

The Return of Strictly Rhythm Records!!



After a five year hiatus the label that defined house music throughout the 1990s announces its return to the dance music community with a track forecast to have huge crossover success – Todd Terry All Stars feat Tara McDonald 'Get Down', a cool vocal house track co written with house music heavy weights Kenny Dope, DJ Sneak and Terry Hunter. It features the talents of Tara McDonald, the voice of Armand Van Helden's 'My My My' and Axwell's 'Feel the Vibe'. Already championed by BBC Radio 1's Pete Tong, with two successive week's plays and further initial support by Radio 1Xtra's Aaron Ross. Already an underground club hit due to frequent spins from international Dj's including Dimitri from Paris and Roger Sanchez, this record is sure to grow from the grass roots upward. That is not all. Since Strictly first announced its re-launch in Feb 07 and to date has already notched up over 30,000 downloads of its back catalogue. Now the label switches attention towards brand new productions and signings. "It's not about us doing what Strictly have done, it's about us taking it to the next level," says Simon Dunmore, Strictly A & R.

Strictly's new roster now includes exciting new signings and forthcoming releases from Masters at Work, Quentin Harris, Osunlade Tiefschwarz, Mood II Swing and Grand High Priest. A dedicated website has been built and is ready to go live. www.strictly.com will provide a direct facility to download all Strictly product and will provide all the latest news, information on all new releases and exclusive interviews from classic artists like Roger Sanchez, Erick Morillo & Barbara Tucker. Other features include regular podcasts, videos and a newly designed merchandise range.

About Strictly:

Strictly Rhythm the New York label first opened its doors in 1989 and quickly gained a following among club DJs thanks to a series of high quality underground tracks by the likes of Roger Sanchez, Todd Terry and Kenny Dope. In 1994 Strictly notched up its first crossover hit with Real 2 Real's 'I Like To Move It', a feat it was to repeat throughout the rest of the decade with Wink's 'Higher State of Consciousness', Ultra Nate's 'Free' and Wamdue Project's 'King of My Castle'. In between the hits the label provided a steady output of club tracks by a huge array of respected artists from Barbara Tucker and Masters At Work to Erick Morillo, Josh Wink, Armand Van Helden, Danny Tenaglia, David Morales and DJ Pierre. Almost every house producer of repute who was active in the 1990s is represented in the catalogue. 'I am often quoted saying that Defected aspires to be as revered as Strictly Rhythm was back in the day' says Dunmore. 'The label was the starting point for anybody who is anybody in today's scene, be it as a producer, a dj or a collector; Strictly Rhythm has left on them an indelible mark'.

www.strictly.com

www.myspace.com/strictlyrhythmrecords

Check Out David Banner's New Cartoon "That Crook'd Sipp" on Cartoon Network



New York, NY May 11, 2007 David Banner is set to debut his thought provoking cartoon That Crook'd Sipp this Saturday Night (Sunday morning – May 13th) @ 12:15 AM on the Cartoon Network.

That Crook'd Sipp, loosely based on Banner's life, is about a white family in Mississippi named The Beauregards who are living in Mississippi trapped in the 1800s but actually living in 2007. Virgil, a young progressive black man in Mississippi and the main character, played by Banner, tells the story of the Beauregards through his eyes. Virgil owns the hottest restaurants in the little town called Sweet Tea, Mississippi and has the most controversial group in the South called the Sweet Tea Monsters, who will really release an album as added bonus to the series.

Banner decided to use his home state as the setting of That Crook'd Sipp because "I actually think Mississippi is one of the best states as far as race relations is concerned, because Mississippi is more honest about how they feel about each other. If white folks like you, they really like you and will die for you. If they don't like you, well that's a different story." That Crook'd Sipp deals societal issues of the day and allows me as a rapper to use another avenue to get the word out on issues that they may not have a chance to do through sound recordings," states Banner.

Banner is currently in the studio working on a new album, The Greatest Story Ever Told due out late 2007. He recently had his debut as an actor in the feature film Black Snake Moan alongside Samuel Jackson and Christina Ricci and has been working on a few more movie roles over the past year.

MAYA AZUCENA Releases Sophomore Album “Junkyard Jewel”



New York, NY May 9, 2007 – Critically acclaimed songbird and Purpose Records recording artist Maya Azucena is set to release her sophomore album “Junkyard Jewel” on Tuesday, May 15th. “Junkyard Jewel”, is already creating a huge buzz amongst industry insiders with the release of the title track “Junkyard Jewel” to radio. “The song is just infectious”, says the programmer at WHCR radio.

When singer/songwriter Maya Azucena released her solid, soulfully funky, debut CD, aptly titled Maya Who?!, it was meant to playfully address how many responded to hearing her exotic surname for the first time. However, after hearing her music or seeing her perform that question was quickly spun to echo those keenly wanting to know, who this strikingly talented new artist on the scene was. They were no doubt quick to discover what has been described as her passion, sass and been there authenticity and a voice that’s diva strong and compelling. “I sing what I mean and what I feel from the bottom of my heart,” says Maya with an undeniable tone of sincerity and it undoubtedly comes through in all she does as it has earned her streams of love, admiration, respect and opportunity. CDBaby.com, the well-regarded online music store where Maya’s internationally acclaimed and popular CD remains in the Urban/R&B Top Sellers list, was encouraged to say This soul/R&B/hip hop album is a fantastic launching point for a young woman with a bright and long career ahead of her.

“Junkyard Jewel is album that I can identify with for many reasons, says Maya, one of them being that it is my second-

born and I was able to convey my experiences from the first album, traveling around the world and to where I am now", expresses Maya. The album is fueled by the guitar work of Ver Halen and a solid band consisting of percussionist Ivan Katz, bassist Jason DiMatteo, violinist Tarrah Reynolds and cellist David Gotay. Maya's expressive voice shines in the midtempo "Set You Free", "Runaway Blues" and "Like No Other". Ballads such as "Wash Over" and the title cut "Junkyard Jewel," put Maya's soulful voice above the rest. Her rendition of Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" has been a fan favorite at shows and now, finally recorded, is notable, inspiring and hair-raising.

The attractive Brooklyn , NY native fueled by an obsession for crafting riveting tracks and stirring up faithful audiences with spirited live sets has since taken on "hardest-working" status. Not only has a burgeoning résumé of impressive accomplishments been the result, but also a resounding buzz often reserved for those touted as a star in the making. The range of those accomplishments is a reflection of the truly creative artist she is and the enormous ability she possesses proving the buzz is certainly warranted. AllHipHop.com recently named the one time aspiring actress "Best Alternative Artist of the Year, while Soultracks.com has touted her as a "Best Female Vocalist of the Year" nominee.

Maya Azucena has shared stages or been on bills with legendary artists, vets and newcomers from the worlds of R&B, Soul, Hip Hop, Jazz, Rock and more. Artists such as Roberta Flack, Bilal, Martin Luther, Jaguar Wright, Joss Stone, Leon Ware, Richard Bona, Lupe Fiasco, Big Daddy Kane, the Isley Brothers, Gladys Knight, Anthony Hamilton, Platinum Pied Pipers, and John Legend. In addition to crisscrossing the US with riveting performances she's toured cities in Canada, Italy, England as well as Stockholm, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Croatia where Croatian superstar, Gibonni enlisted Maya's vocal talents for a track on his latest CD named, "Andejo U Tebia" ("Angel In

You"). As a result their collaboration garnered 2 Croatian Grammy awards and a stellar performance at the televised ceremony.

Maya is also featured on Grammy-winning producer/songwriter and son of the legendary Bob Marley, Stephen Marley's track, "Let Her Dance" , from his latest Universal/Tuff Gong release Mind Control. Maya currently has the #3 spot on BILLBOARD'S Hot Dance chart with the single, "Make It Happen" on Kult Records. And there is still a long list of collaborations with notable producers such as Devo, Springsteen, Rich Medina, DJ Bob Sinclair and Jonathan Peters, among others. In addition to her voice grabbing your attention through national NAIR commercials in "The Less You Wear" campaign and others for Icy Hot, Macy's INC, Mike's Hard Lemonade and Longhorn Steakhouse, Maya is an activist in her own right. She has sung on Washington DC 's historic Mall at the Save Darfur rally against genocide in the Sudan , in solidarity with national activists and celebrities such as Barack Obama, Al Sharpton, and George Clooney.

All that Maya Azucena has done thus far is indeed impressive. Not merely by the amount of things there are, but because of the realization of something taking place that means far more to her. That something is growth. On the back cover of her debut CD she then wrote, "I am a work in progress." This was both a refreshing and revealing statement. For one, she was being incredibly modest for even then she displayed great ability, poise and professionalism that immediately hoisted her among the premiere artists to watch on the soul scene. But it was also a declaration from the start that she is a sincere, creative artist first, driven by the desire to move an audience emotionally and physically – challenging herself each time to explore ways to do it differently- do it better.

ARE YOU READY TO EXPLORE THE "JEWEL" THAT IS HIDDEN INSIDE?

* Song collaboration with Croatian Superstar, Gibonni, just

won 2 Porin (Croatian Grammys), (April 23, 2007) in the category of Best Song Collaboration and Song of The Year for "Angel In You" (Andeo U Tebi).

- * "Make It Happen" holds the #3 spot w/ a bullet on Billboard Hot Dance Chart.

- * Maya Azucena's cameo appearance on NBC's comedy 30 Rock, featuring Tina Fey, Alec Baldwin, Tracy Morgan and Special Guest LL Cool J. Maya's indie music video, TOO MUCH, directed by Jason Fisher, was posted on a large flat screen TV in a scene that takes place backstage at the SOURCE Awards with the captions: BEST MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR – MAYA AZUCENA.

- * Maya's vocals were chosen for the recent JOHNSON & JOHNSON and NAIR National TV/Radio campaign (currently airing now).

- * Song collaboration with Stephen Marley, "Let Her Dance", is generating huge buzz at radio.

- * Best Female Vocalist of the Year nominee – Soul Tracks Readers Choice Awards

- * Best Alternative Artist of the Year WINNER – AllHipHop.com

See Maya here: [read more](#)

Happy Birthday James!