

Locals Only: New England artists showcased at Troop every Thursday



I recently caught up with local hip-hop legend Lord Gremithy of Dirty Durdie over brunch at Troop in Providence to talk about the “Locals Only” showcase that takes place at the restaurant every Thursday night. For the showcase, Gremithy put together playlists filled with hundreds of tracks from New England artists, and through these playlists, he connect artists with fans who may have never known how much talent exists in our own area.

Hakeem Kushimo (Motif): Could you tell me a little bit about Locals Only, what it’s about, and how it started?

Lord Gremithy: Locals Only is a homage to the local hip-hop and r&b scene. It really started during the pandemic, around July of 2020. I asked one of the co-owners of Troop, Christopher Simonelli, if he would be willing to let me do this idea where we basically put this playlist together on Spotify. So he helped me get it started and me and him selected a few people to feature on the playlist, and we just advertised it as a place where people can come, and while eating lunch they could also listen to, and discover local music. From there it became a segment on Real Rap Radio on 90.3FM with DJ Nook.

HK: What is your direct involvement with Locals Only?

LG: I make the playlist, which you can find on Spotify under “Locals Only Movement,” and that playlist is played during the night. I also gather special guest DJs, such as DJ Nook who play 100% New England hip-hop. We are working on potentially having live performances with an open mic where Local artists can come out and do their thing.

HK: Is this something that you want to build off of for bigger things to come?

LG: Absolutely, I think this is definitely something to build off of. Anywhere and everywhere in the country when referring to hip-hop, you think of the local scenes. For years the word local has had a bad taste to it. Now this is starting to turn around to where people are now encouraged and excited to support something local. The end goal is to be able to have a Locals Only in L.A, a Locals Only in Atlanta, a Locals Only in Chicago. The point is to take the brand, and be able to inspire people everywhere.

HK: What’s been in the works for Dirty Durdie as a group?

LG: Oh man, we have been collaborating with a lot of artists, my partner Demmene, and Unk11 and Supa just dropped a new song and video called “Melted Butter.” But right now we have just been collaborating with a few selected artists and we are expected to drop an EP by the end of this year, and again myself and my partner Demmene Syronn will be working on our solo project and our solo ventures. Dirty Durdie isn’t going anywhere and we are always working together and are always connected.

HK: How about for yourself? Do you have any personal goals? Is there anything you are trying to do as Gremithy yourself?

LG: Absolutely, first and foremost being the best dad I can possibly be, finding a place where with or without the music I can live comfortably and somewhat develop generational wealth for my lineage. That’s kind of what the whole persona of Lord Gremithy is. It gives a feel of royalty, and I want people to know that we are kings and queens, I want us to live in that realm. But again, more music and tours, performances out of state, and overseas, more everything honestly.

HK: As a veteran artist in the city, what is the one thing you think the city needs to do to make it to the next level in terms of music?

LG: First of all thank you for considering me a veteran, I don’t really feel like I am yet because there is still so much I want to accomplish, but in some ways I kind of do feel like a veteran based on how long I’ve been doing this. But nonetheless I think for the scene the one thing we have always lacked was unity. There is a lot of isolation in the New England area alone. Why aren’t more artists from Masscahusetts collaborating with Rhode Island artists? Why is everyone in their own separate pockets? If locally people could really and truly start supporting each other aside from the invisible pat on the back, things would really start to turn around.

*Locals Only Movement takes place Mondays 3-6pm on 90.3fm WRIU (Kingstown, RI); Locals Only @ Troop takes place Thursday’s 5pm-1am;
Follow @LocalsOnlyMovement and @lord_gremithy. To submit instrumentals or music, please send clean, radio edited mp3 to
lordgremithy@gmail.com. For more info, go to www.lordgremithy.com.*