AES Audio Engineering Society - Pacific Northwest Section

Around the Seattle area, Washington, U.S.A.
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Saturday Night Fever — Y2K Style
An Evening at Rane Corporation
Wednesday, November 29, 2000
7:30PM

In 1977 Saturday Night Fever propelled John Travolta to stardom and took disco to its apogee. Although dancing to records is nothing new, disco created a new audio service provider: the mobile DJ. While you can still hire someone to bring a system in for your event and spin the hits, being a Boss Jock in a nightclub is not at all what being a DJ is all about. Today, a DJ, his turntables, mixer, and dub plates are an instrument all by themselves. A new word has evolved: Turntablist.

Two Frenchmen, both named Pierre (Schaffer and Henry) probably get the credit for the origins of modern turntablism back in the 1940s in what became known as *musique concrete*. Part of what Schaffer worked with were sound effects. He got the idea of creating sonic work using "found sounds" or what he called *objets sonores*, and developed such techniques as looping, cutting & pasting, filtering, transposing, and reversing in a pre-tape era—that is, using vinyl. [1]

From the Turntablism FAQ: Turntablism originates from Hip-Hop Djing, particularly from "battle" DJ culture. Though Turntablism has a fairly recent history, its roots can be traced to the origins of Hip-Hop.

In 1973, Kool Herc (a.k.a. Clive Campbell) helped give birth to Hip-Hop when he took two turntables and two copies of identical records to isolate and loop certain "breakbeats." This basic foundation of beat-extending gave B-Boys and MC's their platform, the seed from which Hip-Hop would grow.

As early as 1977, Hip-Hop pioneers such as Grandmaster Flash and Afrika Bambaata would battle at local dances and in parks. Battles at this time, were mostly about who could be louder and attract the bigger crowd. (The New Beats, S.H. Fernando Jr., pgs. 9-10.)

But also in 1977, Grand Wizard Theodore would forever change DJ culture when he invented the "scratch." While cueing a record back and forth through headphones, Grand Wizard Theodore heard a funky, rhythmic sound, and DJing would never be the same.

> *"I just came home from messing around.. I was about 13 or 14 years old, and my mother was banging on the door... So I stop the music and she opened the door and she was talking to me. At the same time she was talking to me I felt myself moving the record back and forth and forth and back while she was talking to me, because I wanted to keep that same groove I was on. I was talking to her and I was listening to the record...and I said to myself.' Hey this sounds really good. So I kept practicing it.. and it became a scratch." (Grand Wizard Theodore, Battle Sounds documentary.)*

It wasn't until 1983 that the musical mainstream got clued-in. Herbie Hancock scored a hit using legendary Zulu DJ Grandmixer D.S.T. to scratch on the song "Rockit," and it wasn't long that kids from all over the USA (and world) were ruining the needles on their parent's stereos trying to imitate D.S.T. The point that DJs could be true musicians was finally hammered home. [2]

Transformer, Chirp, Flare, Orbit and Crab. New dance steps? Pokemon? **NOT**. They're all names of different scratches. You can discover what they are by visiting the turntablism website http://www.turntablism.com/skratch_tutorials/default.htm

The Evening

To celebrate their upcoming 20th Anniversary in 2001, Rane is offering their world famous *Nickel Tour (tm Rane Corp.)* at a special, one-time-only discounted rate of 100% off. Yes, that's right, 100% off! Now what would you pay? **NOTHING**! That's what. Following the tour will be a few treats, a brief discussion of Rane DJ Mixer technology and products for club, mobile, scratch, and house applications. Last but not least, a secret, award winning, special guest DJ will perform to illustrate the amazing techniques and styles required for today's demanding DJs and their mixing instruments.

Credits:
1. http://www.queensu.ca/cfrc/zine/myjun97/plunder.htm. Plunder Appropriate Sample, Scott E. M. Stevens.
2. http://www.turntablism.com FAQ, Section 2.2, Origins of Turntablism. Taking my cue from the previous credit, I plundered this material quite liberally (rickc).

Directions to Rane:

From Seattle

The trip from downtown Seattle to Rane takes about 25-30 minutes (assuming no traffic)
Take **I-5 North** / Eastsiders take **405 North**:

1.   If taking I-5 North, take Exit 182, "525 North to 99" but stay to the left as you exit so you pass under the freeway. (do not take I-405 South)

2.   Merge into the left lane (with northbound I-405 traffic), follow the "525 North to 99 Mukilteo" sign. [405 Northbound travelers follow this same sign.]

3. Turn right at the 1st traffic light (3 miles later) onto Northbound 99 (Aurora Ave).
4. Turn left only 1/4 mile later to continue on 525 to Mukilteo. (Just after turning, there is a Food Emporium & a Starbucks on the right).
5. Three traffic lights later (2.1 miles), turn left onto Chennault Beach Drive. (There is a Texaco here and this is just before the hat-tipping, neon sign at The Monkey Trap Tavern.)
6. 1/4 mile down Chennault, take the first right into the Harbour Pointe Business Park onto 47th Ave W.
7. Rane is 1/4 mile down on the left. Enter through the lobby (2nd parking lot) on the far side of the building.

Directions from the North:

Take I-5 South to 526 "To the Mukilteo Ferry" (aka The Boeing Freeway) Once you pass Boeing, follow signs to the Mukilteo Ferry (right turn) At the bottom of the steep hill (Taco Bell, Dairy Queen, 7-Eleven) Turn LEFT (not right toward the ferry)

You are now heading south on 525, the Mukilteo Speedway. At Chennault Beach Drive, (Texaco/4th light) turn right. Follow directions above starting at #6

Rane Corporation
10802 - 47th Ave W
Mukilteo, WA 98275-5098

(425) 355-6000

Meetings in the Future

Unless someone drops a meeting into our laps, there is no December meeting. We're working on a meeting at the Experience Music Project and another at Microsoft's new meeting/conference facility. These will take place sometime in 2001. Are you interested in Cobranet? Please let us know if this is worthy of a meeting.

-Rick Smargiassi

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AES PNW 2000-2001 Section Chairman

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