



13th Son & MC Brass

22/01/05, Riverside Theatre, Paramatta.

13th Son, MC Brass, Tony Mitchell, Nick Keys.

Summary:

“We were all from the west, like greater west, out from the Hawkesbury area, and so it’s like the very fringe of the metropolitan area of western Sydney. And that’s where we were from and that’s where we represented, that’s what we were all about.” [13th Son]

We spoke to the Upshot MCs 13th Son and Brass backstage at the Parramatta Riverside Theatre. It was to be Upshot’s last show together, and Brass and 13th Son reflected back on their time as MCs in the live instrumental hip-hop set up of the band. Both MCs also talked a length about the personal hip-hop history; for 13th Son, the meeting of fellow hip-hop lovers through a concert band at the age of 12 which eventually grew into the group Fathom. For Brass, it was his connection with Def Wish Cast’s Sereck and the western Sydney scene, a connection which grew into Celsius (which is Sereck and Brass). Both spoke about the strength of the western Sydney scene and their identification with it.

About:

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13: 13th Son

B: Brass MC

TM: Tony Mitchell

NK: Nick Keys

TM: Let's start off by talking about Fathom, back in the day.

13: Oh, OK, if you want to go all the way back. That started when I was – I can actually tell you the moment, the actual inception of the whole thing – I was 12-years-old and I was in New Zealand with the other two members of Fathom, and at this point we didn't even have a name. We all knew each other because we were part of a concert band, the Hawkesbury History Concert Band. I used to play the saxophone, the other member, WhyBurn used to play the trumpet and our third member OnTheDawn used to play percussion. So we all met each other and we realised that we all loved hip-hop and we were really into it, and then in 92 we went on a two-week tour of New Zealand, and while we were overseas we just said 'Hey look, we all love this hip-hop thing and we're all into it,' – I had been into to rapping since I was ten – we said 'Well, when we get back to Australia, let's start, let's make a crew'. WhyBurn said, 'I've got sampling software on my computer and we can play around and make some beats and things'. So we said, 'Right, cool, when we get back to Australia, let's get into it'. You know, we were schoolkids, just full of enthusiasm and wanting to do it, and didn't really know much about 'the scene' at that time. As soon as we got back we cranked it out, got into it, started making things, and in the beginning we called ourselves Industrial Dispute and we started working on some material, we got some really, you know, pretty good gigs for that period. Being like 12-years-old, we got some gigs doing like school discos and things like that. And we recorded a demo and we later found out that it was at the studio where Def Wish Cast recorded at, and they heard some of our stuff and thought it was pretty cool. And then, through that connection, and through another connection at school – where this girl who was a friend of mine, her cousin knew DJ Mime – we ended up hooking up and eventually we got some really good gigs. When I was 14 we got our first big gig at the Pavilion – before it was full of pokie machines – and we got to play with Def Wish Cast, 046, and DJ A.S.K was there, and that was the beginning of it all. We sort of started to make a name for ourselves, doing lots of gigs, and then about 95/96 we went through a reinvention of ourselves, and renamed ourselves Fathom. We did lots of gigs around that time, lots of really good stuff, and worked on a new tape or a new album, and that's the one that you have. We recorded that in 96 and it came out in early 97, and yeah, we steadily worked on more stuff, and we actually recorded one last EP, it was called *The Bandhigh Lumberjack's EP* and that was due to come out around 99 or so, but for personal reasons, everyone sort of went their own ways and the group disbanded around 98. That's when I took the step to become a solo artist, and I worked more closely with Sereck [*from Def Wish Cast*] and did my solo EP, *Always*, which dropped in about 2000.

TM: What's the significance of the name 13th Son?

13: The significance is that – it sort of starts from the other member OnTheDawn from Fathom – because he used to call me 13th Son because my birthday was on the 13th of December, so he used to call me that, just mucking around, and I thought to take it on as a name. Because when I first started as a kid, I used to call myself Dr. D, and you know, it's a pretty cheesy sort of name, so I wanted to come up with something a bit more original, and 13th Son sort of stuck.

TM: And Fathom had a very western Sydney orientation didn't they? References to the west and so forth?

13: That's right, and well, because we were all from the west, like greater west, out from the Hawkesbury area, and so it's like the very fringe of the metropolitan area of western Sydney. And that's where we were from and that's where we represented, that's what we were all about.

TM: What's your ethnic background?

13: South American. And that plays a lot of importance for my rhymes, and my point of reference in a lot of things. I'm from Native American heritage, and that's really important to me, and you'll find on the cover of that Fathom tape, there is a picture of a South American textile from my ancestral background. So we used that as a front cover.

TM: Which country in South America?

13: Colombia. Yeah, so for me, that has a lot of significance, and even right up until now and forever it will. It's an important part of who I am as a person.

TM: Can you speak Spanish?

13: No, I don't. Actually, I'm adopted, so I was brought here when I was just six-weeks-old.

TM: Have you ever attempted to explore your Spanish background or learn Spanish or anything like that?

13: Not just yet. I mean, I've explored my background, but things like learning Spanish takes time, and it's time that I don't have. You know, I work nine to five, five days a week and whatever spare time I have I dedicate to music, and then I've got to fit my family and friends in sometime around that.

TM: Let's get onto you Brass; I know that you're also in Celsius with Sereck.

B: Yeah, that was probably the beginning for me. Before that I started with Sinus – who also appears on the Celsius record – and he was sort of a friend from school, so I started with him. You know, we used to do similar things, just go into talent quests, and we did a lot of youth projects where we'd play shows in shopping malls and things like that. That was probably around 94 to 96, and before that I was heavily into Motley Crew and Faith No More and a lot of that sort of stuff. So I never really grew up on the old-school hip-hop tip, as in NWA and things, the first stuff I really heard was probably A Tribe Called Quest, Black Sheep and Leaders in the New School. So that stuff pulled me in, and from there I was reading cult magazines cause I was really into graffiti – not that I ever did it apart from a paintbrush, 'cause I never really knew anyone. But I was really into it, and my dad used to buy me magazines of graffiti, and I'd see Def Wish Cast and spin out on their unique pieces and their tight pieces. And then yeah, one time Sinus turned up at school, cause he was a lot more hairy than most of us, and he got into the clubs and he ran into Sereck out there and found out about a couple of shows that he was putting on that we should go to. So I went along to – probably about 95 or something like that – and that was when I first met Paul [Westgate, aka Sereck], and he got me up on stage and we did a few different things and yeah, I just started to get in touch with him and he started to show me the scene. So he introduced me to what was actually happening here, where before I was wondering 'how do I find it?' So that was my first step. So then I disappeared for a bit, I was at school doing my HSC. I went through a bunch of stuff there, and one day I just sort of rung him up [Sereck] out of the blue, and it was probably about six months since I'd spoken to him, he was a bit shocked that I still thought about him, and showed the initiative to come back. I was still doing stuff that whole time; we just hadn't been in touch. So, he put me on at a big show at Kinsellas – it was the last show at Kinsellas, called Contents Under Pressure – and had my name on the bill, at the time it was Brass Knuckles, and that's really cheesy to me now as well.

13: Hey, we were all into the cheese.

B: Yeah, I mean I was into jujitsu martial arts, and I'd been doing it for a long time, and I used to wear a lot of rings, and it sort of fitted in with something that sounded sort of tough and was hip-hop. So we did this show, and there was like 500 people, it was massive, I'd never seen anything like that.

Before that I'd played at Black Market when I was underage, and did a show, that was pretty terrible. But this show was huge and I got up on stage alongside Sereck, and we weren't Celsius then, but we'd worked on stuff together. Yeah, it was just a really big night, and from there it sort of just kicked off. We worked on the first record and released a bunch of things, we did the *Basic Equipment* vinyl for the documentary, and that was probably my first release ever, and that was in 98. And we did that song, and that was the first Celsius song, which evolved into the first Celsius album, which came out in 2000. So yeah, that's where I learnt most of my recording and stage presence, that's where it was built. Before that it was just a lot of sort of street performance and you know, getting up and doing anything really. But that's where my whole style really evolved, in that period there, sort of 96 to 98. So we released the first record, and it went really well, and we had a really great cover – Dash from Perth did all that – this massive texta mural painting, of sun gods and all that. And from there, Sereck went back into Def Wish Cast and I sort of went on my own path. I did some solo projects, and released two seven-inch vinyls, and sort of took on some band things as well, I worked with Sinus again, doing stuff on the side all the time. And yeah, we put this whole band thing together to play those vinyls live for a launch. That was really cool, just to get in and work with live musicians – I found I got a lot out of it. Being in Celsius there was only two of us, and we were playing the Metro a lot, so I learnt to use the stage by myself, without a band. But then to get up with the band was just such a different feel. And from there is where we moved through Upshot, and they were a like a band coming into the scene, looking for different MCs. They had Sleeping Monk, and he was their main vocalist, and at shows they'd invite other MCs to get up with them, so they called myself and Sereck and a bunch of other guys...

13: ...I got up for a couple of them.

B: Yeah, you might have got up for a couple of them; it was a bunch of different guys. And then Quro, who was always one of the ones getting up, started to take over as the leading vocalist. Raul [Sleeping Monk] then also moved on, and that's where I sort of came into the picture, as the second vocalist in the band. And from there, it just sort of stuck. It was great; it was something new, playing with a live band. I mean, I was juggling two groups and they were two completely different things. Last year I was doing two records, one with Celsius and the other with Upshot, and I was recording them at exactly the same time, and it was so different. It was like switching my personality to match what I was doing, and that was cool, it took a lot of focus. I think with Upshot I developed a lot more, having to play live on stage, and getting things together, working on songs that I'd never really thought about before, you know, they gave me a couple of beats. They gave me one that they'd shown a few MCs and no one could sort of rap on it, and you know, I'm a little bit cocky when it comes to things like that, so I said 'Give it to me, I can fix that up'.

TM: Is this mainly how you work with Upshot, in that they'll give you a track, and you'll write over the top?

13: Maybe for Brass. For me it's sort of been more about fitting in with what they have already established, and because at the moment I'm working on a solo album, I had some ideas and some songs that I worked on that could be re-interpreted as live tracks and brought that to the group. But my sort of interaction with the group is sort of different from Brass's.

B: Yeah, at first, it was like that for me too. Everything was already written, so I was backing up on Quro's songs. But then, as I made my place, we worked on songs for me as well. So yeah, you start that way and once you have sort of moulded into the band, and have got your place, you just become another musician in the band. Now it's a bit different, this is our last show with Upshot.

NK: Is it?

- B:** Yeah, we broke up last week. Everyone is sort of going in their own direction. It's more for travel reasons; people are leaving and things like that. So this is our last show tonight.
- 13:** Yeah, so we're going to go out with a bit of a bang. And Brass and I are going to start working on a side project, on an album, so I'm pretty excited about getting that going. It's not really Upshot though, it's another thing.
- TM:** So Upshot is really just a stage on the journey?
- 13:** I guess you could look at it like that.
- B:** Yeah, I mean, I always thought that they came into the scene, and they were Upshot, and we were the MCs. And even up till now, when it's featuring MCs blah blah blah, it's not necessarily Upshot with us on it. And as much as it's all good, and there's no hard feelings or anything like that, it's just how it always seemed, you know.
- 13:** I see it as almost like a stepping-stone, because I've always wanted to work with Brass, on a track or whatever. But now I've been working with him on stage, and now I get to do an album with him, it's like, it's perfect, and it's awesome. It's what I always wanted to do, and now I get to do it.
- B:** And also with what you were saying about do they just show us the music and we write to it. It's like that, I've found over time, the people I've done music with, even with Sereck, we don't write half of our lyrics in the same room at the same time, but what we're going on about, and the feeling we have, it just all gels. So I've never really had a problem writing to any of the Upshot music, or the Celsius music, or any of them MCs that I work with, because they are my favourite artists. So I've never had the problem of trying to fit what I do with it, so yeah, it just all naturally moulds together. Say with the new Celsius record, we recorded eight songs in eight weeks, which was so quick, and then it took a year to do the other two. But the way it all happened was just so natural, we didn't force anything, we weren't trying to make any sound, and we weren't trying to sell it or the idea of Celsius to any new records people. It sort of got to the ears of some people, and hence Crookneck took it on and released it for us, which was great. But we never really did it to sell, but it got to the point where we should of maybe, and it was like 'oh shit, how are we going to try and get this on the radio?', 'cause it's actually really heavy compared to the first record. So that was a weird step, so we're going to go through a new phase, now that we've got that off our chest, and now we're in the mode where we're making more viable music, just to have fun to, because that's where we're at. We're ready to just have a good time – and that was a really heavy last album, because that's what we wanted to do at the time, but now that's gone – let's just party. So that's where the new Celsius is going, and Paul's got Def Wish Cast, so Celsius is looking to focus more on me as the MC and Paul in the background, doing the beats. But I know when we start making it he will want to jump on every track, but he says at the moment he wants to sit back and do the music only. But so that's a change in itself as well, and the new stuff that myself and Dario [13th Son] are doing is a whole completely new thing again, that we've never done before.
- 13:** And a completely new sound for both of us as well. Something new for us to explore and it's good, I'm really excited about it too.
- NK:** Are you guys producing it as well?
- 13:** No.
- B:** At the moment what we've got is other members and associates producing most of it, but I think it sounds like the guideline for all of us getting in together and really working on it. I'd like to focus a lot on song structure, that's something that I think we need to look at, especially with Upshot; somehow the song structure is never there. So that's something more what I'd like to do.

TM: So, it is going to be 13th Son and Brass, or do you have...

B: No, it will probably just be a band name or a group. We're yet to sort of think it through...

13: It's all very embryonic at this stage.

TM: With Upshot it seems to me that one of the models for the band is The Roots; their kind of live jazz thing..

B: They [the band] love The Roots.

13: I don't know about you [Brass], but my model never really was The Roots. I mean, that might really be the core root of the band, but I'm just a MC and I do what I do, and I've done it for a long time, and now I've been given the opportunity to rap with a live band, so I just take that opportunity and run with it. It's not like I'm thinking that I want to be like Black Thought, it's just that it's what I do.

TM: You bring your own idiosyncratic style to the band.

13: Yep.

B: It's really hard. People ask me what's its like, and I couldn't say that it's like The Roots, because I don't think it is.

TM: Well I guess it's a convenient way of pigeonholing it.

B: I feel that definitely within the band themselves; they get a lot of influence from The Roots, in terms of what they like, but not necessarily about how they play.

TM: And then they got the guy to master it.

B: Yeah, that's mainly because they want the sound of that album; they love the sound of that album.

NK: Which album?

B: The Roots album.

13: Yeah they got Tom Point to master it. And if you can afford it, why not? He's good at what he does.

B: Yeah it's good. But I'm a little bit biased, because if it's not mixed that well, then it doesn't matter who masters it. Yeah, I think just as good a job could have been done here, I think more time should have been spent on mixing. And you know, I didn't sit in on any of it, and that's the way it goes, there's always something you can say about it, and I think it's cool, but there's probably a lot of things I wouldn't have done to the effects on the vocals.

TM: There's also this sense to Upshot that the main drive is the live performance, rather than the album.

B: Yeah, I've always found the live show always sounds so much bigger than when we record. When I lay vocals down they just seem so empty, when I'm recording with Upshot in the studio, and it just comes across so differently to when I'm doing stuff with Celsius. But then the live show with Upshot is great, and if everyone's fully into the show then it's all happening and it can be one of the biggest experiences. Yeah, it's such a completely different thing I noticed with the recording and the live performance. I haven't really listened to the album, you know what I mean. I think there are some really cool crews on there, but I think the vocals ruin it half the time. I think Quro does a top job, I think he's great, the songs he does are great – I'm talking from the album that's released, not the new stuff.

TM: You were trying something quite different with 'Breathe'?

B: Yeah, 'Breathe'. That was probably the most gruelling track I've ever done.

NK: Was that the backwards one?

B: Yeah, the second verse is the first verse, word for word, in reverse. So I'm reading it backwards. So I spent four weeks, everyday, just training for it. At home, just rapping for hours on end to get it down and tight. And I was losing my voice everyday and it was really crazy. And then I went in and laid it down on record in like an hour and a half and I thought, 'wow, that's probably the best thing I've ever laid down.' Because I really worked very hard for it and to this day I don't think I've laid anything down as tight as that.

TM: Do you still do that live?

B: I haven't done it for a long time, but we might do it tonight. We haven't done it since Dario's [13th Son] been here because we've got all these new songs and the old ones get pushed aside. But it's the last show, so maybe we should do it, and no one's played it forever, and it's just a weird time. And that's the song that they gave me and said, 'Look, we've given it to all these MCs and none of them can do it,' and I said 'Yeah, I'll give it a go'. So yeah, it's not necessarily what I'm talking about, but more what I'm doing with the structure of the words. I like to get into that, because I write a lot of poetry as well. I've got three solid books of just verse and verse. I write everyday you know. Writing is just my thing, I don't read, I don't do anything but write, constantly. And I think I'd like to spend more time getting into other musical areas, learning to play an instrument, but I just can't put the pen down. Yeah, so 'Breathe' was a very hard track for me, and it's very hard to do live, and I think I've pulled it off perfect once. Because on the actual recording it's recorded in two or three sections. I think they killed it with vocal effects, it's just flooded with effects, yeah, you know, they're coming up with a sound, but they got some cheap dude in Guildford to mix the album, I don't know...

NK: The politics of mixing.

TM: Better not to talk about it!

B: Yeah, so he didn't really know what he was on about. But yeah, it's cool, I still think it's a good record, I just... Upshot's very cool; it's very different from Celsius that's for sure. I can get up and play with them and play for two hours and still have my voice, but I get up with Celsius for half an hour and I'm going to die. So, I guess we got seven guys, so I don't have to do as much, I don't have to run around and entertain everyone, I can just slot in and give six other guys a go. So yeah, it's forever moving. I'm looking at hopefully getting overseas this year, mid-year, and just really get out there and do something. I don't know if just being here is enough for what I want to do, I'm really trying to expand on that, and bring it back. There's a guy, Muskrat from Adelaide, and just to see the difference after he came back [from overseas], just how he did shows, it was unbelievable. He was up here on everyone else. His performance...

TM: I remember going to his launch, I think it was 99.

B: Yeah, it would have been a while ago. Yeah, I remember when he doing his early stuff and all that, and he was cool, and he was on a great level, but then he went overseas and was just doing shows and playing along side some great artists. And then he come back, and it was just 'wow, who's this?' you really noticed the difference.

TM: He's another person who's associated with Quoro isn't he? He was in Reference Point, or the Fuglemen?

B: Yeah, I think he did all the Fuglemen stuff. Reference Point, um, yeah he might have been in that. They do a lot of things. Quoro is very loose with what he does when he works; he gets a whole col-

lection of people together. Yeah, that's how I am with Sinus. We've got our Cyclic Macho Distorter, which is pretty much just noise, and started off at home on my 8-track. And you know, we have a lot of acoustic guitar melody, and a lot of keys involved. And we did this project; I got this old footage of Sydney that my grandparents had filmed of the Opera House and that. All silent pictures, and we wrote a score to it. It went for about half an hour. We did a show with Realistics and all that from Explanetary, and yeah, we screened the film and played all the music to it live behind the screens. And doing things like that is unbelievable, writing music to pictures. That's why I think it's great, some guys have the idea that it has to be a perfect packaged CD, or a vinyl that looks like it needs to go on the shelf, where as, I just want to make music and if people did it then that's great, whether it comes out on cassette tape doesn't bother me. Paul [Sereck] also just orchestrated the score to a short film, being screened in February. It's great, he wrote the whole thing. Yep, I don't know, there's just so much you can do. I've found within Australian hip-hop, it's all very limited. And I've copped a lot of flak for what I wear and how I rap, instead of talking about the usual 'straight out of Wentworth' bullshit. I got hit in the head with a bottle while I was on stage and it's things like that. You know, and it's cool, because it changed so many people's attitudes that night because I didn't stop, I kept going. I had big bikies from Adelaide with shaved heads and big beards who were at the start of the night going 'Oh, who's this fucking faggot, wearing this on stage', you know, 'cause I wear whatever I want, and they were coming up at the end of the night going 'Mate, thank you, you broadened our minds with a lot of things'. You know, hip-hop to me is something that doesn't necessarily have boundaries, and it evolves on being innovative and creative, yet, if you're not wearing baggy jeans and a baseball cap, you're not hip-hop. So it's really confusing.

- 13:** The thing is like, if Brass comes out there and he looks like what he does, but he gets up there and he's got the skills, then fuck them. That's basically it. That's what it comes down to, skills, and if you can represent with those skills, then it doesn't matter how you look or whatever, it's like 'Fuck, I just burnt you dude, doesn't matter what I look like'. And that's what he does.
- B:** It's such a great style, or type of music, whatever you want to call it, for the underdog. 'Cause if they get in there and practice their art and get good at what they do, then they are ready to take on anyone. And they can get up there and they could have been the kid at school who everyone threw shit at his whole life, or robbed for his lunch money everyday. You know, at the end of the day, you can get up and take out anyone with the best hat or the best sneakers on. Yeah, it's a really weird sort of thing, as much as I love it; I hate it at the same time. It's crazy like that, and I guess it made me into who I am today, so we all get here somehow.
- 13:** I guess we exist within that paradigm, but we try to push it in ways that we can, you doing Macho Distorter or your seven-inches, me doing Humanoid with WhyBurn and that, and I do that, but I'm not going to try and let that restrict me if I want to rap about this or that, or whatever music I want to play. What it comes down to is: if I'm feeling it, then basically that's it. I'm making music that I want to hear, first and foremost, and secondly, if other people are going to like it then great, because I have a product that can sell and I can have a fan base. But basically, I rap because I love to rap, I use it as a way to vent things, get shit off my chest, I use it as a way to impress people, I use it as a way to piss people off. It's just what I do, I can't imagine not rapping. For one period of my life I almost gave it up, and I look back at that and think it's crazy that I ever thought about not doing it because I'm probably going to do it for the rest of my life, and it's what I do. And if people don't like that, if people don't think I fit in with their paradigm, then fuck them, because I am hip-hop, and I know where I came from, and I know how I came up, and I going to rap and do what I want to do, and that's how it is.
- TM:** So there are too many rules and regulations and by laws and gatekeepers who are trying to...
- 13:** ...There's too many pseudo-rappers.

- B:** For such an open, take-from-everywhere sort of art, it's weird. It can bring out the best in so many people, but it also holds a lot of people down.
- NK:** That happens when people care about things very strongly, though. When they've been doing something so intensely and then someone comes along and says something that is outside their paradigm, then people are sensitive about things that are close to their heart.
- B:** And they clash.
- 13:** And to be honest. I'm guilty of that as well. As much as I might think crazy shit, I'm still a biased purist in that sense, too. So who am I to say shit when I still wear that cap as well?
- TM:** Is there a sense that there is that there is a lack of opportunity in Australian hip-hop, like, because there is very little infrastructure in terms of industrial support, and it's hard to do what you've got to do?
- B:** I find there's different ways. I could probably quit my job, and just scrape by on the music. And it's pretty good to be in the hip-hop scene, because you know, you get flights and put up in hotels down in Melbourne. And I have mates in bands who bust their arse and get paid jack shit. But at the same time, I think, yeah, the radios are taking stuff on; the labels are taking things on. But I just wonder about the big labels and what we could actually get out of it and how much are you going to owe them.
- NK:** At what cost to the culture?
- B:** And when they get sick of you, you are not just going to be able to walk away. You know, they are signing these people like Figgkidd, and you're sitting there going, 'Well, what's going on?' They are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on him. I just recorded a track with my friend DJ C-f, who DJs clubs now, he does all the big clubs and cool man, he's getting paid to DJ, that's his job, and he's releasing his album and he asked me to rap and we're old mates, so why not. Figgkidd's on one of the tracks, and he thought it would be interesting to put him on there, and me on there and see what the difference is. And he was working with this Figgkidd guy, and he got cut from the record and all this shit, blah blah blah. But I look at these things and think, 'These major labels, they want to take on these Aussie rappers and mimic American stuff'. They've got him rapping like Eminem, or whatever you want to say and the choruses sound exactly like [what] N.E.R.D. are doing. It's just a total rip off. He's not going to sell here, or there, because he's not American, and no one in Australia is going to give a shit, and...
- TM:** Well, we were saying before, with Brethren, he's already kind of been ostracised from the scene.
- 13:** Yeah and he says it himself, I've spoken to the dude. He says, well 'I'm not Australian hip-hop, I'm pop rap,' and he was quite upfront and honest with me, he said 'I respect what you guys do, I think it's great, but that's not me'. And I'm like, 'OK, I'll respect you for your honesty and where you come from, and you know where you are, and you know your place in things'.
- B:** He says it in his songs even, 'everybody in the hip-hop scene hates me', and all this stuff. But at the end of the day, if that's what they want to do [Sony] then why don't they go and pick up an American artist and actually make so money, 'cause that's all they are trying to do.
- 13:** Brass is right. The Australian music industry doesn't have any idea. They are only beginning to have an idea. This year was the first year we had an Urban Music category in the ARIAs, and thank god Koolism won it.
- B:** I don't know how they did.

- 13:** Because if anyone else did – I mean, they won on their own merit, and that’s fucking great – but as an extension of that win it was like a win for all of us, it was like a coup for the whole scene. They’re independent, they’re our mates, we know them personally, and they’re from the same sort of scene, and they won. It’s like, ‘you haven’t just won for yourself, you’ve won for all of us’.
- TM:** And Danielsan actually said that didn’t he, ‘this is for the whole of the Australian hip-hop scene’.
- 13:** And he said something to the effect of, ‘this isn’t for the guys who rap in American accents and things, this is for us’. And that made my day.
- TM:** Well, it was a great moment.
- 13:** I think the industry is starting to evolve an urban category now, and the industry is starting to be a few more magazines now. I mean, *Stealth* magazine has always been there, and now we’ve got some of the major publishing companies, like Derwent and Howard have *Urban Hits* magazine, and Next Media have got *Urban Beats* magazine, and they cover a lot of local stuff, as well as a lot of overseas stuff. But these are these magazines sponsored by major publishing houses that are tackling our culture, and putting us to the forefront a little more. I think we’ve got a long way to go but...
- B:** It just seems to me that it’s who you know, and who your mates are, and if they work for the mags, and you’re already chummy with all them then you’re going to get the big spreads. And if you’re not [in with them] and they’re not invited to your thing then they are not going to help you out. And it’s like we’ll still pay to get in for shows, I don’t expect to get in for free. If someone invites me, that’s great, but I’m here to support, and if they invite me, then I’ll buy your shirt and your CD. I’m the first person, if I hear something great, [to] buy it. The only thing I ever hear is, ‘get me a few copies of those’, it’s like, ‘what, I don’t pay lots of money to get you new shit, if you want I’ll just take you down and buy you a new jacket. I may as well, it’s the same thing’.
- TM:** Well, it’s about supporting.
- B:** That’s the only way it happens. You got guys down in the south selling millions of records who haven’t even been heard of in New York, and they are multi-millionaires, why, because everyone in their suburb, their area is buying their record. Now, if Australian hip-hop was like American hip-hop where every kid in every school was into it, and buying every CD that comes out, then everyone would be rich. But it just isn’t like that, it’s a very rock-based country, it’s a very sport-based country.
- NK:** And the industry is so slow and crap.
- B:** Man, it is the slowest. And one day it will probably get the point – I don’t think it will in my lifetime...