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::: Interview :::

- Saeed Younan
- Younan Muzik, Star*69
- 11.24.2005 ::: Simon Jain



As a top international DJ and producer, Saeed Younan has developed into a true artist of the global dance scene. Carving a sound all his own, Younan seamlessly blends house, techno, tribal, and percussive grooves with building momentum, making him a favorite among club goers as well as promoters.

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Younan has been DJing, producing, and remixing music for major and independent labels (including Addictive, Strictly Rhythm, Yoshitoshi, Star 69, Bamboo, Distinctive and Sondos) since the early 90's. He's had numerous Top 10 hits and a #1 spot on Billboard Dance chart (Celeda "The Underground"). Younan's nomination for "Best Breakthrough DJ" in the 2003 DanceStar awards is a testimony to his worldwide appeal. This milestone provided an opportunity to push his sound even further, and while doing so, he's captivating audiences worldwide.

A native of Washington DC (from a middle-eastern descent), Younan grew up listening to a variety of ethnic music. As a result, his musical sound resonates with percussive beats and tribal rhythms. His production has been dubbed "Timeless" by top DJ's and even referred to as "a change of heart for dance music." His vision is clear, yet simply stated; "I just want people to enjoy my music as much as I enjoy playing it for them."

Saeed Younan has headlined at prominent clubs across the globe in places such as Space and Cream (Ibiza, Miami), Pacha (Argentina, Israel, and Spain), Cave, Acabus (Dominican Republic), +Soda, and Venue (Greece), Vinyl, and Avalon (New York), Womb, (Tokyo), Sona (Montreal), and Boa (Toronto).

To date Younan has released 2 mix compilations: Tide Edit (2002 on UCMG/Europe & STAR 69/US) and Addictive Beats (summer 2003 on STAR 69/US and SPG/Canada). These compilations showcase not only Saeed's tribal sound, but also a deep and minimal side. Both compilations have received rave reviews from critics around the world.

Younan is currently entering the busiest period of his life. Not only is he DJing at a different international destination on a nightly basis, but he has also stepped up the production work. He recently released a new single, "Rock The Rhythm," on Sondos Recordings and has a massive cache of remixes on the way. This summer will see the release of Saeed's remixes of Club 69's "Warm Leatherette" and Suzanne Palmer's





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release of Saeed's remixes of Club 69's "Warm Leatherette" and Suzanne Palmer's "Sound Of The Drums" on Star 69; and Todd Gardner Feat Shawnee Taylor "The Only One" and BPT "Moody" on Tweek'd Records. Also coming this summer is Saeed Younan Re-Mixed, a new mix compilation arriving on Star 69.

Nocturnal: Tribal maestros Deepgroove have been quoted as saying, "Saeed Younan is a master of the tribal, head twisting groove". What is it about Tribal that you feel so comfortable within it? How do you relate to it as a genre?

Saeed: Tribal's in my blood. I was born in the Middle East where drums and percussive instruments were the foundation of all Arabic music. I've always been fascinated by it. It's so versatile; you can incorporate the elements of percussion in all forms of music. It's amazing when you stop and really think about it.

Nocturnal: Formerly part of Saeed & Palash, how did your beginnings within a partnership affect or influence where you are now as a solo performer? Do you miss the dynamic of being part of DJ duo?

Saeed: I'm on phase two right now...a new chapter in the book. You basically have to progress in life in order to meet your goals. The duo thing was a great experience and I enjoyed it very much. But, I'm always looking to better myself, and this time I'm more focused and calculated than the first round.

Nocturnal: Will Addictive Records resurface? What creative pursuits are you engaging in currently outside your Star 69 work?

Saeed: I closed Addictive Records, and launched Younan music (YM) one of the first and only digital labels. We've signed some great artists to the label. Our tracks have been featured on the Love Parade compilation for 2005 and countless other comps. You can also find most of our music on ring tones now days. We've expanded the operation and working with the biggest DL's around like iTunes, Napster, Beatport... just to name a few. Aside from running my label, I've got my production and remixes to keep me busy between gigs. You can find all the stuff I'm working on currently by visiting www.saeedyounan.com and all the YM tunes on www.younanmusic.com.

Nocturnal: What remix or original productions are you most proud of right now?

Saeed: I'm proud of all my work. I don't release anything unless I'm 110% happy with. I do however have few favorites." moody" by BPT on Tweek'd Records and 'Puncher' The Wall on STAR 69. Both of these originals played an important party in my musical life. They bring lots of good memories. So, when I was asked to remix them, it was more of a gift then a job to do. I was very excited.

Nocturnal: What producer or DJ have you been working with recently whom you deem to be the next big thing?

Saeed: I actually don't work with anyone on production. I do everything myself down to the mastering. But, I'm always up for collaboration, it just hasn't happened yet. As for DJing. I haven't had the time to go out and hear fresh talent... it's been very hectic lately. But I'm sure lots of newjacks out there ready to fuck shit up!

Nocturnal: Outside of your hometown, where do your most memorable events occur?

Saeed: I just got back from a gig in Egypt (Shareem El Sheik) right on the Red Sea. The people are lovely, and the scene is so fresh and new. Some of my memorable gigs have also been right in Toronto and Montreal. I've always loved the Canadian energy when it comes to art and music.

Nocturnal: Your new full length record, "REMIXED" - being released shortly on Star 69,



is a complete compilation of your production and remix credits... what was the reasoning behind this approach? Are you still interested in making mixed compilations?

Saeed: I wanted the people to hear and understand what I'm all about. Combining my production & Djing ability in one album was really the only way I can reach out to 1000's & show them what I'm about. 'REMIXED' (the name of the album) coming out in December will weave through my recent remixes and production from house to techno. It was a bit tricky to mix and edit some tracks for the CD. Because I really wanted it to flow perfectly. I believe I achieved that. I'm very proud of this album because it's the complete "me".

Nocturnal: At the dance music summit you are a head panelist for their discussions on music technology and how it has changed the face of promo distribution among other things. This includes how technology has changed the role of the DJ. What major adaptations have you had to make as a DJ in the face of modern DJ technology? Have they helped or hindered what you love about the art?

Saeed: I've been an avid vinyl DJ all my life. Switching from vinyl to CD's was a big deal at first, but like everything else... it took time to get used to. I embrace technology and the forward movement to better your performance as a DJ. I think it's interesting how things are evolving. I love going to mp3 shops and downloading (paid for) music just before I travel. Listen to the tunes on the plane, and be able to drop them at the club that same night. But, don't get me wrong. I still buy and play vinyl. But mp3's are just easier to deal with when it comes to travel.

Nocturnal: Being a North American DJ, you are well aware of the stigmas that face DJ culture in our side of the ocean. How has your experiences affected your work, have you found it to be difficult rising into the DJ elite being from here? What advice would you impart to ambitious producers and DJs starting out here?

Saeed: I'm actually very happy where I am. I don't believe you have to be a "super star" DJ to enjoy the super star life style. It's all a mind set really. For all the nu-skool heads... just remember to Keep it fresh, and don't let anyone tell you it can't be done.

Nocturnal: At the end of rigorous set, your drink of choice to relax with is?

Saeed: Patron on the rocks with 4 limes thank you!

- www.saeedyounan.com
- www.younanmusic.com
- www.star69records.com

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