

NEW YORK

NIGHT TRAIN

SOUL CLAP

& DANCE-OFF!

WITH

DJ



NORTH AMERICA'S MOST POPULAR AND PROLIFIC SOUL PARTY!

Jonathan Toubin and the New York Night Train Soul Clap and Dance-Off

The dawn of 2010 finds New York Night Train conductor/soul proprietor Mr. Jonathan Toubin the most popular, prolific, and highest-earning rock and soul DJ on the North American nightclub circuit – taking the 45rpm dance party to a whole new level conceptually, culturally, and commercially. Though known for “maximum rock and soul” dance club sets and multi-media “Happenings,” his Soul Clap and Dance-Off party has in the last year put Mr. T on the map as soul man and left a huge footprint on contemporary American urban nightlife. Working over 600 gigs the last two years, Mr. Jonathan Toubin has managed to keep one boot in the counter-culture from which he emerged (bars, basements, and live music venues) while crossing over to dance clubs, prestigious festivals, hotels, museums, ivy league colleges, and even raves – while receiving nominations for nightlife awards from the fancier side of New York culture.

Mr. Jonathan Toubin conceived the Soul Clap and Dance-Off three years ago as a monthly outlet for playing his favorite soul jams to his small underground art/rock social community in the spirit of the mid-1990s indie/punk scene soul parties. He added a brief dance-contest to the mix to make the party a little more interesting. As this humble makeshift underdog became an institution, he deliberately employed the party’s popularity as a weapon against tired hit nights, 80s nights, and other mediocre contemporary dance culture – offering an alternative in the possibility of dancing to exciting music most of us have never heard before. The epic size, frequency, and geographical breadth of the Soul Clap has been the seed for a new wave of soul dance culture among indie rockers, punks, and hipsters first in Brooklyn, next in Manhattan, and, in the last year, around the world – garnering slews of imitators and developing a new nightlife economy everywhere from Portland, MA to Portland, OR, from Canada to Mexico and even as far away as the Middle East.

A label-owner/musician/journalist/blogger/academic, Mr Jonathan Toubin began informally DJing punk/garage/noise rock at the Lower East Side’s legendary Motor City Bar in 2006. Within a year, Mr. Toubin was working nightly – mixing in eclectic genres (soul, jazz, psych, international genres, etc.) and casting mp3s, CDs, and even LPs aside to step up to the challenge of spinning exclusively in the biggest and baddest musical medium ever, the 45rpm vinyl record. As he became known as a soul/garage 45 DJ, Mr T distinguished himself from mod, garage, northern soul, and funk 45 retro-nights – focusing on dancers instead of collectors – cutting \$1 commoners with \$100 rarities with strategic pitching, sequencing, EQ-ing, and transitioning – developing a playfully unique sound that also growls meaner, thinks deeper, and runs faster than that of his contemporaries. Almost four years of constant labor has offered NYNT’s conductor a huge advantage over his peers –an infinite nightly laboratory of how, without playing hits, to make a variety of cultures and subcultures dance together – uniting even the squarest weekend dance floors under the undeniable power of his mixes. Along the way he has not only shared the DJ booth with David Johansen, Gibby Haynes, and the Black Lips, but presented live acts like King Khan and the BBQ/Shrines, the Oh Sees, and Quintron and Ms. Pussycat at his parties.

2010 finds Mr. Jonathan Toubin faced with both the benefits and backlash of the monster he helped create. Amidst an international glut of new soul 45 DJs in a rapidly expanding market, Mr. Jonathan Toubin must retain his reputation as the best at what he does, stay a step ahead, and remind people of his seminal role within the emerging culture, but also establish the Soul Clap and Dance-Off as a classic instead of a trend. Finally, with a new series Happenings and an emerging new international 60s freakbeat discotheque format, he will, as always, embark upon new territory while continuing to prove that nightlife doesn’t have to be boring.

SOME PRESS for the SOUL CLAP & DANCE-OFF

"DJ Jonathan Toubin, from underground music zine (and label of the same name) New York Night Train, spins the 45s. The mid-'60s to early-'70s r&b and funk will have you dancing with the stars."

- Sharyn Jackson, *Village Voice* "Voice Choices"

New York Night Train's Mr. Jonathan Toubin spins a selection of first-rate funk and soul, largely from the mid-'60s canon, with a dance contest ... It's like Dancing with the Stars, but less crappy!

- Bruce Tatum, *Time Out New York*

"Our festival experience began with an oh-so-soulful DJ set by New York genius Jonathan Toubin."

= Josiah Hughes, *Exclaim* review of Sled Island Festival Soul Clap and Dance-Off

"An eve of 45-rpm soul sizzlin' and expressive dance."

- Lina Lecaro, *LA Weekly*

"It was ridiculous and fun and had me hoping Soul Clap returns."

- Jennifer Maerz, *SF Weekly*

"Soultastic"

- Courtney Ferguson, *Portland Mercury*

"Dance-offs aren't just for b-boys and Britney anymore"

- Deidre Fulton, *The Phoenix*

"(Toubin's) finely honed collection of '50s and '60s soul and R&B - the grittier, the better - to help you get over the hump by shaking your rump."

- Chris Gray, *Houston Press*

"(The Soul Clap) matches a burgeoning star of NYC's DJ underground (Jonathan Toubin) with a more organic, infinitely more sweaty-fun stack of sounds (a long-awaited alternative to the ever more stodgy and conservative realm of "dance" music) and a fervently followed format that features a dance contest judged by a distinguished panel of local celebs"

- *Red Bank Orbit*

"Even though Toubin isn't entirely unique in using only 45s, his skill at transitioning one song into another ("segueways") is seamless, and his depth and range of choice songs, primarily from the mid-1960s, are far from the mainstream yet extremely danceable."

- Mark Shikuma, *North Coast Journal*

"Jonathan Toubin is the dude who made NYC dance parties fun again. Tonight is the third anniversary of what may be the best party of the past few years, Soul Clap and Dance Off at Glasslands."

- *Brooklyn Ski Club*

"One of the biggest dance parties we've seen"

- *HaveFaithInWorthlessKnowledge.com* (Portland, Maine)

"I remember the first time I walked into one of DJ Jonathan Toubin's Soul Clap and Dance-Off parties at Glasslands Gallery. Wiggly mamas were shaking their manes and hitting the splits, gangly boys were swinging from the balcony, and the two dance contest finalists, having already ripped their shirts off, were vibe-a-ratin' like washing machines in the middle of a cheering crowd. And the music, man! I was getting hit by squall after squall of screaming, crackling soul tracks, some pitched so fast that I hardly knew how to move to them – so I did like everyone else and just let the music jerk my body around, flailing with the breathless abandon of a toddler. I'm a big fan of sixties soul music, but every song was new to me, each so raw and greasy and BIG and *palpable* that they had me scrunching my nose up and torquing my neck in this ecstatic frenzy. Now, I make a point of seeking out those rowdy shows and crazy parties that leave you sweat-soaked and grinning uncontrollably, but I've been hard-pressed to find anything that can top the roaring bliss of a New York Night Train Soul Clap."

- Erin Sheehy, *Jezebel Music.com*

"As previously noted in this here reputable rag, Jonathan Toubin's Soul Clap and Dance-Off shindig is truly New York City's most stimulating all-night dance party, easily trumping all other soul or retro nights."

- *MyOpenBar.com*

"Jonathan Toubin הנקרא יורק בניו חמות מסיבות ליינ יש לטובין. [שסקב](#) נוחת האמריקאי הוא שבהן, Soul clap הנקרא יורק בניו חמות מסיבות ליינ יש לטובין. [שסקב](#) נוחת האמריקאי הוא שבהן, סול מתקלט הקהל מקרב שופטים עם קודיםרי תחרויות גם בהן נערכות כלל ובדרך, בלבד 'אינץ 7 מתקליטי ורוק אנק, סול מתקלט מקום לוקח שאני ותראו הרצפה על הטלק את שפכו, בעד אני) תהיה תחרות גם, תרצו ואם ינוגנו מצוינים קטעים שלל (ראשון. 22:00"

- *The Marker* (Tel Aviv)

Hela grejen blev så rå, ful, osammanhängande, provokativ, meningslös, rastlös, drogad och hemmagjord i sanna vänners gemenskap. It was like finally a little punk over New York City again. Det var liksom äntligen lite punk över New York City igen.

- Emma Vikingskull, *Denimzine* (Finland)

SOME PRESS FOR MR. JONATHAN TOUBIN/NY NIGHT TRAIN

"New York Night Train's Jonathan Toubin throws the raddest underground rock parties in New York"

- Alexander Thompson, *Paper Magazine*

"Jonathan Toubin, the New York City DJ who turns ho-hum rock shows and tin-canned dance parties into transcendent nightlife experiences. Spinning rock and soul on 45, Toubin gets the rock kids to dance and the clubbers to rock, meshing together live music, performance, film and dance, dance!"

- Megan O'Neil, *Detroit Metro Times*

With his impeccable taste and extensive vinyl collection, Jonathan always seems to know exactly the right track to get bodies moving on the dance floor.

- Bree Dillon, *L Magazine*

INTERVIEW

Very heavy rotation: 6 spots that New York Night Train knows well



By Paul Caine December 7, 2009

Jonathan Toubin, under the aegis of New York Night Train, is one of New York's more ubiquitous and idiosyncratic DJs. He spins rare soul 7-inches, organizes parties with unusual conceits (dance-offs, "record releases" during which Toubin gives away the vinyl after he's finished spinning it), and keeps a busy touring schedule, bringing his records and party-starting verve to cities across the country. But Toubin's home is New York. It's where he got his start, and it's where he plays almost every night in a staggering assortment of clubs across the city. To get a measure of those, *The A.V. Club* spoke with Toubin about six nightspots in New York that he regularly plays, three of which he's scheduled to play in the next few weeks.

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“A shimmy-worthy mix of maximum rock’n’soul”

- *New York Post*

“New York Night Train’s Mr. Jonathan Toubin has solidified his reputation as the premier soul party engineer and the hardest working guy in New York with packed parties at underground venues.”

- Jason Diamond, *Heeb* magazine

“I’m not one of the Schmucks who will lament over New York not being “what it used to be”, but I will say that we’re not fans of this dismal wasteland of Eurotrash tourists and guidos with polo shirts unbuttoned down to their navels grinding to the repetitive pounding of bad electro... Enter Jonathan Toubin, and his simple-yet-visionary approach to revamping the entire lanscape of New York and Brooklyn from midnight till the after hours. His New York Night Train parties have become stuff of sheer legend do to the simple fact that Toubin actually seems to care about what he is producing. His meticulous approach has paid off quite handsomely as pretty much each and every party with the Jonathan Toubin stamp on it seems to be the biggest party going on for that given night.”

- *Impose* magazine

“Jonathan Toubin is a local DJ with a penchant for two things: soul obscurities and making people move. He spreads his gospel by way of tireless sets at bars and clubs across the Lower East Side and Brooklyn, at which he’ll host dance-offs, invite artists and other musicians to contribute to the merriment, and spin a heady blend of what he calls “Maximum Rock and Soul.”... Expect even more music, dancing, and rambunctiousness than usual, knowing full well that “the usual” is already pretty hard to top.”

- *The Onion A.V. Club*

“But by the end of the night, I got Toubin’s joke: He and Svenonius know how to make people freak out. I mean really lose it. They can access a primal human circuitry that somehow prefigured the advent of 1960s boogaloo, international freakbeat and garage rock. All that “nntzuh-nntzuh” Euro syncopation, all that New Order, even ol’ Marr and Morrissey, were little queefs of ozone compared to the voltage that these two have amassed over years of rummaging through record bins. They’ve learned how to incite a kind of bond breaking, a freedom claiming, in young psyches.”

-*Justin Richards, New York Press*

“Hey man, I get it. I don’t know what foul hell fire stokes your engines but this is good work you are doing. In this stale city that makes even the richest poor, and the poorest gone; in the shadows of the newly birthed and vacant luxury condominiums that rise around us, in the crush of drunken NYU students hiking up their skirts to piss in the gutter and belligerent senior account executives furious that people are having fun downstairs from their loft-style 300sqft railroad apartments, we need this sound you’re summoning up–this primal music howling out the past like the voice of everything that needs saying. We need it and we’ll take it on every night that you’ll bring it...”

- *Monty Shanks, Cheap and Plastique*

“Dogzstar’ın gündemimize fizyolojik bir bomba gibi düşen New York’un en hip adamlarından biri masasının başında oturup yazmayı çizmeyi bırakıp İstanbul’a gelecek ve kalemî yerine döndürdüğü plaklarla hünerlerini gösterecek.”

- *Entertainbul* (İstanbul)

Motor City (127 Ludlow St, 212-358-1595)

Upcoming set soon: "Record Release," Wednesday, Dec. 9

I think it's one of the last unpretentious inexpensive places on Ludlow. It's been there forever, and the bartenders are really all well-known, many of them sort of legendary New York bartenders. They've been around in punk-rock and rock 'n' roll and rockabilly or whatever for years. It's one of the only places at this point that's a rock 'n' roll community bar, in the sort of Lower East Side traditional sense that you don't see anymore. I have a lot of loyalty to them. They started me out as a DJ, and they're really good people. It's the only chance I have to just hang out. It's a low-pressure night. I don't have to make anyone dance. It's really weird, too: Bands, when they're done with shows, even at even large venues, pop by and hang out.

Market Hotel (1142 Myrtle Ave, Brooklyn)

I only do Market Hotel in conjunction with Todd P. I'm not there very frequently. I mean, I love it. It's a weird old building. And it keeps me in touch with the kids—it's my only all-ages thing I do. Typically I DJ only when there's a big show. Like Monotonix, they wanted me to DJ their show. **Chain And The Gang** wanted me to do that. I put on my first happening by myself with **Health**. It was cool, like 600 people paid. Market Hotel's been really good.

Home Sweet Home (131 Chrystie St, 212-226-5708)

Upcoming set soon: Friday, Dec. 11

Home Sweet Home is a really interesting story. I had an '80s and '90s dance night and [the people there] hated it. This was really a test for me, because they were like, "We'll bring you in for these weekenders and you can play all this rock 'n' roll and soul music and stuff that people don't even know." They had seen me do it before at Beauty Bar, so they thought it might work. I came in there and the regulars from that night hated me. I just fought with them for two weeks in a row and then they quit going and no one was there. I told Home Sweet Home, I was like, "You know, listen. We tried this and I understand you don't have to keep me here. It's not working. Nobody's here." But then this weird group of kids and different people started lining up for it. It's a really successful night—a line around the block thing often. It's a mix of NYU kids and I don't even know what. Art-scene people, some really kind of square people, everything. One of those traditional New York mixes of everybody.

MORE INTERVIEW

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Beauty Bar (231 E. 14th St, 212-539-1389; 921 Broadway, Brooklyn, 347-529-0370)

At the Manhattan one, it's just a weird intersection of... It sucks, because some nights people will just harass you for Kelly Clarkson or something. But if you just stick in there you do develop a weird crowd out of kids that live near there. And the other thing is you can get a bunch of big trannies walking in during the middle of the night, dancing with some weird German tourists. The kind of mix that you don't normally see, you get at Beauty Bar late at night on a weeknight. Right now [Beauty Bar Brooklyn] is the only place nearby that's at least a somewhat countercultural bar. I don't even know if countercultural is the word, but at least a non-Puerto Rican bar or something. I started out at the one in Manhattan really early on in my DJ career. They gave me a night and believed in me. Then they opened in Brooklyn and I went there for a while on Thursdays. I don't have a regular night there anymore because I just got a little too busy. It's just been—for some reason Thursday has been a night where I keep ending up in other towns. Whenever I can, I show up there. I still help them get DJs and stuff because they're great guys.

Santos Party House (96 Lafayette St, 212-584-5492)

I had a weekly at Santos for about six months. It was a Monday and I had bands downstairs. I had King Khan And BBQ, Quintrón, Miss Pussycat, and a two-piece version of Trail Of Dead doing a hardcore set. It was different all the time. But it's a difficult proposition. I mean, they're great people that run it. It's just a really big place and it's a little bit out of the price range of the type of people that go to my parties.

Glasslands Gallery (289 Kent Ave, Brooklyn)

Upcoming set soon: "Soul Clap," Saturday, Dec. 26

My biggest party is the one I do at Glasslands. I've known the owners since they had a place called the Glass House. I was in a band that used to play there a lot. When they opened Glasslands, we did a final show and the girls were like, "Anytime you want to do something..." I was totally friendly with them, so they let me try all kinds of stuff that no one else would let me do. "You can have a whole weekend night and do this crazy thing." Think about a DJ just playing soul records: You might not block a Friday or Saturday night off at a normal club for that. They took a chance because they're open-minded. They let me do this thing called the Animal Train Happening, which I wish we still did. We gave it up because it was too much effort and time and not enough money. We would do this whole thing with projections and themes and dancers and performance art and bands and DJs. Glasslands would let us totally just change the whole space. We'd spend days getting everything ready and coming in to totally redecorate. A lot of places would never let you glue and staple things. Glasslands, they didn't care at all. They were great.

SOUL CLAP AND DANCE-OFF: DREAM THAT BIG AND CRAZY

November 11th, 2009 · 6 Comments



keenan michael keller

This Thursday, L.A. will host another Soul Clap and Dance-Off with New York Night Train promoter Jonathan Toubin. He will also be bringing guest DJ Ian Svenonius, former frontman for Nation of Ulysses and the Make-up and current frontman for Chain and the Gang. If you think you have what it takes, show up and show off! This interview by John Henry.

What exactly goes down at a Soul Clap and Dance-Off?

Jonathan Toubin: It's pretty simple. The Soul Clap is a dance party and the Dance-Off is the short contest in the middle. I throw killer soul 45s together to get people moving and somewhere in the middle of the party, numbers are pinned on audience members, five judges take the stage and I turn on exclusively deep James Brown jams while the audience—in groups of ten—duke it out for dancing supremacy. There is a dance-off between the winners of each group and a final dance-off between two contestants, which is of course the dramatic climax of the night. After that, everyone's been waiting and watching for a half hour or so and are itchin' to bust a move, so the records—which have been gradually escalating in speed and intensity for the entire night leading up to the contest—go up just one more notch and the party really gets going. At its best it can be like church, and at its worst, 'The Gong Show.' A lot of it depends on who turns up.

And this time you're bringing Ian Svenonius along.

Jonathan Toubin: I'm bringing Ian along to host the competition and to DJ with me during the dance party. Ian of course is a great DJ and gonna make a killer MC plus the fact that he's quite the dancer doesn't hurt either.

How long have you two known each other?

Jonathan Toubin: We originally met in 1992 or so when Nation of Ulysses played at the Cavity in Austin. I told him that a mutual friend of ours—Larry from Victim's Family—said to say hi and that he couldn't make it to the show because he had to work all night at a bakery. So Ian said, 'Where's the bakery?' And Tim Kerr and the entire band jumped in the van just to say hi to this guy stuck working alone until dawn. I initially thought it was such a noble act to go so far out of his way in the middle of the night to see his friend. But years later, as I've got to know him better, I've decided Ian may have also done it because he loves bakeries. As for as our collaboration, we got to know each other via an ex-girlfriend of mine and were next brought together by **Kid Congo Powers** for the release party I threw for his first solo record. Since then, we've been working on events every few months with varied frequency for well over three years now. We get along and make a nice fit behind the DJ booth both artistically and commercially. But Pop Montreal last month was the first time we went in together on the Soul Clap and Dance-Off.

What's the prize?

Jonathan Toubin: The best dancer typically gets \$100. The only exceptions these days are in more unusual places outside of the fifty states like Monterrey, Mexico, where the prize was a pair of sneakers. Or the District of Columbia, where it was a pair of tickets to see **Devo**.

What kind of dancers show up? Are they all amateurs or are there some real pros?

Jonathan Toubin: It takes all kinds. Some places it's all goofballs. Sometimes it's highly competitive types. But most nights, it's a healthy mix and primarily a goodtime vibe. You never know who the judges will pick—it all depends on their aesthetics and what they value in a dancer. L.A. was actually the first and only place to select a b-boy, though they always enter ...

I saw a lot of b-boy dancers last time I was in Brooklyn. Does it sync up well with the old R&B and soul sides you play?

Jonathan Toubin: The great thing about b-boys is that they are much more into their heritage and history than a lot of trendier subcultural groups. So they don't only care about early hip-hop, but are very interested in the music that the early hip-hop djs were turning in the 1970s. So they flip out over any James Brown or Jimmy Castor. And when you jam other songs that were sampled up to the present, they lose their shit! The only problem is that they don't care as much about the early to mid-'60s wild ones that make up at least half of my set, but the better ones move to that too. And that's a good thing because I by far prefer guys and girls dancing with one another to a guy dancing with himself in the middle of a circle.

Who are some of the guest judges you've had in the past?

Jonathan Toubin: The guest judges are always different. When I originally started creating these panels, the plan was to bring all kinds of kooky characters from our local community together—a magazine editor sitting next to a bartender sitting next to a Bad Seed sitting next to a neighbor of mine or whatever. But as we've been on the road, the judges have become more important. On this tour so far we're having everybody from classic indie rockers like Mike Watt and John Reis to Karla LaVey, leader of the Satanic Church and Anton's daughter and Matt Gonzales of the Green Party...

Do you select the judges?

Jonathan Toubin: Ha! That's a good question. In New York I select most of the judges—sometimes the Glasslands or Laura, my hostess here in New York, picks a friend or two. But, on the road, I get a lot of help from my agent Michelle Cable, the bookers of venues, friends in various towns, and, this time, Ian Svenonius as well. It's not easy to know enough people to pull this off...

What kind of drunken spills have you seen during the contest?

Jonathan Toubin: Eeek! Sometimes people get really sloppy. Particularly last time in L.A.! One time in New York the judges and the audience—most of whom knew each other in some capacity—started exchanging words and throwing stuff back and forth, and before you know it, one of the judges had jumped over the table! There was total mayhem and I was briefly escorted out of my own party by security while defending the honor of a woman who was only guilty of a retaliatory ice toss.

I've also witnessed some judge's drunken antics—like last time you did **Soul Clap at Nomad Gallery. What happened there?**

Jonathan Toubin: I had a lot of fun last time in L.A. and a lot of my favorite people from all different places and parts of my life turned up. But there were a lot of things about the last L.A. party that I didn't think were up to the Soul Clap standard. There was too much hanging out outside in the breezy courtyard far from the dancing in the hot room. One judge got a last-minute gig that night and another judge was there but never checked in and I was waiting for him so the contest was delayed forever and he left for that reason. But in all the confusion, Howie Pyro sold me some great records, Indian Jewelry stepped in to judge and DJ Short Shorts and Carlos went way out of their way to make it happen. But I definitely think this one is gonna be tighter all around.

Do you do a lot of record shopping while on the road?

Jonathan Toubin: My hosts sometimes get so annoyed with me. Recently I was in Istanbul for only twenty hours and spent half of the time record shopping. I got some amazing stuff which sadly you have to hear at my other gigs as it's not soul. I also love to shop in Detroit where you turn on the faucet and amazing soul jams fall out into the sink and little kids are in the street playing frisbee with 'em. I was recently thrilled to find Jimmy Mayes and the Mill Street Depot's 'Monkey Shine' for a buck in Baltimore—a record I haven't been able to find anywhere at any price for years. I played it at the WFMU Record Fair last weekend and the dealers started running up. One of them told me to name my price. I've been looking for that one forever and there's been none traded anywhere. In the greater Los Angeles area I also have a few secrets and am a fan of the new **Territory Store and BBQ restaurant**.

I don't think I've ever heard of a touring dance contest before—do you know of any others or are you forging a new fad?

Jonathan Toubin: I read in some kind of business website called Trend Central saying my party was more 'rockers than mods' and that I'm helping start a new hipster fad but it was just a big accident. The Soul Clap was initially just an excuse for me to play less punk and rock stuff and have a night where I just bust out my soul records for my friends. And the Dance-Off was added to the concept after I witnessed these two guys in a crazy dance competition around dawn at a loft party where I was spinning. I thought it would make a fun and interesting short addition to the night but I never dreamed this would become my most popular party or that I would become known as a soul DJ. And I never imagined taking it on the road until this year, when Canadian venues and festivals began requesting the Soul Clap—that was the first time either me or my agent imagined taking it outside of Glasslands. I wish I knew how to dream that big and crazy but I'm a bit of a pragmatist—a Barnum-esque pragmatist, but still a pragmatist...

So what is New York Night Train all about?

Jonathan Toubin: I wish I knew. It started out as a webzine and record label intent on helping spread the word about the music and history of Kid Congo Powers and other folks I knew who were productive veteran artists with great stories but not getting the proper recognition. Then it also became a production company of sorts because of the record release parties I threw for the label. And then, when I became a DJ, it gradually grew with me to be my own promotional organ. What kind of sucks is that, because I never expected to DJ beyond a few nights nights at the local rock bars—Motor City, Daddy's, Eind's, etc.—I never came up with a cool pseudonym. And as my career started developing, a lot of people knew New York Night Train better than they knew me. Now its pretty much about 50/50 so I have to be billed with the cumbersome 'New York Night Train DJ Mr. Jonathan Toubin.' And, while the original NYNT has by necessity been on a bit of a hiatus because I currently spin and promote over 300 DJ nights a year all around the world, the label has been semi-active and I hope to get the journal back online as soon as I can move beyond this super-intensive nightly schedule ... Oh yeah, I forgot to mention, New York Night Train also puts on shows by folks like **Thee Oh Sees**, **Quintron** and **Ms. Pussycat**, **King Khan and BBQ/the Shrines**, and so forth either alone or incorporating them into my other specialty—the multi-media 'Happening' with go go dancers, visuals, performance, and, of course, dancing to my 45s...

**THE NEW YORK NIGHT TRAIN SOUL CLAP DANCE-OFF WITH
DJs JONATHAN TOUBIN AND IAN SVENONIUS ON THUR., NOV.
12, AT SPACELAND, 1717 SILVERLAKE BLVD., SILVERLAKE. 9 PM
/ \$5 / 21+. **CLUBSPACELAND.COM**. THE DANCE-OFF WILL BE
JUDGED BY **JENNA THORNHILL**, **MIKE WATT**, **JESSICA
ESPELETA**, **WENDY YAP** AND **MICHAEL GERNER**. VISIT NEW
YORK NIGHT TRAIN AT **NEWYORKNIGHTTRAIN.COM**.**

New York Night Train's DJ Jonathan Toubin Goes to Israel



New York Night Train's Jonathan Toubin solidified his reputation as the premier soul party engineer and the hardest working guy in New York with packed parties at underground venues like **Glasslands** and the recently opened **Bushwick Beauty Bar**. This summer, at the urging of Tel Aviv band **Monotonix**, Toubin took his boxes of rare and obscure soul and funk floor-shaking 45rpms to the Middle East on the hippest trip from Istanbul to Jerusalem. *Heeb* recently talked to the self-proclaimed Jewish atheist about his first time to the Holy Land and the sort of music Israelis request at soul parties.



Photo: Michelle Panache

Have you gone sightseeing?

A bit. In Jerusalem I saw the Walling Wall and, accidentally, Jesus' tomb—he was a lot shorter than he looks in pictures. Though they closed Masada too early for me (3 p.m.), I did manage to make it to the lowest point on earth and float in the Dead Sea.

Did you go wail at the Western Wall?

I did not wail, but I did tidy up all of these ragged scraps of paper I found stuck in it. Seriously, I put on the paper yarmulke that they give you at the gate and did my best to keep it from blowing off of my Jew-fro.

When DJing, what song got the best response?

By far the Turkish psych, pop and traditional singles I picked up in Istanbul got the best response. In terms of soul music, the Israelis, like most folks, are most interested in familiar material, so I spin obscure soul covers of famous songs. They were particularly fond of Jeanette Williams's super gritty and soulful 1969 take on 'Hound Dog'— words and music of course by the Jewish songwriting team of Leiber and Stoller.

Did you get any requests for trance music?

No, but I did get hip-hop and Michael Jackson. I also got a lone Supremes request, and my friend Yonatan from Monotonix kept on me about playing the new Turbo Fruits. But I know what you mean—those Israelis can't eat, drink or dance without '90s-ish fast post-house-thump blaring. It's preventing that part of the world from getting along...

Did you play the late King of Pop?

No, I told them I didn't come halfway across the world to play music they could find in even the most unhip of kibbutzes. I also told them that the records they were hearing were by black men whose appeal to white folks such as myself had nothing to do with the bleaching of their skin nor their castration...

Has your visit to Israel helped you find your faith or will you keep on playing that devil's music?

Maybe I could've found my faith and then some if they paid famous New York soul DJs even a fraction of what they do in other places! In fact, the compensation was so bad that I abandoned my agnosticism to become bona fide old-fashioned Jewish atheist. How can there be a God when the money's so bad? The eternal question! But really, while the religious end of it oddly didn't even cross my mind, I was fascinated by the culture. I met a lot of wonderful people, ate some incredible food, visited interesting places and learned how to view the universe from right to left. As for whether I will continue to play the 'devil's music,' what's more Jewish than soul music? Don't you remember Lenny Bruce's 'Jewish/Goyish' routine? 'Ray Charles is Jewish. Eddie Cantor's goyish.' Who do you think produced and manufactured most of those records I play? I'd also like to point out that soul brother number one, Mr. James Brown, wore the Star of David around his neck. So I don't know, maybe James Brown is Jewish and Benjamin Netanyahu's goyish?

August 6, 2009

DJ Jonathan Toubin

LOCAL SPOTLIGHT NYC

"DJing is so weird; it's such an ambiguous term. Some people would argue that a real DJ is someone who mixes or scratches. Some people would argue that it's just someone who can keep the beat. Some collector DJs think being a good DJ is having the rarest records, and then on the other hand, some people are great party DJs and play very obvious choices. They play all the hits and they get everybody dancing. But on the most base level, it's just rocking a party. Can you rock a party and can you do it your own way that's distinctive? And if you can get the response from some weird place other than familiarity, and more from just energy and sharing things where people are like, 'Where has this been my whole life?' that I think, is probably what a good DJ is."

- Jonathan Toubin



DJ Jonathan Toubin After The Humboldt County Soul Clap

I remember the first time I walked into one of [DJ Jonathan Toubin's](#) Soul Clap and Dance-Off parties at [Glasslands Gallery](#). Wiggly mamas were shaking their manes and hitting the splits, gangly boys were swinging from the balcony, and the two dance contest finalists, having already ripped their shirts off, were vibe-a-ratin' like washing machines in the middle of a cheering crowd. And the music, man! I was getting hit by squall after squall of screaming, crackling soul tracks, some pitched so fast that I hardly knew how to move to them – so I did like everyone else and just let the music jerk my body around, flailing with the breathless abandon of a toddler. I'm a big fan of sixties soul music, but every song was new to me, each so raw and greasy and BIG and *palpable* that they had me scrunching my nose up and torquing my neck in this ecstatic frenzy. Now, I make a point of seeking out those rowdy shows and crazy parties that leave you sweat-soaked and grinning uncontrollably, but I've been hard-pressed to find anything that can top the roaring bliss of a New York Night Train Soul Clap.

And now Mr. Jonathan Toubin is taking 'em all over the world.

"We're going into enemy territory, so we have to be as badass as possible," says Jonathan, passing a 45 to his intern, Georgia. We're in his kitchen, surrounded by stacks and boxes and cases of 45 rpm records, trying to select the golden cuts that he'll take when he brings his Soul Clap party to the West Coast. Georgia puts on "And I Do Just What I Want," this mean, screeching James Brown song that I've never even heard of. "It's one of his sloppiest, but it's the most punk rock song ever," says Jonathan. "It's like some Stooges song that never happened." Talk like this clues you in to why Jonathan's parties are so much rowdier than your average soul DJ's: he's a rock 'n roll man! And while the idea behind the Soul Clap is to create, among other things, a new space where folks from different subcultures can come together and rock out, at the end of the day, Jonathan's gonna play tracks that are fast enough and raw enough to appeal to someone who might otherwise be bruising ribs and breaking capillaries at some riotous punk show. In other words, puppies, this ain't no oldies night.

"Oldies is a derogatory term," says Jonathan. "You have the oldie and the classic. The oldie means a disposable product that reminds you of something, and the classic is something that will always be supreme. You don't call Shakespeare an oldie!" Well sure, *I* get it, and so do the 500 or so people who flock to Glasslands every month. But Jonathan's taking this thing around the world – how in the hell does one prepare to win people over in Israel, Mexico, and Arcata, California, where there's really no precedent for a seersuckered soul DJ with a punk rock musical aesthetic spinning exclusively 45 rpm records in an alternative gallery space?

Well, first you gotta test the waters...

"I have all these little benchmark things to see who I'm dealing with. Sometimes I'll put on the Richard Berry version of 'Have Love Will Travel,' which, if you don't know the Sonics' version of it, is not that big. But if people know the Sonics, they're like, 'Yeah!' If I play that and no one responds much, I'm like, 'Oh fuck, these people don't know who the Sonics are. I have a different kind of job to do tonight.'"

And then you gotta get folks on the dance floor...

"As Jean-Luc Godard said, all you need to make a good movie is a beautiful girl and a gun. All you really need to make a good dance party is a beautiful girl and a 45. You know how they tell public speakers to look at one person in the audience? If I see a couple girls tappin' their feet here and there, I'm like, 'Alright, that's who I'm going to play for right now, cause they're likely to start a dance party.' So I just play for them and pretend there's no one else there. And typically if it's working out, I just kind of keep them in mind and I'll keep looking around and keep adding it until I get like a full floor."

And if the party starts to slump ...

"That's when you play the cover of '96 Tears' by Big Maybelle, something that people will be able to relate to. It's just a bunch of noise if no one relates to it on any level. You gotta throw the dog a bone sometimes. It's better to play a cover of an obvious song than just the obvious song."

And so on...we're still sorting through records, talking "butt music" versus "hip music," "sex music" versus "drug music," the importance of hand claps and a good hook. "The song should do the work for you," Jonathan tells Georgia. "Good dancers like you, you can do all the work. But what I do is not about being good dancers. You gotta play the stuff that dances the bad people around too. It's democratic, if somewhat amateurish..." Man, at my first internship I learned how to use a fax machine, but this girl's getting the important stuff.

At something like three in the morning the final record selections have been made. In an hour Jonathan will be headed to the airport, to find out how far he can take this New York Night Train thing, and to see how much he can shake things up with a single case of explosive 45s.

"It's so funny cause when I started playing, I was like, 'Wow I wish more people played this stuff,' and that was not even three years ago. And now people are going, 'Oh God I wish I could hear something else other than this soul crap in Brooklyn!' I think it's great though, cause people are dancing everywhere more. The main thing is I just got bored of cool people hangouts where everyone just sits around. For a DJ, how boring is that? What's interesting is when everyone gets up and gets into it and gets wild! And I hope that we take these Soul Claps out there and push the culture towards everything being a little more of a party."

by Erin Sheehy

ps – The [Soul Clap](#) is back in town this weekend. Come shake it.

Bothering: Jonathan Toubin



Photo by **Jackie Roman**

I'm not one of these schmucks who will lament over New York not being "what it used to be", but I will say that we're not fans of this dismal wasteland of Eurotrash tourists and guidos with polo shirts unbuttoned down to their navels grinding to the repetitive pounding of bad electro.

*Enter Jonathan Toubin, and his simple-yet-visionary approach to revamping the entire landscape of New York and Brooklyn from midnight till the after hours. His **New York Night Train** parties have become stuff of sheer legend due to the simple fact that Toubin actually seems to care about what he is producing. His meticulous approach has paid off quite handsomely as pretty much each and every party with the Jonathan Toubin stamp on it seems to be the biggest party going on for that given night.*

I get this feeling that by now, you have attained the rank of world class DJ? Is that true?

Ha! I guess since I now get to travel the world playing records – yeah! As for class, I'm still not sure if I have any - but do go on about this "world class DJ" business - it makes me sound so... legitimate!

When did you know it was your destiny to be a world class DJ?

Let's see... A gypsy woman told my mother before I was born.... But really, I never had any idea this fate awaited me. I was obsessed with rock'n'roll and records and Kiss (ha!) since I was a small child and did my share of college radio and record store jobs and occasional gigs at clubs between bands or whatever – but I was always a musician and never really thought much about DJs either way. Though I saw a few cool ones I guess the image of some guy in comfortable clothing and a baseball cap cutting back and forth on a crossfader at a dance club always came to mind - and that whole scene never really had even an iota appeal to me. And neither did the whole dusty retro-night record collector time-capsule scene. Nope, this occupation snuck up on me and took me by surprise...

By surprise?

Yeah! There were these isolated incidences the last few years but it really wasn't until my friends at Motor City Bar kept inviting me back to play records every week and then other places started asking me and soon I recognized that my calendar was full enough to quit my day job. Though I threw down some soul and garage tunes and kept a broad mix, I started out playing primarily punk, noise, and other subcultural genres mixed together – so obviously I had no career plans, as one can't very well live in New York on \$100 a week - but I did start working it and honing my aesthetics, concepts, and methodology in terms of format, presentation, and promotional strategy once DJ-ing and party/show-throwing became a matter of food and rent.

If you had to pick, is there one party you have set up (specifically in Brooklyn) that stands out in your mind more than others?

Whaaaa! That's a tough one. I did over 300 last year and can't remember. But, if you don't want the parties where patrons tried to assault me or I had adventures acting as security, the most eventful have definitely been the Glasslands events - I'll have to pick the Soul Clap and Dance-Off that ended in a riot. I don't really know what happened as the 45 DJ is always on his toes with the short jams, but one of the judges, my favorite DJ Josh Styles, wound up dumping the judge table over and audience and judges were throwing stuff at one another and fighting and a variety of objects were flying at me, hard, soft, wet, dry, shattering, exploding, etc.

Booze was getting in the mixer and hundreds of people were still managing to dance either oblivious or just into the wild energy and somehow the new huge bouncer at the club wound up giving me the boot from my own party for trying to prevent the most passive of the judges from getting ejected. While I saw everyone else morph into total maniacs, her only crime was defending herself by returning an ice volley. The funny part is that, while I was arguing with him at the door, I noticed music was still playing and the same girl that was supposed to get ejected was now the DJ! And I think I had to spin a fist-pumping late-night electro rave immediately after armed with only my soul 45s. Ouch!

In your mind, what make New York Night Train parties different than others?

Well, in my mind it's because they're simply aesthetically, musically, and socially superior than others! Ha! But in reality, at their best, the parties bring together a variety of previously disparate subcultural groups, offer them a unique experience, and bring dancing into the mix. Typically discos and the music within are totally alien and unappealing to rock folks like myself and rock culture, where shows and bar hang-outs are a bit dull. With New York Night Train I've made a conscious effort not only to make these traditional social spaces more lively and interesting, and to bridge together these subcultural groups, but also to bring together various generations, geographies, and disciplines. For example downtown art girls and Brooklyn rock boys make a great mix if you can get 'em on the same dance floor.

How much have you traveled in the last ninety days?

Urgh! How much haven't I traveled? I guess it wouldn't be so bad if I wasn't also working practically every night in New York when I'm not out there but, let's see... Last month I brought my Happening to Baltimore and DC, spun two parties at Sled Island Festival in Calgary and two more at Toronto's NXNE festival. I did a 60th birthday party in Jersey! Ha! In May I was in Portland for a number of gigs, a couple in LA, Vancouver, San Francisco, San Diego, etc. In April I was also on the West Coast and also Texas and Las Vegas for the Beauty Bar Anniversary Parties and my favorite festival in the world, the Ponderosa Stomp in New Orleans. I have an amazing booking agent, Michelle Cable at Panache and she keeps me plenty busy and does an amazing job.

As a DJ in New York, you probably keep strange hours, and I know some of your gigs are "after hours", what is your typical post-DJ'ing routine? Do you go straight home?

Ha! I wish I had a routine but everything is too scrambled! Sometimes I stick around with the bar staff and have a drink or two. Sometimes I have a bite or a drink with a friend. Sometimes I stay out until the next afternoon/evening. Sometimes I get in a car to the airport. Sometimes I go home and work on a flier or catch up on correspondence or some promotional schpiel that is past due. But most of the time I just put on a record or two and either read a book or pass out – pretty dull, huh?

Do you ever go straight home from a party you put together and cook breakfast?

You know, I don't recall making early-morning breakfast lately – I've always loved the kitchen but become a bit estranged from that particular room since I got so busy.

What's the most you have ever paid for a record, and was it worth it?

Oh man. I'd rather not talk about it. I used to pride myself in being an excellent thrift shopper with a \$20 ceiling at stores, then a \$30, \$40, \$50, \$60 ceiling! And now... Oh brutha - ask me in a year whether I make that much more money for gigs now that I buy expensive records... and how many of them haven't been scratched or broken by my beloved rowdy public...

What does the future hold for you Mr. Toubin?

If I don't drop from exhaustion, heart attack, stroke, bizarre gardening accident, etc., I plan to perfect my "Maximum Rock and Soul" aesthetics and 45 library, to continue bringing dancing, merriment, and flair to rock bars and venues that never had it, and simultaneously to bring wild, immediate organic music to dance clubs that never had it, to destroy the mash-up and the 12-inch remix, and to continue to spread my good times/good taste gospel to every cool man, woman, and child around the world! And maybe in the process finally get a day off! Ha!

And in a more immediate and literal sense, next week I'm bringing my Happenings to Detroit and Chicago with Awesome Color and my crew of go go artiste Anna Copa Cabanna, projectionist Spencer Bewley, and performer Hula Hoop Harlot Melissa Anne, and, later in the month, Soul Clap and Dance-Off up and down the West Coast interspersed with some dates with Quintrone and Ms. Pussycat, a Mexican tour in August, and, in the fall Pop Montreal, CMJ Festival, Fun Fun Fun Festival, Vice's Garage Rock Festival, and Happenings with Shonen Knife, Chain and the Gang, and hopefully the Contortions reunion if they can get it together. Of course, when I'm in town I plan on sticking with all the good folks who believed in me when this was all unimaginable - my Wednesday night at Motor City, Thursday at Beauty Bar Brooklyn, the Thursday I curate at Enid's, Friday at Home Sweet Home, and all the other local special Soul Claps, Happenings, and other parties at Glasslands, Live With Animals, Market Hotel, etc. But, most importantly, in the next few months I hope to discover love, the meaning of life, and the ultimate 45 while getting one step closer to perfection every night by playing an artfully arranged yet pragmatically improvisational cycle of 150 songs over and over and over and over and over....

Hey DJ! Friday Q&A: Jonathan Toubin

By Jennifer Maerz in Q&A

Friday, Jul. 24 2009 @ 6:06AM

San Francisco's got nothin' but soul--lots and lots of soul nights, soul record stores, and plain ol' soul aficionados.

New York's also got a lotta soul--thanks, in part, to DJ [Jonathan Toubin](#), who believes all good tunes can be traced back to punk and soul. He's the conductor of [New York Night Train](#), a traveling showcase of classic 45s that's pulling into San Francisco for the weekend. He'll be DJing a house/bus party in Oakland on Friday, hitting the turntables between acts for [Quintron and Miss Pussycat](#)/Ty Segall show at Thee Parkside on Sunday, and then on Monday hosting the [Soul Clap and Dance Off](#) at Elbo Room.



The Soul Clap and Dance Off requires lots of audience participation--all those weekends you've been cutting it up at Saturday Night Soul Party? Time to put those moves into competition. The dance off is a special soul-based battle, where you'll be judged by a panel of [dancing fools](#) highly trained judges: artist Jay Howell, David Katznelson of Birdman Records, Jello Biafra, Cinnamon of the Lusty Lady, Paul Costuros of Saturday Night Soul Party, DJ Primo, Kimberly Chun of the *Guardian*, and yours truly. If you win, you'll earn more than our lavish praise: the prize is \$100.

And without further ado, we introduce you to soul man Jonathan Toubin...

Name: New York Night Train Conductor and Soul Proprietor Mr. Jonathan Toubin

Club night(s): WORLDWIDE: Soul Clap and Dance-Off (which is coming to Elbo Room Monday w/some very prestigious and discriminating judges!) and New York Night Train Happening. NYC: New York Night Train Wednesday, Boogaloo Shampoo, Shakin' All Over Under Sideways Down!. FORMERLY: Animal Train Happening, Secret Santo/DECLASSIFIED!, Loose Caboose, Ants In Your Pants Dance Party, etc.

Style(s) of music you spin: Exclusively the good and the ugly - from primarily punk and soul lineages

So what's your story, in 100 words or less? Jewish Texan winds up in NYC after extensive touring with band en route to Chicago, lives two years off major label rock tit, works at the World Trade Center, tries to grow up when it blows up, quits music, cohabitates in Manhattan, goes to graduate school, drops out on the last mile to find himself back in Brooklyn playing music with a bunch of junkies again and writing garbage for a living, founds a webzine and record label, brings a few Dicks records to the bar one night, and accidentally stumbles into a career as a 45rpm dance party DJ.

You've DJed in San Francisco a couple times now: what's your SF connection? It's a major metropolitan area that sits between LA and Portland and necessary for New York Night Train manifest destiny - other than that, and that my booking agent Michelle Cable of Panache spent some time there, and that its also one of my favorite cities, I haven't had much of a connection to San Francisco since the scummy Mission days of the 1990s...

Do you have a favorite SF club night? I really had a blast spinning with [Primo](#) at Oldies Night at the Knockout and think SF should consider itself lucky to have such a special party and world-class DJ!

What's the oldies/soul scene like in New York compared to the scene here? To be honest, I know very little about the SF or NYC oldies scenes - I'm not very much a part of that world - I just happen to be a DJ who's becoming known for a lot of the vintage records I find exciting. In terms of 45 DJs playing those type of records in New York, I can safely say there are literally dozens that I know of who are active, including a few legendary figures like Fine Wine, Billy and Miriam of Norton Records, Phast Phreddie and my favorite DJ Josh Styles of Smashed! Blocked!. Culturally speaking though, while they know each other, they all do different things at very different places for a relatively different public which doesn't "scene" in the traditional sense.

More importantly, where are the better record stores for old 45s? There really aren't! I wish we could steal [Rooky Ricardo's](#) from you! Though something I want occasionally turns up at fine local stores like Academy or Tropicalia in Furs or Eat or Earwax, most of my records are hard-earned during my travels, on E-Bay (it seems like all of the minty good soul records are all across the Atlantic!) and at record shows. We don't have a store with 1000s and 1000s of 45s like you do...

What's the idea behind the The Soul Clap and Dance-Off? The Soul Clap initially came from my desire to start a monthly that focused exclusively on my soul 45s. At that point, soul was probably less than 1/4 of what I was spinning but increasingly my favorite part of my sets. The Dance-Off portion came from an experience I had turning records at a loft party near dawn when these two southern expat punk musician guys, one from Texas and one from Memphis, got in a disagreement and decided to have a dance-off to determine who was a better. It was a hilarious contest and I thought it would be a fun element to include in a party. So I combined these two ideas - that was around 2 1/2 years ago. I really never imagined it would become my most popular party and take me around the world.

Who have been some of the better known judges in NY? I typically pick an unusual collection of what I call "neighborhood celebrities" - people that are famous to me - a popular waitress sitting next to the drummer of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, next the owner of a local vintage shop, next to a girl from Academy Records, next to a celebrated documentarian, next to a go go dancer, next to the editor of a music magazine. I like a crazy mix. But, the last one, which was curated by the club as I didn't have time to do it last minute, featured exclusively famous musicians - the singer of MGMT, the singer of Yeasayer, the singer of Chairlift, and the two rappers from Das Racist. The punchline to this story is that, since its typically my job to introduce the judges as our hostess Laura Leigh doesn't usually know who they are, I looked across at this collection of rock stars and didn't recognize a one of 'em. So I got on the mic and said to Laura, "Now it's time for you to introduce the judges" and she looked at them and looked back at me and replied, "No Jonathan, it's time for you to introduce the judges." There was this exceedingly long awkward quiet moment that finally ended when she turned to the panel and asked, "Why don't we have the judges introduce themselves?" So we both gazed upon the most famous judges we've ever had and neither of us had a clue as to who any of them were!

What are some tips for making it into the dance-off winner's circle? I never give the judges a criterion - but, because I typically pick interesting judges, style tends to beat ability in almost every case. I'm really pissed that in NYC my favorite dancer always gets second place and the judges afterwards always say something to the effect of "he was too good" or whatevs. Joe Stummer kissed the guy's feet and told him he was the best dancer he's seen in his entire life forchristsakes but he can't win our contest. That doesn't mean the winners aren't great dancers - but those who bust out a sequence of acrobatics always loses to someone who has an unusual style.

Name of a track you can't get out of your head: "California Here I Come" (the 20s Jolson version of course!)

Why do you think soul music is enjoying such a resurgence on the DJ scene right now? It's pretty curious to me as well. For my little nook of culture there's always been an element of soul music about - and I think this can be said for almost every great western subcultural music movement since soul was born. Plus good labels like Norton and Crypt Records have been consistently hiping the punk underground to these sounds for decades. But, as for the last year or two, I'd like to take personal credit for the grand soul resurgence of 2009. Ha!

But really, one important factors may be, in mass culture, all of that Amy Winehouse business generally made a Shirley Ellis-style tune acceptable on a typical clubby dance floor and also led a lot of kids into that Sharon Jones/Dap-Tone scene. As far as my little end of the world is concerned, Black Lips, King Khan and the BBQ/Shrines, and all the 21st Century bands who are sympathetic to soul/garage aesthetics made it cool to like the stuff for a new group of kids.

And, probably most importantly, for the generation coming up that has access to all of the music ever recorded and thus a shocking array of knowledge about even the most obscure genres and sub-genres - its only logical that, when confronted with the entire body of recorded music, the young people would gravitate towards what is not only the most supreme dance genre, but the most immediately appealing music ever made in terms of combining the finest and most exciting beats, riffs, musicianship, vocal performance, and, in terms of the 45, mastering! I've been very surprised to develop a crowd that's primarily in its early-to-mid-20s for this kind of sound.

Musical mantra: "All music jars when the soul is out of tune" - I wish that was mine but it belongs to Cervantes

Favorite DJ experience: Being myself at a huge rave featuring famous DJs.

Worst request: I was in the unfortunate predicament of spinning a soul party the night Michael Jackson died. I'm still in recovery. What about "I'm Bad" don't people understand? I wish I heard even 1/100th as much James Brown when he passed on.

Worst club faux pas you've committed: Being myself at a huge rave featuring famous DJs.

Most treasured vinyl score: Last week's gorgeous haul from People's Records in Detroit - you'll hear what I'm talking about on Monday....

What other music-related projects are you currently working on? I'm still struggling to find time to keep my record label alive. I have new 45 releases by one of my favorite NYC bands, Stalkers, LA's [Static Static](#), and Melbourne's [Witch Hats](#). I'm also in the process of digitizing my 45s to make public on my web site and struggling with the idea of how to make a proper mix. But I haven't picked up my guitar for a few years now.



Dust on Vinyl

DJ Jonathan Toubin brings his record crate to the ATL

By Mark Shikuma

You won't see NY-based DJ Jonathan Toubin carrying around crates of 12" singles or LPs to a gig. You won't even see him scratch the needle back and forth. Toubin carries around 45s, 7" singles, nearly 150 of them to each gig. And for the past several years, Toubin has averaged over 25 DJ gigs per month, playing everywhere from dive bars to underground live music venues (accompanying live sets by bands such as King Khan and the BBQ/Shrines, The Yeah Yeah Yeahs, The Melvins, Crystal Stilts and Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, to name a few) to art spaces to music festivals (such as South By Southwest and Pop Montreal).

"I've always loved the sound, feel and look of 7" records," says Toubin, "but I didn't really become an exclusively 45 DJ until the last year. As I moved from bar DJ to professional dance party/club DJ, I couldn't help but notice that no matter how I EQ-ed it, the 33 RPM tracks rarely packed the same punch as the 45 RPM and made for uneven sonic transitioning. I also liked that 45s were easier to transport, quicker to cue and, eventually, I learned that it gave me a bit of a niche to boot!"

Even though Toubin isn't entirely unique in using only 45s (The Magnetic Fields' Stephin Merritt, for example, also occasionally DJ's bars in Lower Manhattan using the 7"/45 format), his skill at transitioning one song into another ("segueways") is seamless, and his depth and range of choice of songs, primarily from the mid-1960s, are far from the mainstream yet extremely danceable.

"[These] records are mastered loud, the beats are wild, the riffs are catchy," Toubin enthuses. "So much of it is out there to discover -- American soul and garage, European and Asian freakbeat, Latin American stuff, and a bit of punk, glam, psych, funk, R&B and rockabilly."

"I've been in general trying to start a revolution against the infinite beat on the dancefloor, preferring to change the beat and tempo every couple of minutes, often before the end of the song, for our shared short attention span and love of variety."

Soul Clap and Dance-Off

Birthdays
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Monica Topping For the Times-Standard

Posted: 07/23/2009 01:27:23 AM PDT

Mr. Jonathan Toubin used all the resources available to him when he started DJing—MP3s, CDs and vinyl, based on availability.

It didn't take long for Toubin to realize that aside from sheer portability issues with all the different equipment and the time it takes to cue a specific song on a vinyl LP, he was having to put a lot of work into making his transitions smooth--making the jump from a digital file to a 45 rpm record or a CD created a huge disparity in sound.

"Even the difference between a regular 33 and a really fat 45," says Toubin. "I couldn't even EQ them to sound similar. It kept sounding like the beat was dropping out."

So Toubin switched completely to spinning 45s.

"When you get a snare hit, like a really good, well-mastered '60s 45, you just know it right away," he says. "It's perfect for dancing. What it lacks in clarity, it makes up for in just how huge it is."

And the pool of available music, even in the form of that little 7-inch vinyl disc, is never-ending. Toubin says he takes every travel opportunity to dig through record stores for new material.

"Every day, that's the main part of my job," he says. "I get bored and I play almost every night, so some of the people that come all the time, they don't want to hear the same songs, night after night."

"I'm constantly refreshing the pool and spending ungodly amounts of money. It gets worse every day."

Advertisement

When I get there, you'll see, I nose around everywhere. My travels, I use as an excuse to obtain more of the black gold."

Another element that Toubin added to his soul set a couple of years ago was the dance-off, inspired by a late-night/early morning party he DJed, where he showed up and one party-goer challenged another to a dance contest.

"I'm sitting here playing these records and there's these two guys, and the sun's coming up, and they're going crazy," says Toubin. "I thought this would be really great to have a party where every time, people come out to do that, so basically, I threw that in the middle of my soul 45 party, and thus, the Soul Clap and Dance-Off was born."

Toubin's soul party has been limited to Brooklyn and its surrounding areas until now, when with the help of Michelle Cable of Panache Magazine, he's taking the Soul Clap and Dance-Off on the road. This tour hits West Coast cities like Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland... and Humboldt—Cable's original home base.

When the party rolls into the Arcata Theatre Lounge this coming Tuesday, July 28, it will be everything that it is in the bigger cities--soul 45s, flattering lighting and celebrity judges.

Toubin assures that even in the big cities, not everyone who comes out to his parties, dresses to the nines.

"People come for a variety of reasons, but most of them are just regular people that want to dance to soul music," he says. "If a few hundred people come, there'll be maybe 50 of them that want to win the pot, so they usually dress up a little more, because they're trying to win money."

Track of the Day: DJ Jonathan Toubin's New York Night Train Mix

By Jennifer Maerz in MP3 of the Day

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As I mentioned yesterday here, I'm on a serious soul trip (as is much of SF's nightlife/DJ scene, of course) so I have to post this excellent mix from New York DJ Jonathan Toubin.



Toubin, aka New York Night Train, hosts a whole lotta shakin' at clubs all over Manhattan, but he's bringing his vintage collection of rockabilly, British Invasion, European freakbeat, soul, girl groups, garage, glam, and some funky New Orleans horns to the Knockout's Oldies night, where he'll DJ on Friday, May 15. To get yourself in the right mood for his underground boogie, check this [rough mix](#), which collapses the generation gap between the decades with a whole lotta pizzazz.

Soul Man

A little over two years ago, the Butthole Surfers' Gibby Haynes brought musician and writer Jonathan Toubin to DJ on the South Williamsburg waterfront. It was the first gig of Toubin's new career as **a rock and soul DJ**, a niche that has made him famous on both coasts. When in town, he can be found turning platters almost any night* of the week. His most popular party is the Soul Clap Dance-Off at **Glasslands**, where you can win cash for boogeying. (Last time nearly 500 people came and it sold out by midnight, so arrive early for the March 28 installment.)



What's special about Toubin's nights is that he spins exclusively 45's — and, 90% of the time, it's a cut you've never heard before that you'll love on the spot. Tonight he celebrates St. Patty's at **Daddy's** and later this week he brings his soul party to Texas with a 24-band, three-stage **show at SXSW** that includes Brooklyn acts **Crystal Stilts** and a second one with **King Kahn and the Shrines**. It's one of many out-of-town gigs filling up his dance card lately (**New York Night Train**, his record label and site, details 'em all). Toubin talked to BB before hitting the road.

Why spin soul, and why 45's?

I've always loved soul and, when I started dealing with these dance environments, either trying to get clubby people into raw immediate music, or conversely, rock and rollers into dance music, I found soul a great tool. It was never my intention to be retro — it's just that I can't find more exciting, better played, more soulful dance music than the kind made in the 1960s, and I haven't heard a sonic medium that comes anywhere near a 45.

What's your take on NYC nightlife right now?

The decline of mixing/scratching DJs and various electro genres, people's weariness with the same New Order song, and the blandness of the newer hits have left a big void in the dance club economy. Nobody really knows how to fill it, so clubs are a bit more adventurous. This is a great time for change all around. I think that's why I've gotten so many unusual jobs.

I live and breathe my records and expect the same when I see other folks. **When I hear a bunch of tiny tinny mp3s of obvious music it breaks my heart.** Nightlife needs to be more special. I'd also like to see more clubs, promoters, and DJs paying attention to the environment out there and trying to determine the needs of this emerging generation of party-goers — not only in terms of aesthetics, but also in relation to the economic crisis. (Perhaps the recent success of Soul Clap has something to do with the \$3 cover, free beer and cheap drinks?)

There are a number of others out there who are also trying out new possibilities. Josh Styles, whose **Smashed! Blocked!** party has been one of New York's finest for years, spends a great deal of time, money, and effort obtaining records that aren't the least bit obvious...and I admire both **Rebel Night** and the **Weird** party for their subcultural spirit.



Any exciting new finds?

Today I got a copy of Richard Berry's "Have Love, Will Travel," which is killer — the version that most of us know best is the Sonics' cover. I also got Roger and the Gypsies' "Pass the Hatchet"— an amazing New Orleans shaker that, like many of my faves, I learned from Crypt Records ages ago. And Johnny Jones and the King Casuals' stellar cover of "Purple Haze." And "Dis-nous Dylan," a little 4-song, 7-inch EP by French freakbeat band **Les 5 Gentlemen**, which is some of the wildest floor-filling music of all time.

Where do you go record hunting?

Academy Records in the East Village, with an annex in Williamsburg; **Eat Records** in Greenpoint; **Permanent Records** in Greenpoint; **Passout Record Shop** in Williamsburg; **Tropicalia in Furs** in the East Village. And the Brooklyn Record Riot that happens every few months at **Warsaw**. I dropped five bills at that one a few weeks ago.

Toubin's weekly parties include New York Night Train, Wednesdays at **Motor City, Boogaloo Shampoo, Thursdays at **Beauty Bar**, Shakin' All Over Under Sideways Down, Fridays at **Home Sweet Home**, and afterhours Saturdays at **The Shank** (Yes, it starts at 4 A.M... Yes, the cops may come and break it up).*

Bash Compacor: Still Playing Pretty

An evening with Ian Svenonius

By Justin Richards



Justin Richards

freak out. I mean really lose it. They can access a primal human circuitry that somehow prefigured the advent of 1960s boogaloo, international freakbeat and garage rock. All that "nntzuh-nntzuh" Euro syncopation, all that New Order, even ol' Marr and Morrissey, were little queefs of ozone compared to the voltage that these two have amassed over years of rummaging through record bins. They've learned how to incite a kind of bond breaking, a freedom claiming, in young psyches.

"There's a crisis [in dance music]," Toubin says, "and I think we have an alternative." He and Svenonius weren't crazy about the Cake Shop gig. Playing under and between live sets, losing a battle for attention. Their next stop was Tip Top Bar in Bed Stuy. I shared a cab with Svenonius, who wore a dapper tan suit and heavy sideburns. He scorned, in his slightly sibilant voice, the repurposing of music in shoppers' venues. Svenonius, a professor's son, essayist and sworn enemy of the music industry, is a great pontificator. He can pontificate so far that the ideas turn inside out and he says things like "lighting is more important than music" or "music is overused—you can have silence."

At Tip Top, the DJs set up in a dance room adjacent to the bar, where some older locals drank peacefully. What followed was two hours of wild amnesia. Svenonius and Toubin would later say it was the best show they'd ever played together. With songs like "Pass the Hatchet" by Roger and the Gypsies and "Out of this World" by Gino Washington, they showed what can be done with clean piercing guitar licks on found 45s. By 3:30 a.m., the room was all wet forelocks, sunken shoulder straps and people shaking uncontrollably.

Then the main event. Toubin and Svenonius took their positions on a balcony overlooking the vast warehouse space of The Shank. Hundreds of people down there, dancing on their hands, kissing each other's sweat, lingering along the walls and looking out through the haze. When Toubin was warned of police presence, he switched on an old Smokey Robinson record. *Nothing weird happening here, no sirs.* It worked, for the moment.

At 7 a.m., though, cops cleared the place out. It was the first time this had happened at the makeshift club, and there was word of canceling its weekend parties for good. Over breakfast at Kellogg's Diner that morning, a concerned friend—the door girl from Cake Shop—asked Toubin how long he thought it would last.

"After hours never lasts," he said, later adding, "But even if it does shut down, people will still be talking about it for a long time, you know? Like, 'This thing, it was special.'"

At first I didn't see it. There was **Jonathan Toubin** behind the turntables, chest hair sprawling, Dr. Strangelove hair hanging over his right brow, wearing that perpetual smile like, *Man you've gotta hear this joke.* His partner **Ian Svenonius**, radical rhetorician and former frontman of The Make-Up, who described his first band, Nation of Ulysses, as "a political party," was off to the side chatting with **Jared Leto**. How did this fit with his agenda for musical anarchy? What was so radical about being Cake Shop's guest DJ?

But by the end of the night, I got Toubin's joke: He and Svenonius know how to make people

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SOULED OUT

BY MONTY SHAEKS

A Week of Night Training with Record Selector Jonathan Toubin

Tuesday, August 5th, 5:30pm:

I know the fucking tag line says a week, but listen, this is where I get off. My hands are shaking, my eyes are stinging and this is my fifth trip to the can in the last forty-five minutes. My throat feels like a grocery store parking lot. And my NASAL PASSAGES feel like a grocery store parking lot that someone just detonated a thermonuclear device in the middle of. My face looks like the drivers' side airbag of a Prius that's just been rear-ended by one of those trucks from Maximum Overdrive, or maybe more like the last bear claw in the office pastry box honestly, because no airbag has ever been this greasy. I haven't spoken to anyone in the hour

since I got up and honestly I'm not sure my voice is even working at the moment. Yes, Jonathan invited me to go record shopping with him today, and was going to take me to check out some of his favorite drinking and late night music spots in Brooklyn tonight, but NO I am not doing it. Six days of this insanity is plenty man. I'm just going to email in this article, finish eating the rest of this box of vegan nuggets, finish up in here and go back to bed.

[Editor's note: My apologies that Monty couldn't finish his assignment. Maybe next time we'll give him something more his speed, like a week of watching romantic comedy DVDs on the couch with his girlfriend.]

So yeah, here it is, one 'bible week' (day 7 = rest) with Mr. Jonathan Toubin, New York Night Train's Soul Proprietor...

Wednesday, July 30th, 10pm: Motor City

Here we go! The Lower East Side is pretty crazy these days and fully occupied by the nightlife army. It's been a while since I've been down to Motor City, but I'm happy to report that it is the same rock and roll dive bar it has always been. When I get there Jonathan is already squeezed behind the tiny dj table to the right of the bar starting off his weekly Weds. night curated guest dj party. I guess lately he's been running a series called "Bar Wars" and inviting some local celebrities from some of the better water-

ing holes around town to take a spin on the steel wheels. This week it is some kids from Union Pool, including Ryan from Tall Firs, Stars Like Fleas and more I'm sure.

At this point they're trading off sets of a pretty wild mix of soul, some rock tunes from the all over the time map plus some other kind of music I can't even identify that has a vintage and foreign feel with some undeniable shake to it. Whatever it is, the girls of motor city seem to be digging it and some of the crowd has cleared in spots for spontaneous dancing and carrying on. Jonathan's tagged off the decks, and manages to glad hand his way through the crowd of what seem to be all friends or admirers over to the vintage Galaxia video game table I've bunkered behind to take some notes. He tells me how tired he is of the whole cult of the dj and how he considers himself 'just' a record selector that lives and dies my his (perhaps not a direct quote here....) music nerdiness. He's just combing through the dusty bins and the dirty internets for unharvested party jams to keep our nights interesting. He also wants to make sure that I'm not going to pepper my article with all the old cheesy dj cliché's like "take a spin on the steel wheels", "tagged off the decks" or "combing through the dusty bins". Awesome. By this time I had also already written tomorrow night's entry about all Toubin's stacks of wax, fat tracks and so forth. Thanks. Guess I'll see you tomorrow then.

Thursday, July 31st, 10pm: Motor City again.

I was a bit rough around the edges for the DJ (day job) today. Stayed in the city after work for some falafel and hair of the dog so I made it in before the throng and was able to speak to Jonathan for a bit. I asked him if he was the Motor City house DJ, but I guess Wednesday night is his real night here and he's just been helping out for a bit on Thursdays until his new "Boogaloo Shampoo" party at Beauty Bar up on 14th St. starts next week. It was at this moment that I realized I actually would be staying out until the party stops for the next 6 days. I must have gotten that deer-in-the-headlights look because Jonathan offered me a drink to 'calm the nerves'. I ask for one of those energy drink vodka combos or a Sparks or whatever keeps the kids snappy these days, but he came back with an EL NIGHTTRAIN, which appears to be a pint glass filled mostly with tequila and ice and a splash of seltzer. Thursday night in LES is even crazier than Wednesday, and outside the doors of motor city it is starting to look a little thick with the business casual / family credit card gone wild crowd. But I have to admit I'm having a blast inside. Jonathan isn't doing any fancy dj tricks or sticking to any kind of taxonomic playlist, but he sure can set the mood. The night went on swimmingly like this until 1 or so, when things took a turn for the worse: these goth rockabilly dudes--I believe psycho-billy is the correct term--came in and started ass grabbing a few of the girls dancing to Jonathan's tunes. Girls became upset and of course, gentleman and party supervisor that he is, J.T. came out and tried to tell the billies to chill (sorry for that everybody, it has been a long night...). THEN this one big guy that looks like a cross between a linebacker for the Pokipsy Punk Rockers farm team and some kind of 70s batman villain, covered in chrome studs and little skulls, charged up and head butted Jonathan! Now, under normal circumstances, I would have stepped in and gotten the shit kicked out of me right along side him, but you know, as a journalist I felt like it was my job to observe, and, you know, document and shit. Anyway, this guy had flattened out his pompadour on Jonathan's face, and was screaming about who's looking for a fight? and all his buddies were menacing in too. But despite the head butting Toubin was still grinning. He just smiled and shrugged his hands up: "Guys, you can all get together and beat the shit out of me, but I don't think it is going to be very FUN for you... So how about I put on an other record? Any requests?". Seriously I think there was a little sparkle off his teeth as he said it and smiled his big smile. Next thing you know the goons are settled into a corner singing along to Human Fly.

I mean, I'm not sure I totally get what's he's trying to do with the whole New York Night Train endless party thing, but I have to admit there is SOMETHING about this guy... I waited around past 4 to share a cab with him back to Williamsburg, which entailed doing a bunch of shots with the bartenders and waiting around while Toubin politely diverted or rain checked the advances of what appeared to be a few of his more devout fans. As we were riding over the bridge I remember him talking some more about music and up tight Disc Jockeys and the new soul revival bubbling under the skirts of our fair city and about to pour forth into the streets. And maybe some other stuff too, I don't know, at that point my head was spinning crazy like a-- um, ok what's something that spins?

Friday, August 1st: Home Sweet Home

Down a bit deeper into the Lower East side, Home Sweet Home is a step through the wardrobe into some kind of back to the future nightlife wonderland shit. I posted up early, as is my way, in this cozy downstairs bar that is half dance floor and half museum of creepy taxidermy nicknack's, after walking by the nondescript stairway entrance 3 or 4 times like one of the account executive goons stalking these parts with me this Friday night. Grim indeed outside, but easier to process than what is going on in the basement; by eleven it is packed with kids. No grizzled psycho-billy dust heads here, just a whole crew of the young and beautiful that are inexplicably in love with shaking their asses to Jonathan's frenetic soul party jams. There's a bunch of hip grew-up-in-chinatown kids; sharp-shoe'd young turks blowing off art school steam, and of course a breathtaking fleet of the glamazons that seem to pop up to see Jonathan wherever he "selects". By 12 he's conjured the sweaty press into a froth and even I'm on my feet by the time his cohorts: legendary underground music icons Ian Svenonius (frontman for Nation of Ulysses, The Make-Up, Weird War, author, talk-show host and full time radical dude) and Calvin Johnson (Olympia's indie-rock kingpin, founder of the seminal K Records, and band leader of Beat Happening, Dub Narcotic and countless others), take over. I was pretty in awe of being in the same room as these guys, but honestly what I didn't expect was to see this new soul revolution BS that Jonathan was slinging at me last night with my own eyes. As I wobbled my bike over the bridge in the early morning gloom, shivering through my dancefloor baptized clothes was really feeling like, I don't know, maybe I'm a believer?

Saturday, August 2nd: Hope Lounge

Slept the entire day today. Awoken by voicemail from Toubin with tonight's itinerary. I think this is the 8th straight night that he has been working. It doesn't seem to phase him at all. Tonight at least we're on my side of the river in lovely, metallic-smelling Williamsburg. Hope Lounge, like many of the new places popping up around here is a bit too fancy to harmonize with the tone set by this decade's crop of young gentrifying conquistadors. But tonight the place is packed with enough underground rock and roll luminaries to make a blogger drop his iphone in the toilet from his hands shaking as he tries to text his blog buddies about it. But none of them were there! Scooped again by Cheap & Plastique I guess... Tonight Jonathan is joined in the booth by this girl Alix, who I recognize as the bass player from local favorites Golden Triangle. I think she might have some heavy hitter connections with the Memphis rock scene too, but I'm not sure because she is far too intimidatingly hot to speak to or look at directly. One of the guys from the Black Lips is also supposed to be playing some records, but he's nowhere to be found. Instead, I'm milling around with the likes of Ian Svenonius, Calvin Johnson, the infamous King Khan and his band the Shrines, some of the members of Deerhunter and probably other indie-famous folks from the NY/Atlanta/Memphis scenes that I don't recognize. They're all congregating here to get drunk and shake a tail feather. Many drinks and feathers later, the Black Lips guy shows up and things get REALLY



Jonathan in action, wooing the ladies.

crazy and I'm having such a blast my face is numb. Actually not sure if that was related, but it was definitely numb. Before tumbling into the car service back seat I apparently agreed to attend the Black Lips & King Kahn show at Mcarren Pool tomorrow afternoon. ONWARDS!

Sunday, August 3: Mcarren Pool and then Glasslands

What is this, day 12? I'm feeling really not so good. Whoever designed this fucking pool obviously wasn't in the loop with the designers of THE SUN. The beer they're selling here tastes like batteries to me and is not helping with my near-deathness. Not sure if I am going to make it to the glasslands "afterparty" tonight, without some divine intervention. This maniac has been throwing around bananas, and via the back of my head I get a hold of one. It's written all over in sharpie with the details of Jonathan's Glasslands party tonight. I know Toubin wasn't involved with this. From the looks of him--amazingly dapper seersucker suit and sunny disposition notwithstanding--Jonathan hasn't spent much time alone since last night; and I certainly can't imagine that he and his companion have been spending their time writing out "glasslands" on hundreds of bananas. Does this guy have a street team? Seems unlikely. I decide on a more miraculous explanation, as the banana was bruise free except for one small one arguably in the shape of Saint Peter. Also, it was delicious.

After a huge plate of beans and rice and several spicy BMs (bloody maries) from Enids, I am a bit more of myself. Glasslands is a sweaty trainwreck of boozy goodwill. The K-Holes came on like a wild garage throwdown, despite one of the members of the Stalkers sleeping on the stage through their set. It was a looong night following a long day for sure. I hung outside for a while trying to dig up some dirt on Jonathan. I met a bunch of folks who each had a 'crazy story' about how they met Mr. Toubin; a few banana followers and a bunch of people that know how to use the internet and are chasing the dream of a "wild party". I heard some stories about Jonathan's most recent birthday party at Santo's Party House (wow I just said 'party' many times), the seemingly legendary Animal Train parties (theme based art-music dance party happenings)

that Jonathan has put together (the dinosaur cave man one sounded particularly insane), and the time that Gibby Haines of the Butthole Surfers showed up to DJ with Jonathan's right after he had been ejected from his own band's reunion show for punching the sound guy. The more I understand about Mr. Toubin the less I get him. He's like a good-times perpetual motion machine. Back inside Golden Triangle is finishing up with their euphoric freakout and Jonathan brings up a this raw shrieking witch howl of a song as their last note dies. It couldn't have been recorded any time after 1964, but over Glasslands' straining PA static it is more like the sound of that beer today in the anvil of the pool, and these drunk and sloppy kids with their heads thrown back on the dance floor, and Jonathan's wild grin as he sets up another song.

Monday, Aug 4: Santos' Party House, Crypt Records 25th Anniversary Party

Thank Jesus I had the wherewithal last night to send an email to my boss telling him I was really sick with food poisoning and wouldn't be able to make it in to the office today. I don't know where Jonathan gets his stamina for this shit. I can't really sleep so I've just been sitting with my eyes closed on the couch since this morning. I ordered a veggie burger and fries from Enids, then another veggie burger and double fries from Lodge and I'm starting to feel like I could put on some pants. Another 4 hours of couch and 90 minutes of shower and I'm dragging my ass out for another stop of the New York Night Train. This time we're back in Manhattan, down in Chinatown at Santo's Party House, a big new 2 floor venue masterminded by the enigmatic Andrew W.K. and some other big time NY Nightlifers. It's sort of a coup for Jonathan I think, since this place is a few times larger than glasslands for sure, and every other night of the week is filled with techno thud from pro-style DJs like the LCD Soundsystem guys and Disco Pioneer Nicki Siano. The Santos folks wanted to have a rock and soul night and they tapped Toubin, so now he is doing Mondays here. Tonight is an unbelievable bill; it is a party to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Crypt records, the visionaries that dug up the totally required listening: Back From The Grave garage records, and have launched the careers of countless purveyors of some

of the most raw, dirty and energetic rock ever bashed into existence. King Khan is playing again tonight, this time with his collaborator "BBQ", plus the K-Holes, Red Dawn II (super-twofer group of local celebs Wolfie from Roxy Pain and Alison from Awesome Color), with Jonathan sharing the disc jockeying duties with Tim Warren, the founder of Crypt. I didn't make it on to the dancefloor so much tonight, on account of the headache and motion sickness, but my mind was blown again by King Khan and by Jonathan's selection of cuts. I found out later that he did an entire set of only Crypt releases, which was pretty smoking, and probably the lowest fidelity music ever blasted over Santos's state-of-the-art sound system and walk in sub-woofer!!! Sadly, my battered body and brain could not handle any more nightlife, and I left as Jonathan began his second set. I caught his eye as I was trying to remain vertical while crossing the sea of shimmying, arm-swinging and hand clapping. I was about to flash him a salute, or some kind of sign to say, "hey man, I get it. I don't know what foul hell fire stokes your engines but this is good work you are doing. In this stale city that makes even the richest poor, and the poorest gone; in the shadows of the newly birthed and vacant luxury condominiums that rise around us, in the crush of drunken NYU students hiking up their skirts to piss in the gutter and belligerent senior account executives furious that people are having fun downstairs from their loft-style 300sqft railroad apartments, we need this sound you're summoning up--this primal music howling out the past like the voice of everything that needs saying. We need it and we'll take it on every night that you'll bring it...", and some other shit along those lines but I was knocked on my face by these neanderthal morons dancing up a storm and singing along to some brit version of bo diddy. As I was crawling to safety I could see their pompadours flapping, and their fists pumping in the air as they jumped and wiggled and laughed like 3 year olds as the disco ball spun on, glinting from their studs and greasy faces. More fresh-faced recruits for the Soul Party Army, punching their tickets and climbing aboard the New York Night Train. So I redirected from the door to the bar, refreshed my tequila and decided to take my seat and ride on down to the end of the line.

The L Magazine

COLUMNS » NIGHTLIFE

July 16, 2008

Jump on the New York Night Train

by [Bree Dillon](#)

Since 2006 the 'Soul Proprieter' of the New York Night Train record label and webzine (soon to be online vinyl guide), the endlessly charming Mr Jonathan Toubin, has been throwing parties, putting together shows, and DJing in all the coolest bars around NYC like a madman. Currently found spinning at no less than four weekly parties (as well as guest DJing at parties all over the country), Mr Toubin has to be one of the hardest working DJs in NYC, playing everything from soul, funk, garage and girl groups, to glam, punk and rockabilly. With his impeccable taste and extensive vinyl collection, Jonathan always seems to know exactly the right track to get bodies moving on the dance floor.

Mondays at Andrew WK's hyped new venue Santo's Party House NYNT presents 'Secret Santo', a rock and roll soul party that throws together world famous underground bands and DJs, kept on the hush hush until the day before.

Every Wednesday is the 'Listening Salon' at rock and roll dive bar Motor City, a night of hard drinking punk eclecticism with help from special guests from across the NYC music community. Past guests have included members of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds/Grinderman, Sonic Youth, Pussy Galore, Yeah Yeah Yeahs, TV on the Radio, the Shins, Black Lips and many more.

The backroom at Beauty Bar every Thursday is a 'Boogaloo Shampoo', one of the only weekly soul parties in the greater New York area. With help from special guests, Jonathan Toubin spins the finest in soul 45s, spanning late r&b to early funk.

'Shakin' All Over Under Sideways Down' is NYNT's Friday night party at the hipster dungeon that is Home Sweet Home. With an unbeatable 3am 2-4-1 happy hour, night owls shake and shimmy to 45rpm party favors from the 1950s to the present. Obscurities, novelties and underground classics are carefully selected and spun for your dancing pleasure.

Santo's Party House- 100 Lafayette St
Motor City- 127 Ludlow St
Beauty Bar- 231 East 14th
Home Sweet Home- 131 Chrystie St