



The Future is NOW

BY DAVID A. M. GOLDFARB

My wife tells me stories of growing up on Oahu when plugging into the burgeoning global multiculture of the 1980s meant depending on expensive imported records and magazines, as well as a primitive social network of friends and cousins that circulated photocopies, clippings and dubbed cassettes. 21st century youth in Hawaii have no such limitations, for the internet has absolutely transformed what it means to grow up here.

In Honolulu, these transformations are more visible in urban arts and lifestyle centers like Chinatown and Kaka'ako. But even on Maui, a place shaped by a slower-flowing aggregate of Native Hawaiian culture, plantation economies, haole migrations, local "Island Style," and Hollywood expatriate wealth, the energies of electronic culture throb, strobe and rumble. The Maui Arts & Cultural Center has extended its reach to embrace those for whom terms like "drop," "epic," and "fire" (not to mention untranslatable emojis) are currency when applied to the way that a stratospheric arpeggiating synthesizer run can take a vertiginous plunge into Marianas-deep caverns of bass and reverb.

Part of a general trend of established "grown up" cultural institutions collaborating with more nimble communities of promoters and DJs, the MACC has not only hosted internationally-recognized EDM (Electronic Dance Music) acts but supported the local scene through successful events featuring local DJs and producers. Their themed ArT=Mixx events not only feature EDM DJs but stage multi-media collaborative affairs that feature interactive art, performance, tied into a Schaefer Gallery experience. Those who have seen a "full-on" EDM concert with a sea of bodies moving in sync to lights and rhythms will appreciate the way that organizers at the MACC have successfully adapted that spirit of unity and optimism



to local conditions. Other readers may have to tap their fond memories of peak experiences with psychedelic rock to understand what "the kids" are hearing or feeling in the tracks and DJ mixes of acts like Canada's Adventure Club, Tritonal of Austin, Texas and L.A.-based Steve Aoki.

The MACC has seen a tremendous audience response, and they have willingly jumped into the at-times treacherous flows of social media in their efforts to cross-promote and document EDM events on Maui. Perhaps their greatest success is marked by the simple emergence of "buzz" on channels like Facebook and Twitter in the anticipation of the arrival of superstar DJ

and producer Diplo. This Mississippi-born white kid has attained global status for circulating the underground electronic sounds of the American South, England, Jamaica, and Brazil. The MACC delivered his animated surrealist backdrops and the depth charge bass, tooth-shaking drones, rattling snares and stuttering vocal samples that seem to define our sonic moment.

As an outgrowth of the MACC's established track record of bringing diverse, innovative and top-quality talent to Maui, the institution's involvement with Electronic Dance Music and its artists seems to me entirely appropriate. The best of what makes the internet work comes from the productive mingling of ways of doing, hearing and seeing "this" with ways of wearing, making and performing "that." The MACC has managed to embody a bit of the Net, thereby ensuring that local communities (particularly Millennials) can enjoy, participate in and speak back to an ever-accelerating Global Culture.