



Headlining Hip-Hop Artist Young Stitch performed at Young Stitches: Pyramids In the Sky Tour in the Duke pub On November 1st, 2014. Young Stitch is from Toronto.



Hip-Hop Artist KEHMAK performed at Young Stitches: Pyramids In the Sky Tour in the Duke pub On November 1st, 2014. KEHMAK is from London.



Hip-Hop Artist Casper Marcus Performed at Young Stitches: Pyramids In the Sky Tour in the Duke pub On November 1st, 2014. The tour has provincial headliners and local artists from every town the tour stops in. Casper Marcus is from London.



Hip-Hop Artist Paige Miss Paige Leslie performed at Young Stitches: Pyramids In the Sky Tour in the Duke pub On November 1st, 2014. Paige MissPaige Leslie is from Ajax.



Hip-Hop Artist Keaton Karz Ryan performed at Young Stitches: Pyramids In the Sky Tour in the Duke pub On November 1st, 2014. Keaton Karz Ryan is from Kingston.

Rural Underground

Story and photo by Jeremy Mckay

The Duke Pub in Belleville's downtown core was bustling with performers as *Young Stitches: Pyramid of the Sky* tour, passed through Belleville on Nov. 1, 2014.

"Dopest tour show yet!" commented Pyramid of the Sky tour manager Ken West. Local JL Prophet, owner of Stylin Flow Entertainment, with West helped coordinate the show to promote the local hip-hop scene in Belleville. Though the tour brought out local artists recently, Belleville has a thriving hip-hop scene that can be traced back to the mid-90's. "Because hip-hop here is so small and reclusive, it's not a bad thing because more scene means there is more of a chance where something creative is brewing unity right? thats what hip-hop is all about," commented Christopher Serna AKA Dislexsick SeRnA about the local scene. Dislexsick is a pioneer of local hip-hop in the Belleville area and has been influencing the scene since he was in high school.

Dislexsick was born in 1980 in Trenton, Ontario. His influences from hip-hop culture came out of inner cities far from his rural upbringing. It was here where Dislexsick and a group of his friends started the scene, ever since, there has been a "well formed nucleus" of hip-hop in Belleville. "I pretty much spawned the scene, helped build it and was the first of many locally in all elements of hip-hop," said Dislexsick.

The roots of Dislexsick's influence stem from the four "elements" of hip-hop preached by hip-hop pioneer KRS-One when the art form emerged from New York City in the 80's. The elements include emceeing (rapping), djing, graffiti and breakdancing. Dislexsick has been practicing all these elements over the years and continues to do in his studio located in Belleville's downtown core.

Since 2003, Dislexsick has put out multiple self-produced albums and performed in live venues across Canada. Along with rapping, Dislexsick can create his own beats and music. With some computer software and a turntable, Dislexsick has had 100 percent control of his creations since 2004.

Rapping and deejaying play a huge role in the Belleville's hip-hop scene, though the foundation that allowed these elements to grow was breakdancing and graffiti art.

"But we started the first breakdancing crew in Belleville, the first graffiti crew in Belleville, laid down the foundation for anything to do with hip hop locally," Dislexsick went on to explain.

Out of all the elements, Graffiti is where Dislexsick's main passion lies. Dislexsick has been doing graffiti art since 1994, after being inspired by an artist known as Cope 2 that had appeared in a magazine. After being exposed to this, Dislexsick has been pursuing this art form. "The art of graffiti to me is kind of like my number one priority for how I like to express myself"

The scene goes somewhat unnoticed on a larger scale. Dislexsick explains that a lot of artists from major cities such as Ottawa or Toronto regularly question if there even is a scene in the Quinte region. "I've always wanted to prove that real hip-hop is coming out of Belleville as it always has." Dislexsick has taken it upon himself to travel to major cities across Canada to interact with other Canadian hip-hop artists. Doing this not only allows his art to grow, but to connect to hip-hop culture on a national level.

The local hip-hop culture has seen its ups and downs over the years. Because of the easy access to rap music, thanks to the internet has spurred, the next generation to begin writing rhymes and build studios in their basements. "It's amazing. The last five years has been healthy for our scene," states Dislexsick.



Hip-Hop Artist Thakid Cocky Performed at Young Stitches: Pyramids In the Sky Tour in the Duke pub On November 1st, 2014. ThaKid Cocky is from Toronto.



Hip-Hop Artist Dislexsick SeRnA Performed at Young Stitches: Pyramids In the Sky Tour in the Duke pub On November 1st, 2014. Dislexsick SeRnA is from Trenton.



Hip-Hop Artist King Johnson Performed at Young Stitches: Pyramids In the Sky Tour in the Duke pub On November 1st, 2014. King Johnson is from Oshawa.