

= DJ Kool Herc =

Clive Campbell (born 16 April 1955) , better known by his stage name DJ Kool Herc , is a Jamaican American DJ who is credited for originating hip hop music in the early 1970s in The Bronx , New York City . His playing of hard funk records of the sort typified by James Brown was an alternative both to the violent gang culture of the Bronx and to the nascent popularity of disco in the 1970s . Campbell began to isolate the instrumental portion of the record , which emphasized the drum beat ? the " break " ? and switch from one break to another .

Using the same two turntable set @-@ up of disco DJs , Campbell used two copies of the same record to elongate the break . This breakbeat DJing , using hard funk and records with Latin percussion , formed the basis of hip hop music . Campbell 's announcements and exhortations to dancers helped lead to the syncopated , rhymed spoken accompaniment now known as rapping . He called his dancers " break @-@ boys " and " break @-@ girls " , or simply b @-@ boys and b @-@ girls . Campbell 's DJ style was quickly taken up by figures such as Afrika Bambaataa and Grandmaster Flash . Unlike them , he never made the move into commercially recorded hip hop in its earliest years .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life and education = = =

Clive Campbell was the first of six children born to Keith and Nettie Campbell in Kingston , Jamaica . While growing up , he saw and heard the sound systems of neighbourhood parties called dancehalls , and the accompanying speech of their DJs , known as toasting . He emigrated with his family at the age of 12 to the Bronx , New York in November 1967 , where they lived at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue .

They encountered wide @-@ scale social disruption following the construction of the Cross Bronx Expressway by Robert Moses (completed 1963 , with further construction continuing through to 1972) ; it had uprooted thousands in stable neighborhoods , displacing communities , and leading to " white flight " when property values dropped near the roadway . Many landlords resorted to arson to recoup money through insurance policies . A violent new street gang youth culture emerged around 1968 , and spread with increasing lawlessness across large parts of the Bronx by 1973 .

Campbell attended the Alfred E. Smith Career and Technical Education High School in the Bronx , where his height , frame , and demeanor on the basketball court prompted the other kids to nickname him " Hercules " . He began running with a graffiti crew called the Ex @-@ Vandals , taking the name Kool Herc . Herc recalls persuading his father to buy him a copy of " Sex Machine " by James Brown , a record that not a lot of his friends had , and which they would come to him to hear . He and his sister , Cindy , began hosting back @-@ to @-@ school parties in the recreation room of their building , 1520 Sedgwick Avenue . Herc 's first soundsystem consisted of two turntables connected to two amplifiers and a Shure " Vocal Master " PA system with 2 amazing speakers columns , on which he played records such as James Brown 's " Give It Up Or Turnit A Loose " , The Jimmy Castor Bunch 's " It 's Just Begun " and Booker T & the MG 's " Melting Pot " . With Bronx clubs ' struggling with street gangs , uptown DJs ' catering to an older disco crowd with different aspirations , and commercial radio also catering to a demographic distinct from teenagers in the Bronx , Herc 's parties had a ready @-@ made audience .

= = = The break = = =

DJ Kool Herc developed the style that was the blueprint for hip hop music . Herc used the record to focus on a short , heavily percussive part in it : the " break " . Since this part of the record was the one the dancers liked best , Herc isolated the break and prolonged it by changing between two record players . As one record reached the end of the break , he cued a second record back to the

beginning of the break , which allowed him to extend a relatively short section of music into " five @-@ minute loop of fury " . This innovation had its roots in what Herc called " The Merry @-@ Go @-@ Round , " a technique by which the deejay switched from break to break at the height of the party . Herc told The New York Times that he first introduced the Merry @-@ Go @-@ Round into his sets in 1972 . The earliest known Merry @-@ Go @-@ Round involved playing James Brown 's " Give It Up or Turnit a Loose " (with its refrain , " Now clap your hands ! Stomp your feet ! ") , then switching from that record 's break into the break from a second record , " Bongo Rock " by The Incredible Bongo Band . From the " Bongo Rock " ' s break , Herc used a third record to switch to the break on " The Mexican " by the English rock band Babe Ruth . Kool Herc also contributed to developing the rhyming style of hip hop by punctuating the recorded music with slang phrases , announcing : " Rock on , my mellow ! " " B @-@ boys , b @-@ girls , are you ready ? keep on rock steady " " This is the joint ! Herc beat on the point " " To the beat , y 'all ! " " You don 't stop ! " For his contributions , Herc is called a " founding father of hip hop , " a " nascent cultural hero , " and an integral part of the beginnings of hip hop by Time .

On 11 August 1973 , DJ Kool Herc was a disc jockey and emcee at a party in the recreation room at Sedgwick Avenue . Specifically , DJ Kool Herc :

extended an instrumental beat (breaking or scratching) to let people dance longer (break dancing) and began MC 'ing (rapping) during the extended breakdancing [This] helped lay the foundation for a cultural revolution .

= = = B @-@ boys and b @-@ girls = = =

The " b @-@ boys " and " b @-@ girls " were the dancers to Herc 's breaks , who were described as " breaking " . Herc has noted that " breaking " was also street slang of the time meaning " getting excited " , " acting energetically , " or " causing a disturbance " . Herc coined the terms " b @-@ boy " , " b @-@ girl , " and " breaking " which became part of the lexicon of what would be eventually called hip hop culture . Early Kool Herc b @-@ boy and later DJ innovator Grandmixer DXT describes the early evolution as follows :

" ... [E] verybody would form a circle and the B @-@ boys would go into the center . At first the dance was simple : touch your toes , hop , kick out your leg . Then some guy went down , spun around on all fours . Everybody said wow and went home to try to come up with something better . "

In the early 1980s , the media began to call this style " breakdance , " which in 1991 the New York Times wrote was " an art as demanding and inventive as mainstream dance forms like ballet and jazz . " Since this emerging culture was still without a name , participants often identified as " b @-@ boys , " a usage that included and went beyond the specific connection to dance , a usage that would persist in hip hop culture .

= = = Move to the streets = = =

With the mystique of his graffiti name , his physical stature , and the reputation of his small parties , Herc became a folk hero in the Bronx . He began to play at nearby clubs including the Twilight Zone Hevalo , Executive Playhouse , the PAL on 183rd Street , as well as at high schools such as Dodge and Taft . Rapping duties were delegated to Coke La Rock . Herc 's collective , known as The Herculoids , was augmented by Clark Kent and dancers The Nigga Twins . Herc took his soundsystem (the herculords) ? still legendary for its sheer volume ? to the streets and parks of the Bronx . Nelson George recalls a schoolyard party :

" The sun hadn 't gone down yet , and kids were just hanging out , waiting for something to happen . Van pulls up , a bunch of guys come out with a table , crates of records . They unscrew the base of the light pole , take their equipment , attach it to that , get the electricity ? Boom ! We got a concert right here in the schoolyard and it 's this guy Kool Herc . And he 's just standing with the turntable , and the guys were studying his hands . There are people dancing , but there 's as many people standing , just watching what he 's doing . That was my first introduction to in @-@ the @-@ street , hip hop DJing . "

= = = Influence on artists = = =

In 1975 , the young Grandmaster Flash , to whom Kool Herc was , in his words , " a hero " , began DJing in Herc 's style . By 1976 , Flash and his MCs The Furious Five played to a packed Audubon Ballroom in Manhattan . Venue owners were often nervous of unruly young crowds , however , and soon sent hip hop back to the clubs , community centres and high school gymnasiums of the Bronx .

Afrika Bambaataa first heard Kool Herc in 1973 . Bambaataa , at that time a general in the notorious Black Spades gang of the Bronx , obtained his own soundsystem in 1975 and began to DJ in Herc 's style , converting his followers to the non @-@ violent Zulu Nation in the process . Kool Herc began using The Incredible Bongo Band 's " Apache " as a break in 1975 . It became a firm b @-@ boy favourite ? " the Bronx national anthem " ? and is still in use in hip hop today . Steven Hager wrote of this period :

" For over five years the Bronx had lived in constant terror of street gangs . Suddenly , in 1975 , they disappeared almost as quickly as they had arrived . This happened because something better came along to replace the gangs . That something was eventually called hip @-@ hop . "

In 1979 , the record company executive Sylvia Robinson assembled a group she called The Sugarhill Gang and recorded " Rapper 's Delight " . The hit song ushered in the era of commercially released hip hop . By that year 's end , Grandmaster Flash was recording for Enjoy Records . In 1980 , Afrika Bambaataa began recording for Winley . By this time , DJ Kool Herc 's star had faded .

Grandmaster Flash suggests that Herc may not have kept pace with developments in techniques of cueing (lining up a record to play at a certain place on it) . Developments changed techniques of cutting (switching from one record to another) and scratching (moving the record by hand to and fro under the stylus for percussive effect) in the late 1970s . Herc said he retreated from the scene after being stabbed at the Executive Playhouse while trying to intercede in a fight , and the burning down of one of his venues . In 1980 , Herc had stopped DJing and was working in a record shop in South Bronx .

= = = Later years = = =

Kool Herc appeared in Hollywood 's motion picture take on hip hop , Beat Street (Orion , 1984) , as himself . In the mid @-@ 1980s , his father died , and he became addicted to crack cocaine . " I couldn 't cope , so I started medicating " , he says of this period .

In 1994 Herc performed on Terminator X & the Godfathers of Threatt 's album , Super Bad . In 2005 , he wrote the foreword to Jeff Chang 's book on hip hop , Can 't Stop Won 't Stop . In 2005 he appeared in the music video of " Top 5 (Dead or Alive) " by Jin from the album The Emcee 's Properganda . In 2006 , he became involved in getting Hip Hop commemorated at the Smithsonian Institution museums .

Since 2007 Herc has worked in a campaign to prevent 1520 Sedgwick Avenue from being sold to developers and withdrawn from its status as a Mitchell @-@ Lama affordable housing property . In the summer of 2007 , New York state officials declared 1520 Sedgwick Avenue the " birthplace of hip @-@ hop " , and nominated it to national and state historic registers . The city 's Department of Housing Preservation and Development ruled against the proposed sale in February 2008 , on the grounds that " the proposed purchase price is inconsistent with the use of property as a Mitchell @-@ Lama affordable housing development " . It is the first time they have so ruled in such a case .

= = = Serious illness = = =

According to a DJ Premier fan blog , The Source 's website and other sites , DJ Kool Herc fell gravely ill in early 2011 and was said to lack health insurance . He had surgery for kidney stones , with a stent placed to relieve the pressure . He needed follow @-@ up surgery but St. Barnabas

Medical Center , the site that performed the previous surgery , has requested that he make a deposit toward the next surgery , because he has missed several follow @-@ up visits . The hospital said it would not turn away uninsured patients in the emergency room . DJ Kool Herc and his family set up an official website on which he describes his medical issue and the larger goal of establishing the DJ Kool Herc Fund to pioneer long @-@ term health care solutions . In April 2013 , Campbell recovered from surgery and moved into post @-@ medical care .

= = Discography = =

= = = Guest appearances = = =

Terminator X - " Herc 's Message " from Super Bad (1994)

The Chemical Brothers - " Elektrobank " from Dig Your Own Hole (1997)

Substantial - " Sacrifice " from Sacrifice (2008)