

Throwback: DJ Jazzy Jeff-Da Ntro Featuring Pauly Yamz & Baby Blak

"Jazzy Jeff" Townes started DJing at the age of ten in the basement of his family's home in West Philadelphia. His passion for the craft elevated his skills at such a rate that he began DJing local block parties by the time he was a high school student. In 1985 he met Will Smith and they became Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince. The following year he won the DMC world championship for battle DJing even though he was not a battle DJ by definition. Their premiere album *Rock The House* was the first time the transformer scratch was recorded and Jeff's own chirp scratch gave the project another quality to make it a landmark album. The second album *He's The DJ, I'm The Rapper* was one of hip-hop's first double albums and it was the first rap album to get a Grammy. The Grammy win was bittersweet because they boycotted the awards show because their win was not televised. Jay-Z took this same attitude towards the academy for a number of years as well. A third album *And In This Corner* was unique for its collaboration with jazz saxophonist Grover Washington for a remix of "The Groove" which was another first because few hip-hop artists had worked with a jazz musician. By 1990 Will Smith had connected with Quincy Jones to be the star of his own TV show "The Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air" and Jeff had a role as Smith's best friend "Jazz." During this time period Jeff became the first corporate sponsored DJ and he started A Touch Of Jazz Productions to develop local talent. In 1991 Jeff and The Fresh Prince released their fourth album *Homebase* which contained the universal hit "Summertime" which Smith has joked about and said that it is the only song of theirs that Black radio will still play. In '93 Jeff became a spokesperson for Starter Gear and he focused more on his production company which worked on Will Smith's first solo album *Big Willie Style* in '97. They worked together again in '99 on *Willenium* but his biggest gain was Jill Scott's debut album *Who Is Jill Scott? The breakthrough with Scott attracted work with Musiq, Michael Jackson, Dave Hollister, Lil Kim, Floetry and City High. In 2002 Jeff released his first solo album *The Magnificent* and that is where Da Ntro comes from along with*

collaborations with people like Big Daddy Kane, Raheem Devaughn, Freddie Foxx and others. His first mixed CD *Hip Hop Forever II* was released in 2004 on BBE and later that year he did another mixed CD *Jazzy Jeff In The House* of that blended house music for the Defected label. In 2005 he reconnected with Will Smith for Smith's solo album *Lost And Found* and he followed up *Hip Hop Forever* with *HHF III* in 2006. *The Return of The Magnificent* EP and album were released in 2007 as well as *The Return Of Hip Hop* EP. Jeff has appeared on recordings by The Roots, Slum Village, Little Brother, The Black Eyed Peas, Talib Kweli, KRS-One and many others. Earlier this year there was a controversy about Jeff being asked to leave a [Kansas City club](#) for playing hip-hop but that ignorance was quickly forgotten and fans gave him his just due for his magnificent display at the [VH1 Hip Hop Honors](#).