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Detroit Now + Then

THE HEARTBEAT
OF
THE CITY

I saw a post recently that said “Is Detroit Tech Really Making a Comeback?”— but the question might really be, **when did it leave?** To many, the answer is never. Detroit founded what the world knows as techno music, and we see its influence through the creative scene in Detroit throughout the years. It is such an important part of what makes Detroit itself. “Detroit has always been a major creative hub- a literal blueprint for the music, film, television, fashion, and automotive industries- simultaneously coveted and misunderstood by the masses. A lot of people benefit from dropping the name and being in close proximity, but the real ones know who actually represents what it all stands for. The real ones always see the difference,” Something Blue said.

The post questioning a comeback was referencing 300 Cari’s new song “Redzone,” which has that ghetto-tech sound that we hear and instantly feel and love. Then, we have the Pistons celebrating the Belleville 3 with a limited collection, the Detroit Pistons Jit Team, or as some may know, as House of Jit, which brings those tempos to the LCA night after night—which brings up another factor, jit, but maybe we’ll get there later.

This city proves every day how techno doesn’t need to make a comeback because it never left. Every weekend, shit- almost every day, you can find a different music event around the city to engage with.

So like I said, a comeback is hard to say because where did it go? Like all things, the next generation has to be introduced to keep it afloat, so comments on 300 Cari sound a bit like this:



troyceasar 1w

Did it ever really leave or just go deeper underground?



1



bmmandm 1w

It never left 🔥



8



__juicee.__ 1w

Ghetto tech been a thing 😴
but I love seeing the impact it's making on this younger generation



20



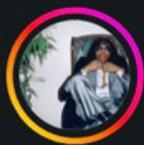
leno_onair 1w

YN Techno?! It's 🔥 🔥



2

Reply



motorxkam 1w

It never left. It's a whole scene of us out here



130

The best part about Detroit is how ingrained the music scene is within everyone's life, whether they know it or not. Not only is this Detroit's history, but many of us feel that this is our history. A few weeks ago, I saw a video making its rounds on TikTok, celebrating the days of dance shows like the Scene, and the video featured my cousin dancing to an old techno song. It just really reminded me how strong the culture is here in Detroit. As we spoke with some DJs, producers, and party-goers around Detroit, it was fun to see everyone recall a moment from their childhood that they attributed their love for this scene to.

"I caught the bug early. My introduction was through my mom and the music I'd hear on her burned CD playlists, late-night radio mixes, and skating at Skateland. Through my early teenage years, I heard techno through CDs, radio, games, and movies, which led me to do my own research later," **Huey Mnemonic** tells us.

Some of us got to witness this historic scene being built, and some of us got to be a part of it. Something Blue told us about their unique intro to the scene, "My uncle (Mr. De') and his friend (DJ Assault) produced, mixed, and mastered 'Ass N Titties' in his studio at my Grandma's house over the course of a few weeks while I'd been staying there after school." **Auntie Chanel** talks about how these exposures to Detroit music as a child shaped her, "I vividly remember being a kid and riding in the backseat while my parents blasted live ghetto tech DJ mixes on the radio. Detroit techno was a huge part of my childhood; it helped me feel closer to my family, and it will forever be reflected in my DJ style."

We celebrate the city's historical scene every Memorial Day weekend with Movement, but that movement at times has felt a little less ours and more, eh. So we continually find ways to bring it back to the real origins and the community that holds it down. Almost everyone can remember their first Movement experience, or as some remember it, DEMF, during their first attendance. Despite its evolution, it seems to play a very important role in most people's journey through the music scene.





“My first memory of hearing techno was when my mom took me to DEMF for the first time when I was 7. From then on, I was fascinated with the DJs and techno music. Back then, I discovered a lot of music through the radio, thanks to Club Insomnia on WJLB and from random mix CDs my mom would buy from around the city. Places like gas stations, hair salons, etc. Later on, as I learned how to burn my own CDs, I would spend hours on YouTube watching clips from The New Dance Show, listening to different tracks, and exploring different genres. This, combined with having an uncle who’s an avid record collector, made me the selector I am today. He exposed me to a lot of older dance and disco records, which only sent me further down the rabbit hole. I started producing my own music while I was a senior in high school, then started DJ'ing officially in 2018,” **Blackmoonchild** recalls.

CURATING + CREATING

The Detroit music scene carries such importance creatively and culturally. We asked **Huey Mnemonic** what the music scene meant to them, and they said, "I could talk about my affinity for Techno all day. Techno is evocative and powerful. We have to respect the weight it carries socially, economically, etc. It's fun and freeing, but alongside that, it's monumentally life-changing. Techno, and electronic music as a whole, has been powered by the culmination of creativity, history, curiosity, and the experience of Black life. I think electronic music, and interaction with it, is an expression of who you are and who you can become. The progression of self is directly tied to how the scene/community continues to develop. Exploitative and extractive behavior/frameworks lead to negative outcomes. Historical acknowledgement, mentorship, awareness, leadership, and respect are how we move forward together."



This scene's ability to build community together is one of its best products. "Before moving here, I had never consistently been around so many black people in my life and I remember my first months moving how amazing that felt for me, and continues to feel witnessing such vast and innovative black artistry in many genres, but especially in the ones I play, which I also learned by being here, was deeply connected to my black history. These things have brought me a connection to people and history and the music I play that I never even knew I needed as a key part of my growth and identity, and I'm forever grateful this place has given me that," **Father Dukes** shared.

"This is also a place to collaborate and experiment! So many of us involved in this thang live in proximity to each other, which is also a cool gift, and I've spent many times going over friends' or strangers' (soon to be friends) places to DJ, meet other DJs, experiment with making music, go out to shows together, hang out after late nights, etc. I think a lot of us have really good personal friendships and it lends itself to a collaborative spirit amongst a lot of local creators that makes the city's musical output and all of us better. Obviously, people clash too and find things we don't want to exemplify or work alongside, and I think respectfully that's good learning too."

It's very special to be a part of such a talented scene and watch everyone grow and inspire one another. **Father Dukes** talked about the collaborative spirit that exists within this scene. You can't ignore the constant inspirations that exist in Detroit.



HUEY MNEMONIC



presents **THE OFFICIAL JITFEST AFTERPARTY**

Featuring:
SUZIANALOGUE
DJ CLENT
SHAWESCAPE
BLACKMOONCHILD
AK

Hosted By:
LIL MZ 313
 Lights By:
NIX
 Powered by:
Redbull



DEC 13

TRANSMISSION



HOSTED BY **AUNTIE CHANEL**

JOYCKI

MOVEMENT

FRI 01 AUG 2025 → 01:00 (BST)



SOMETHING BLUE



BUBBLE BROS
 Love Language
 AK - WASH DC
 GO - WASH DC
 NORTON LANE LARGE
 2/12/25 9-11

When we asked people about their inspirations, it was really beautiful and telling to hear everyone speak about one another. Something Blue stated the women from Blueprint as an inspiration, mentioning, “Four Black women who have their own unique talents and sounds, coming together to throw the most intentional, inclusive, and overall beautiful events I’ve seen in Detroit. I’m forever a fan.” **DJ Etta**, one of the creators of Blueprint, even credited her co-creators as inspirations, “My girlsssss Blackmoonchild and AK. They’ve taken me out of my musical comfort zone.” **Joyxci** recalls “Blueprint was the first dance music party I attended in Detroit” as she was getting into the scene in 2023. **Huey Mnemonic** describes this inspirational environment best: “All my friends are constant sources of inspiration and I make sure they know it. Everyone is doing amazing work right now.”

Every day, we’re reminded of the OGs who created the thriving landscape of Detroit’s electronic music scene and were blessed to watch the birth of legends around us today. “Everything that we do is cyclical, and by studying generations before us, we can derive that this period of mass experimentation is shaping giants for tomorrow,” **DJ Etta** said when asked about what they see in the future for Detroit’s music scene and culture.



A photograph of a DJ, Auntie Chanel, performing at a club. She is wearing a shiny, sequined top and is positioned behind a DJ booth. The scene is lit with vibrant purple and blue lights. The text "AUNTIE CHANEL" is overlaid in a white, pixelated font on the left side of the image. A digital display on the DJ equipment shows "4 23 '23".

AUNTIE CHANEL

We see many shining examples of people carrying on the culture. People mentioned a great deal of HiTech Detroit, a trio that's been on their own wave, turning shit up. In a commercial, Faygo featured a beat made by Sheefy McFly, while another song of his was recently used as the soundtrack to the Pistons Jit performance. There's even an organization, Motor City Street Dance Academy in SW, that teaches jit led by House of Jit, who is getting down to ghetto tech every week, putting the youth on.

We see it in action, we see the fruits of its labor, we all agree Detroit techno never left— but where is it going? We all have many predictions of what the future of techno looks like, what political, social, or cultural aspects will shape it. While considering these aspects, **Auntie Chanel** predicts, “hosting events is expensive, paying for drinks AND cover is expensive, so I hope house parties make a huge comeback this summer.”

TECHNO CITY

Father Dukes echoes this concept, “Over the years, especially from the times I mentioned coming out in college, the price of going out and having a good time has become inaccessible to many, and it's straight up greedy. The people and dancers MAKE the party, so they shouldn't be priced out. What the hell kind of business model is that like?” Detroit is not a stranger to DIY parties and making shit happen, so this transition could provide a beautiful, accessible renaissance. **Joyxci** hopes to see, “Detroit embracing a more punk side to dance music! I believe DIY culture in other cities is infectious, and I think there could be more underground and DIY parties.”

BLACKMOONCHILD



I think it's important to honor the history, hard work, and creativity that built this community. It is such a key pillar in this cultural heartbeat that makes the city of Detroit. How do we do that? Keep dancing, stay learning, constantly creating, continue to socialize, and engage in community.

Huey Mnemonic truly said it best, "I think Detroit will continue to be the cultural incubator it's always been. I also think the city is entering a period of stewardship for the culture that's very necessary. We have several efforts to guide the next generation of producers, DJs, party planners, archivists, etc. By no means is this work new; the foundation has been there, but seeing the push to expose, teach, and expand Detroit techno culture in real time is exciting. Efforts like UMA, Blue Moon Radio, Tec-Troit, Detroit Berlin Connection, Detroit Sound Conservancy, and the decades-long work of Submerge/Exhibit 3000, just to name a few. Continuing, "there's also peer-to-peer collaboration for music projects, parties, panels, and more. In several ways, all of us are working to advance in our individual careers and elevate others. As a person who has benefited from this work, my hope is for these efforts to inspire more connection, authentic artistry, and growth in every facet of our city and culture. Get involved."

For those who were mistaken, like the birds on Twitter and Instagram, I hope we made it clear, **Detroit techno never left.**

IT'S FOREVER