

WHAT'S HAPPENING...

[FEATURED](#) | [IN THE COMMUNITY](#) | [WITH THE DISTRICT](#) | [IN NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS](#) | [VIEW ALL](#)

FEATURED

DJ Sun Ensures A Bright Future For The Flat

posted by [AMBER AMBROSE](#) | January 19, 2015*Credit: Jasmine Lee Richardson*

It's been a year since DJ Sun — aka Andre Sam-Sin — took over management of the small, intimate Montrose bar **The Flat**. It was a natural progression and a perfect fit for the musician, who'd been playing shows and booking talent there for the previous eight years.

"I was approached by the original investors because I'd been there deejaying and promoting their parties on my regular Monday night and was booking international DJs that put The Flat on the map nationally," says Sam-Sin. "When it came time for new management, the investors asked me to take over."

The rest — as they say — is history, and Sam-Sin has gradually become both the force behind The Flat's transformation as well as the face of the business. It was not a decision he took lightly. After all, he'd been honing his own personal brand for close to twenty years prior through his career as a DJ, active involvement in the community, creation of the popular Soular Grooves radio show on KPFT, and producing multiple albums. Sam-Sin knew the potential downsides of lending his name and reputation to something someone else had built, but decided to go for it anyway. The risk, it seems, has paid off.

"I love the fact that people are talking about The Flat and we're actually hearing from others and getting really good feedback about the place," says Sam-Sin. "Some people are discovering it for the first time, others are

rediscovering it, and it's all been really great feedback. That feels really good, like we're doing things right."

Another thing The Flat is doing right is creating a hub of diversity. The demographics are as scattered as the paint on a Jackson Pollock canvas with guests of all ages, races, and backgrounds crowding the dance floor, flooding into the newly redone patio, and lounging on the couches. And lately, staff have noticed an influx of international guests, with patrons presenting their passports when prompted for an ID. Sam-Sin has since taken over the turntables on Friday nights and included more of a global mix of music to reflect the range of clientele. It's a melange that reflects Houston as a whole, and it's something of which Sam-Sin is extremely proud.

"My background is very multicultural," says Sam-Sin. "I think the people we hire are very open minded and I've always had this premise of not wanting to be pigeon-holed. The common denominator [of The Flat's clientele] is that they all just enjoy good art. Good energy means good people."



DJ Sun poses in front of The Flat. Credit: Jasmine Lee Richardson

In addition to an international playlist on Fridays, Sam-Sin makes sure to include an eclectic slate of music and musicians on the docket, including a live jazz trio on Tuesday nights. You won't find any Top 40 here, but that's the point.

"The music we play here will always be out of the mainstream," says Sam-Sin. "It will have elements that reflect a jazz aesthetic, a soul aesthetic, and a real groove. As long as it's good quality and it feels right [it'll be at The Flat]. When you bring positive music, you bring positive energy."

Among other improvements and changes Sam-Sin has implemented are a newly landscaped, updated patio with an outside bar, a fresh interior, a new beer tap system, an expanded wine selection, and an impressive menu of rum, including higher-end choices. But the most important of all are the artistic touches like an eye-catching Daniel Anguilu mural on the façade and the general operating philosophy in which art is the constantly beating heart.

"Art is very important to us," says Sam-Sin. "We're all artists. Most of our employees, and of course both my girlfriend Jasmine [who works at The Flat, but is also a videographer and photographer] and I are artists. It's important that we support that."

What Sam-Sin is also supporting is the revival of a neighborhood Montrose bar where all walks of life are welcome, music is a priority, and the rum drinks are some of the best in the city.



comment

Name: *

Email: * required, will not be published

Comment

{ [submit](#) }