



Hey, DJ! / Q&A

Grandtheft on The Evolution of His Production Career and Essential Bay Area Stops

Posted By Christina Li on Thu, Jan 22, 2015 at 10:30 AM



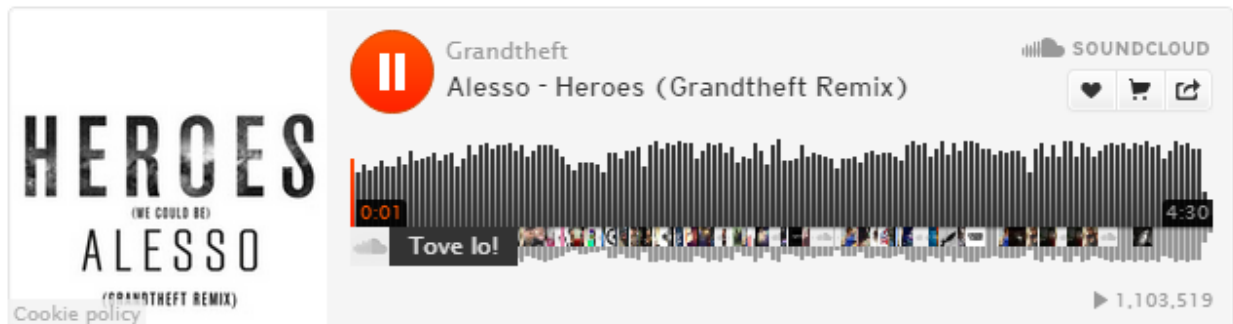
Toronto-based DJ **Grandtheft**, who made his name on the Canadian club circuit as a member of party-rocking duo Team Canada, has ridden his versatile production skills to become one of North America's most sought after electronic musicians. Working tirelessly in the studio while touring over 200 days last year, his releases last year ranged from a bass-heavy trap EP "Keep it 100" featuring Keys n Krates to an official remix of Alesso's "Heroes." We chat with Grandtheft about the evolution of his DJ career, playing festivals versus small stages, and his travel essentials. He will be headlining **Temple's** grand opening of LvL 55, Saturday, Jan. 24.

You started your musical days playing piano, then bands. How did you end up pursuing DJing?

I grew up in a small town and I was making beats in high school. When I got to University in Montreal, I discovered that a lot of my favorite producers were DJing when I went to see their live shows. I figured that DJing was the best way to get my music heard. I was excited to play my own music.

As a producer, you've gone from making party breaks to now being commissioned by big labels to do official remixes. How has your production process changed over the years?

I have always made original songs and remixes of many styles and that holds true today. It's just that, when I started, no one wanted to hear or play my originals and no labels wanted to hire me to do big remixes. My production process has evolved a lot over the last few years. Especially in the areas of mixing/engineering/sound design. I am constantly working to improve and learn new ways of doing things.



You've released tracks in a variety of different genres, from disco to trap to club music to house and beyond. What impact has it had on your career that you aren't solely associated with one single genre?

I think it's easier to get noticed doing one specific thing. Now that I have some notoriety consistently doing a wide variety of tempos/styles, I am right where I want to be. I soak up different techniques and influences by working in various genres, which keeps it fun. I have developed my own sound across many tempos and now I am free to be creative and evolve without much limitation. Hopefully my audience will continue to follow me on this journey. The new originals I am writing are a continuation of my evolution as an artist and I am truly not limiting myself to any particular expectations.

You've collaborated with a number of other producers (most of them Canadian) in your previous releases, including Smalltown DJs, U-Tern and Keys N Krates. Who is a producer you haven't yet worked with but would like to?

I'm open to working with lots of different producers as long as it's fun and we can learn from one another. Some that come to mind are Rustie, Lido, Zeds Dead and Skrillex.



What's the biggest difference for you between playing a festival stage and playing a nightclub like Temple?

I really like both. I like the intimacy of playing in a venue. Also, often there is a higher concentration of die-hard fans. Festivals can be huge though which is electrifying in a different way. Also, playing outside is pretty rad. Some festivals are set in amazingly beautiful places.

You also hold down a residency at The Wynn Hotel in Vegas now. What's it like playing there, with the electronic music scene exploding in the past few years?

I play at Surrender and Encore Beach Club every month and I love it. It's so different from my shows elsewhere because the crowd is so made up of tourists. There's not as much of a consistent scene but people have come all the way to Vegas to turn up so it's fun. The hotels are amazing and the venues are always packed full of people ready to party like mad. I always say, every weekend is like New Year's Eve in Vegas.

Last year, you did over 200 shows traveling all around the world. What are your top three travel essentials?

Nike Roche are comfy ass shoes. My NEXUS card for the border and TSA PRE. I have this indestructible case for my iPhone called Hitcase — it allows me to shoot with a wide angle lens and even underwater.

What's on your to-do list whenever you come to the Bay Area?

I go to Amoeba Records — that's always fun. I like that shop TRUE as well. I also love to play my shows in San Francisco. The Bay Area always has a great music crowd and I'm really excited to be coming back for this show Saturday night!