



The 411 Initiative For Change

www.whatsthe411.ca

Artists' Biographies



Melanie Durrant

www.melaniedurrant.com

It's not merely enough to declare yourself a diva. Indeed, any faux-fox can wiggle and prance while lip-synching insipid lyrics to an already familiar beat, but it takes real artistry to construct a new stylistic vanguard in soul. With the upcoming release of her debut disc *Where I'm Goin'* (Sept. 2005), Canadian chanteuse **MELANIE DURRANT** introduces the world to her unique, writing, arrangements, vocal production and edgy sound. Her albums lead single, "*Where I'm Goin'*" is the perfect introduction to **DURRANT's** talent. The song caught the attention of in-demand video director **Little X** (Usher, Nelly, Sean Paul, Jay Z, Fabolous and more). **DURRANT and her** song, were featured in a commercial for Chrysler's PT Cruiser. Melanie's current video for her new remix single 'Let Me' features **Kardinal Offishall**.



Rochester aka Juice

www.rochesterakajuice.ca

Growing up in the Islington/Finch corridor of Toronto, **Juice** was the first winner of urban radio station (**FLOW 93.5 FM**) inaugural Soul Search talent contest in 2002. **Rochester aka Juice's** full-length debut album '**A New Day**', is slated for release on June 21, 2005 through **Maple Music Recordings**. The video to his single 'A New Day' has been nominated

for a 2005 **Much Music Video Award**. His lyrics speak to distinctly local concerns while carrying universal themes. "*Some cats feel because they sell a couple of dime bags that they're hustlers, gangsters and thug rappers like they see on BET,*" relates Juice. "*The situation in Canada is different. Sure some people are living that kind of life, but why rap about busting guns when you're not? I come from a proud Dominican and Jamaican household, grew up with my two parents, and I didn't live that kind of life... so why am I going to rap about something that I don't live?*" He adds: "*Music is expression of self. If that's not you, don't express it.*"



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Sumeet

www.sumeetmusic.com

Sumeet's debut album '**Deeper**' is a smooth blend of R&B, Hip-Hop, and Dance Hall. The range of her abilities is shown off on infectious dancehall reggae jams such as "**Agony**" featuring **Atlantic Records** recording artist Elephant Man, and "**Wine Me (2 Da Ground)**" which have both been in heavy rotation across Canadian and UK radio, as well as Siruis Satellite Radio in

the U.S. The combined sales of "Agony" on a **Universal Records** Compilation, AV8 Records, and Brukkout Records, is nearly 20,000. Her songs will be featured on an upcoming **VH1** show this Fall 2005 and **MTV** is currently editing a segment on Sumeet to air later this Summer.



Shaun "Rikoshay" Boothe

www.won-by-one.net

Rikoshay is carving out a space for himself in Canada's hip-hop mosaic. You may have seen him in the MuchMusic environment in the summer of 2002 in the highly coveted position of **Much Temp**, or spitting a verse in his **MuchVibe** commercial. His single "**One by One**", featuring Natasha Waterman was release on vinyl by **Universal Music Canada**, while the music video charted on MuchVibe at number 3. His current single and video for "**Stomp**" is in rotation on radio stations across Canada and Much Music.

Travis Blackman

Travis Blackman received the title of **Toronto's International Poetry Slam Champion** in 2003. After going up against 36 poets from around the world he came out on top. Travis Mr. Blackman has energized countless venues with the rod of truth he has been heard by the elderly and the youth in places like **Mel Lastman Square, Art Gallery of Ontario, St Lawrence Theatre, Dundas Square, York University, and University of Toronto** just to name a few. Mr. Blackman's rhymes are insightful, and leaves you with a mindful so prepare to be enlightened.



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Will Strickland

Will Strickland is a longtime music industry veteran in the US. Will conceptualized & produced the first ever online concert in black music history while at **Epic Records** as the Senior National Director of Rap Marketing & Promotions with **Ghostface Killah** in 1997, as well as creating & teaching the first ever course on hip hop culture, "**Edutainment: The Impact of Hip Hop on American Culture**" at the **University of Massachusetts-Amherst** in 1998.



Ken Masters

With his commanding presence, charming charisma and distinctive character, **Ken Masters** possess what many entertainers lack – star quality! **Ken Masters** cemented his name in 2004 with the release of the Iraqi/Bush war inspired track "**The War Report**," which featured up-n-comers Rochester aka Juice, Mhedikc and Adversaree. Masters then followed w/ the campus radio single "**Take You There**." The recent servicing of his latest buzz track "**Back to Back**" is getting amazing early feedback from campus radio djs. **Masters** plans spend 2005 recording his debut album.



DJ Grouch

DJ Grouch a member of the **Turnstylez** crew has earned himself international recognition through turntablist competitions across North America. In 1996 Grouch and his Turnstylez compatriots swept the **DMC's** ranking first, second and third. Later going on to win the 1998 Western Hemisphere title for team battle, Grouch has cemented himself as one of the world's respected turntablists. Grouch is also a resident DJ hosting **The Sound Check Show** on

Toronto's **CHRY 105.5 FM**; the show serve as a relief from the monotony of commercial radio and as a voice for the underground.



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Spin

Spin is a devoted agent of social change, well-known poet and spoken word artist - a firm believer in the power of words. The focus of his spoken word performances raise awareness amongst and between diverse ethno-racial and multicultural youth in the Greater Toronto Area. As a youth advocate and activist, he is a positive youth role model and is well respected by many community groups and organizations in Toronto.



DJ Dopey

While the art of turntablism continues to please audiences across the globe, it goes without saying that DJ Dopey has played an integral role in its rise to the forefront. Having performed alongside the artform's finest including such names as **DJ Q-Bert**, **DJ Craze**, **Mixmaster Mike**, **DJ Jazzy Jeff**, The Beat Junkies, Scratch Perverts and **The X-Ecutioners** to name a few, DJ Dopey has solidified his rank among the greatest in his field by winning the coveted title of **2003 DMC WORLD CHAMPION**. In addition to his DMC World title, other 1st place achievements he holds dear to him include the **2001 Allies All Star Beatdown** put on by renowned turntablist crew "The Allies", as well as the **2002/2003 Vestax Canadian Championships**.