious, funk-fueled grooves that are far removed from a world saturated with extravagant jewelry and fancy living. Grounded by a down-to-earth Midwestern mindset, Waaheed is one half of Platinum Pied Pipers, the production duo primed to enter the big leagues of what he calls a "hip-hop-soul hybridization."

"It's important for us to represent music that has affected our lives and made us the people we are, and that we respect our influences and create something original out of that," Waaheed, 29, says on the eve of a relocation from Detroit to New York with his production partner, Saadiq. "Whether it's hip-hop, old seventies disco or techno, at the end of the day good music is good music." Waaheed is launching his New York life with a DJ gig at the Tuesday 14 edition of the Rude Movements vs. Puma summer hip-hop series.

Waaheed's certainly not the first artist to expand his horizons via New York's vast cultural landscape, but he's intent on keeping

things real, hometown style. "Detroit is a staple—I am Detroit for all it's worth," he says. "I hope to bring more of Detroit to the world." For Waaheed, Detroit resonates with beauty—not the typical 14-karat-gold variation, but the beauty of empty streets at the crack of dawn, after a night of cranking out beats in the studio. "The Detroit flavor is a whole lot of funk, soul, grittiness, but a whole lot of prettiness."

Those Motor City elements find their way into PPP's music—funk and soul with a hip-hop edge—through his turntables, sampler and MPC 2000 workstation. "They're basically like a paintbrush—you can paint whatever you want with them," Waaheed says. "Anything can be an instrument—it's all a template to express a medium, and that medium is sound."

Waaheed's artistic approach first found voice with Slum Village, the influential Detroit hip-hop group he cofounded with T-3, Baatin, Que D and his musical mentor Jay Dee in the early '90s. Waaheed left the group early on, accepting a full scholarship to the prestigious fine-arts program of Detroit's Center for Creative Studies. When Slum Village departed on a European tour in the late '90s,

he put aside school, jumping back on board to begin cutting his teeth as a full-fledged producer working alongside Jay Dee for *Welcome 2 Detroit* in '01. The same year, he launched his own hip-hop label, Bling 47 (which gained immediate props with the release of *The Official Jay Dee Instrumental Series Volume 1*), and earned production credits on the Cartoon Network's *Adult Swim* slot and in the film *Barbershop*. Yet Waaheed didn't find a true outlet for his many influences until he teamed up with Saadiq, an accomplished dancer and multi-instrumentalist whose former band, the Most, found guidance in the famed Motown producer Barrett Strong.

The two recorded their first tracks with Detroit soul singer Dwele for *Rewind Vol. 1*, a compilation released last year on the respected avant-soul label Ubiquity Recordings. Their self-titled album *PPP* is due out later this year, also on Ubiquity, with a cast of guest spots suited to their gumbo of sounds, including lyricists Jay Dilla (Jay Dee's MC alter-ego), Invincible, Lacks, Theo Parrish and Steve Spacek. Styles range from the bright hues of funk on "The Day is Done" (with Georgia's lush voice adding emotional content) to a gorgeous soul meander on "I Got You," featuring Tiombe Lockhart's Southern tones. "Our music is for people like us, who like everything across the board—from Fleetwood Mac, to the Isley Brothers, to Bjork, to Derrick May," he says. "There's no way people could listen to it and say it's a hip-hop record or it's a soul album. It's so inconsistent, it's consistently inconsistent."

Though his music has already taken him all over the world, Waaheed is undaunted by the prospect of starting over as the underdog with a new combo and a new city. His refreshingly down-to-earth mien has served him well. "When I'm by myself, I keep quiet. My mom always taught me that if you listen, you'll learn to listen to the music of the day," he says. It's that kind of commonsense, laid-back attitude that distinguish Platinum Pied Piper's songs from the egotistic ostentation of many of their peers. "The easy part is being who we are, being different," Waaheed adds. "Not being different is *harder* than being different."

Waaheed spins at Rude Movements vs. Puma on Tuesday 14. See daily listings for details.

Listings

IF YOU WANT TO BE LISTED

Submit information by mail, e-mail (clubs@timeoutny.com) or fax (646-432-3160) to **Bruce Tantom**. Include details of event, DJ lineup, dates, times, address of venue with cross streets, nearest subways, telephone number and admission price, if any. **Deadline is 6pm on Monday, ten days before publication date.** Incomplete submissions will not be included, and listings information will not be accepted over the phone.

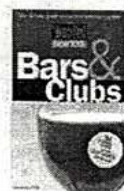
Note: Listings for ongoing events will run for two weeks and then be dropped unless written reconfirmation is received. Due to sheer volume, we cannot confirm receipt on an individual basis. All listings, whether ongoing or onetime, are subject to space limitations.

HOW TO USE THIS SECTION

The following listings are club highlights. Gay clubs are included here if the emphasis is on dancing or partying rather than cruising. For more clubs that are primarily gay or lesbian (including men- and women-only clubs), see the Gay & Lesbian section. For addresses, see the Venues list at the end of this section.

*=Recommended

☞=After-hours clubs: open past 5am



Night owls

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Thursday 9

* Barfly Club NYC

Rothko, 9pm; \$10, advance tickets \$8. Advance tickets available at [Ticketweb](http://Ticketweb.ticketweb.com). The U.K.-based Barfly Club invades the Lower East Side tonight, and it's doing so in fine style—Rothko's downstairs lounge will be soundtracked by a DJ set from the Scottish media darlings of Franz Ferdinand, who we'd bet money will be spinning a lot of groove-based rock material. They'll be joined on the CD decks of steel by the Crashin' and Addive DJs. Meanwhile, the Future Heads, the Rogers Sisters and Tokyo Nights take to the stage on the club's top floor. For more information, check out www.rothkonyc.com.

* Danceteria Class of 1984 Twenty-Year Reunion

Downtime, 10pm, \$20. Go back—way back—to one of clubland's gilded age's, when freaks ruled the nights and yuppies were the outsiders. Things sure have changed! Anyway, the beloved Danceteria's alumni are getting together for a one-time-only shindig. Danceteria veteran Freddie Bastone and Man Parrish are on the decks.

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