

Music and Movement

Building Connection with Music

Beginnings

The History of Music and Movement

Music and Movement was born out of a collective love and admiration for music. The concept itself grew out of a conversation on a December night in 2003 among a group of soon-to-be friends who all met for the first time at a small house party in Oakland, California. The topic of conversation concerned the state of hip hop music and all musical genres in general. The group saw hip hop as a form of social, political, economic and cultural expression that from its beginning captured and distilled much of American society in the voices of a group of young people who often enjoy the least of America's benefits. But the conversation turned into a somber reflection. Because it was universally agreed among the group that hip hop has gradually lost its way, and become emblematic of corporate commercialism that has stripped it of its indigenous moorings in the strivings of real people, with real lives, and real voices. The same crisis is afflicting several other musical genres as well because the meaningful songs that can move and inspire us, no matter what category they fall into, are becoming harder and harder to find. As we pondered the state of music in our lives the conversation drifted into a discussion of Jazz. One right after

What is Music and Movement?

Music and Movement is a social innovation. It's a new way for people to come together to share music with each other. It can transform any regular party into a novel social occasion where sharing a little bit of yourself in the music you love turns an afternoon or evening into a one-of-a-kind experience.

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another, each member of the conversation threw out a favorite artist: Coltrane, Miles, Billie, Bird, Ella, Louis...and on and on. The conversation became electrified by some collective energy to share something about ourselves by the favorite jazz artists we liked. In that moment we became more than just fans of music, we became participants in it. It didn't require that we know how to play an instrument, or be able to carry a tune. It only

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required that we use the music to say a little bit about ourselves as well as about each other. From that one insight, a group of strangers energized by thirty minute conversation decided to meet again and share at least two songs with each other. It didn't matter the genre, artist, decade, or language. It only mattered that the song said a little something about us and our reflection on the world.

The group that began that conversation in 2003 would become fast friends as a conversation transformed into reality and became the beginnings of what is now Music and Movement. Music and Movement had its first meeting in January 2004. It has met 18 times since then; has amassed more than 350 members; has shared more than 550 songs from across genres, cultures, languages, and borders; has hosted a political fundraiser for a Music and Movement member who succeeded in gaining elected office; and has spawned independent chapters in Sacramento, Boston, and New York. Music and movement is only in its infancy, but the power of great music and the attraction of creative, intelligent and thoughtful people will no doubt truly make it a movement in your life as well.

Motivation

Why Music and Movement?

- ❖ Turns any type of party into a unique social gathering that

draws in the wallflowers and excites the music aficionados.

- ❖ Creates a new venue for music appreciation that invites discussion.
- ❖ Political issues are frequently the fare of discussion.
- ❖ Provides people a non-threatening way to share something important about themselves with friends and soon-to-be-friends.

Music and Movement simply opens doors of conversation and creates a sense of familiarity that invites people to confidently share who they are by sharing something they enjoy about a favorite song.

Basic Format of a Music and Movement Meeting

The basic format for an M&M meeting works like this:

- ✓ "Bring food and/or drink and a song to share.
- ✓ Log your name, e-mail and song information on a sign-up sheet.
- ✓ Hang with your fellow music hounds.
- ✓ When you feel the vibe, hand a CD to the DJ; talk about the song you're about to share.
- ✓ Play the song.
- ✓ Kick back, mingle and repeat. As a bonus, all songs are loaded in iTunes and logged as a kind of musical minutes for the meeting. Whoever shows up to the next event gets those songs on a souvenir disc"

Quoted from Chris Macias, "All In Tune", Sacramento Bee

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Implementation: Respect the Music

How a Music and Movement Meeting is Done

Organizing a Meeting

Using the web and email can make it easy to organize an M&M event. An organizer can send out emails inviting people to attend, and guests can RSVP to the organizers through a couple of good websites below:

- Evite (www.evite.com)
- Meetup.com (www.meetup.com)

The Invitation

Each person is invited to play two songs that they enjoy with the group. It's good to have the meeting a regularly scheduled day of the week at least once-a-month.

Ask People to bring their songs on a CD, preferably a burned CD with only the song contributions.

Spreading the Word

After you start having regular meetings, **create a blog** ("weblog") to let the world know about your Music and Movement chapter. You can use a service like Blogger (www.blogger.com) that allows you to easily set up a blog. Take photos of your meetings and post them to your blog along with commentary about the meetings. Invite others to comment as well. Also, create a list-serv using a service like Google

Groups (www.googlegroups.com) or Yahoo Groups (www.yahooglegroups.com)

Make it a Potluck

A Music & Movement meeting is like a potluck of music, but it can't help you when you're thirsty or your stomach starts grumbling. Ask guests to bring drinks and food to suit the occasion. In the spring and summer, it's usually something to throw on the grill. In the winter, it can be a bowl of hot wings or a tofu. Whatever works?

While these music selections are playing, the gathering is also usually accompanied by food (usually BBQ), drinks of various kinds, and an assortment of whatever goodies serves the vibe of the group.

Hosting Conducting a Meeting

Location and Timing

Typically begin in the afternoon or early evening on a Saturday (but timing and location can certainly vary to fit your situation)

Starting the Meeting

Introduce the M&M Meeting and describe briefly what it is, explain the process (i.e. sign-up for a song, and

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present it, all songs are respected), thank the host; start with the first song contributor.

Sharing Songs

Those sharing their song contributions should begin first by saying their name and then telling the song title, artist name, and a little bit about the song and why they chose it (this doesn't have to be complicated; a contributor can just say "it's a great song" or describe a long history of how they came to hear the song and why they love it).

Sign-Up Sheet

A sign-up sheet helps you keep track of who has presented and who is going to present next. Before people start presenting they should add their name to the sign-up sheet along with the following information: contributors name, email address, artist, song title, and the sequence number the song appears on the CD. The sequence number that the song appears on the CD will make it easier for you to find it when you cue it up to play.

RESPECT THE MUSIC!!, "RTM"

"Respect the Music" is the motto and ethos of Music and Movement. The basic rule of the gathering is that everyone's musical selections are respected in honor of the spirit of the group.

Photographs

Take photographs of your Music and Movement meeting and post them to your MySpace page, or blog, etc.

Ripping songs on to a Laptop

In the ideal scenario, a laptop with a CD burner should be present to rip songs that have been played by contributors. This record of the songs played will serve as the "meeting minutes" to be shared with participants at future meetings.

Getting volunteers to help Archive the Meeting and share the "Minutes"

To preserve and record the gathering, at the end of the meeting a volunteer(s) is chosen to gather together all of the CDs from the group (or simply use all the songs that have been ripped onto the laptop and burned onto a master CD) and burn copies to be distributed at the next Music and Movement meeting. This CD is called the Music and Movement Meeting Minutes.

Involvement

Help Build a Movement with Music

Use this manual or contact us to help create an ongoing Music and Movement chapter in your city. Get together monthly and begin to build community. Introduce novel concepts into the gathering. Host a political fundraiser, nonprofit retreat, church gathering, and housewarming party. Let us know how it went at arniec1@gmail.com.

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Music and Movement Meetings Have Been Used in Several Ways:

1. Music and Movement Meeting for a Board Retreat
2. Turning a House Party into a Music and Movement Meeting
3. Church Gathering

4. Housewarming party
5. Fundraisers
6. Get out the vote gatherings

RESPECT THE MUSIC!



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Below is a newspaper article reporting about a Music and Movement meeting that took place in northern California. In the article, Music and Movement is referred to by its earlier name in the Bay Area "FABC". This article appeared in the Sacramento Bee on Friday, March 31, 2006.

All in tune

Move over, book clubbers: This group meets to share -- and keep -- favorite songs

By Chris Macias

Published 2:15 am PST Friday, March 31, 2006

Story appeared in Scene section, [Page J1](#)

The party in this Tahoe Park home is about to start popping. Taquitos and Togo's sandwiches are ready for grubbing, a mojito bar is on standby. But if you want to come inside and hang, you'd better have a song to share.

It's a Sacramento meeting of, to put it nicely, the "(Bleep) a Book Club." The name has an in-yourface ring to it, a slight diss at Oprah's Book Club, but it's just a smart-aleck way of describing a new kind of listening party. Think of "(Bleep) a Book Club" as a potluck where music is the main course, or a soiree based on favorite songs.

There's no way to be a wallflower here. Each partygoer is required to bring a song on a CD, and before an in-house DJ slides the track into a CD deck and presses "play," you give a short speech about why the song moves you. It's about making fast friends over music, a shared party platter of songs and stories.



Mike Chappell gets set to spin tunes for a meeting of the Sacramento (Bleep) a Book Club. Attendees bring songs to play, get to explain their choice -- and others listen.

"You get to bridge a whole bunch of cultures together," says Mike "DJ Chappzee" Chappell, one of the in-house DJs for Sacramento's (Bleep) a Book Club meetings.

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"Music is almost therapeutic for me; it's the only way I know how to relax. (Bleep) a Book Club is one of the things that keeps you from thinking that nobody in the world understands you."

The (Bleep) a Book Club movement is 2 years old; it started in the Bay Area in early 2004 and spread to such cities as Boston and New York City.

The club reached Sacramento last month, bringing together two dozen music aficionados, record collectors and folks who wanted to bond over beats and melodies. A second round of Sacramento's (Bleep) a Book Club went down in March.

The basic (Bleep) a Book Club format works like this:

- Bring food and/or drink and a song to share.
- Log your name, e-mail and song information on a sign-up sheet.
- Hang with your fellow music hounds.
- When you feel the vibe, hand a CD to the DJ; talk about the song you're about to share.
- Play the song.
- Kick back, mingle and repeat. As a bonus, all songs are loaded in iTunes and logged as a kind of musical minutes for the meeting. Whoever shows up to the next (Bleep) a Book Club event gets those songs on a souvenir disc.

"Instead of 'Pay It Forward,' we say 'Play It Forward,' " says Gabriel Romo, a local artist who organizes Sacramento's (Bleep) a Book Club events. "It's about passing that music on. You give some insight in a kind of way, and then you pass it along. The overall goal is just sharing good music."

"My name is Kenny. What's up? This is my first time here. The song I brought is extremely important to me. It's the first music I ever appreciated. It's Marvin Gaye, from a live album. I think it's perfect music, and that's a category I give to not many artists."

- Kenny Times, 37, presenting "What's Happening Brother" by Marvin Gaye

Respect the music

(Bleep) a Book Club events aren't too hung up on rules. There's no limit to the number of people who can attend, though sessions work best on a more-intimate scale. Any song is welcomed at (Bleep) a Book Club, be it rock, hip-hop or something not so hip, such as one by Hootie & the Blowfish.

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But the (Bleep) a Book Club has one overriding rule: Respect the music. A shout of "respect the music!" means to chill and stop gabbing because someone's about to present a song. "Respect the music" also is a reminder that there's no snickering when it comes to someone's song selection. And this is put to the test when Hootie & the Blowfish's "Time" bellows from the speakers. But everyone is cool with the track at this Sac Town edition of (Bleep) a Book Club, and a few heads nod as if the song is a soul-jazz gem by Grant Green.

"No one's musical selection should ever be lampooned," says Oakland's Arnold Chandler, a co-founder of "(Bleep) a Book Club." "It's an open, kind of welcoming social environment. It's not exclusive in any sense."

"I know John Mayer has been this commercial, pop kind of person, but right now he's with the John Mayer Trio. I like that he's not so commercial now - he's doing the blues. The reason why I like it: It's just him talking about how he has everything in his life, but something's missing and he doesn't know what it is."

- Shauntay Davis, 28, presenting "Something's Missing" by the John Mayer Trio



A relaxed event

So grab a space on the futon, mingle, or chill out in a La-Z-Boy chair. The founders of (Bleep) a Book Club envision events that are relaxed, even soulful when everyone's speaking from the heart about their song choices. (Bleep) a Book Club has even been used as an "icebreaker" exercise at a corporate retreat.

"Everyone knows each other by the end of the night, and I've never been to a party before where that happens," says Chandler. "(Here) you're at a party, there's food and a potluck and everyone's having a good time. And at some point everyone gets to be center stage. You get to be the star for something you like, and you get to share it with people."

So when the music and conversation is flowing, the (Bleep) a Book Club sounds something like this:

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"I've always been a hip-hop fan and I went backwards in the roots of it," says Romo, while presenting Isaac Hayes' "Hung Up on My Baby," which was later sampled in Geto Boys' "My Mind Playin' Tricks on Me."

"I didn't know these songs I'd heard weren't original. So I went out and got these songs (that the hip-hop tunes sampled from), and it was like that same feeling you have when you hear the song for the first time."

The beat and guitar groove kicks in.

"This is what my pops played in the house on reel-to-reel," says Times, the first-time (Bleep) a Book Club attendee.

"Reel-to-reel?" says Romo. "Wow."

"Every Saturday, my pops used to put this on in the morning and play it for hours," says Times. "They're like symphonies."

"I love Isaac, man," says Romo.

But that's enough chatting for now because another song is on deck. And that's a cue to pay attention.

"Respect the music!"

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