

DANCE CULT CONFERENCE | 2025 | BERLIN



Preserving and Archiving Electronic Music and Dance Culture

the DRUM n' BASS MUSIC SCENE IN PORTO



-  + **MSC Communication and Management in Creative Industries**
- The Electronic Music and Media Art Observatory [**Ob.EMMA**] is a pioneering observatory for monitoring, mapping, diagnosing and promoting research into **ELECTRONIC MUSIC** and **MEDIAARTS** in Portugal.
- **Academy + Industry | Academics + Artists**
- www.obemma.pt

DRUM+BASS.09
ANDY C+McFUN
RAM RECORDS + URBAN TAKEOVER
15 MARÇO > MARE-ALTA
TILINHOS + PATMAC
GARAGEM + LOOPING
SUBWAY + F.SARAIVA
GARAGEM + SUBBASS
UJUMANA



ABSTRACT

- Case Study

Drum N' Bass scene in Porto (PT)

- Methodologies

Autoethnography

Participant observation

Historical documentation

- Case Study Focus

Local actors

Spaces

Socio-cultural dynamics within the scene.

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"**Scenes** as 'actualiz[ing] a particular state of relations between various populations and social groups, as these coalesce around specific coalitions of musical style" (Straw, 1991).

" (...) **Drum & Bass** was like nothing else the world had experienced before - simultaneously black and white, urban and suburban, old skool attitude and new school innovation. A socio-cultural melting pot of early 90s broken Britain seizing the wheel and **taking control of the machine**" (James, 2020).

THE SCENE

- The concept of "scene" is central to the analysis, as it captures the cultural practices, collective identity, and shared experiences within this music genre.
- Local | Translocal | Virtual
- The narrative of Porto's Drum N' Bass scene is traced from its emergence in the late 1990s to its consagracion, virtual expansion and post-pandemic revitalization.



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CRONOLOGY



PRE FLYER ERA

Middle 90's



FLYER ERA

90's until 2007



DIGITAL ERA

2007 - ...

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THE PRE FLYER ERA | 90'S

- FROM UK TO PORTO
- LOCAL DJS
- LOCAL MUSIC STORES
VALENTIM DE CARVALHO | KAMIKAZE
- FIRST PARTIES @ clubs
RIBEIRA DOURO | ANIKI BOBO | MEIA CAVE
- FIRST COLLECTIVES
HUSHED MARKET | LOOPING



THE PRE FLYER ERA | 90'S

PUBLIC

Young people over 25, linked to the arts, alternative, looking for new sounds.

DIVULGATION

Without formal advertising, spaces organized parties regularly, gaining loyalty for the events.

DISSEMINATION

Local Djs, promoters, producers and friends from the underground scene.

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THE FLYER ERA | late 90'S >> 2007

- THE SCENE CONSAGRATION

- PORTO 2001

- PRODUCERS

GARAGEM | YELLOW STRIPE | DOG BALLS ON
FIRE | PRESSURE FORCE

- BIGGER CLUBS

- INTERNATIONAL DJS

- PARTIES @ clubs

RIBEIRA | SWING | HARD CLUB | K-CAFFE | MARÉ
ALTA | INDÚSTRIA | ARMAZÉM DO CHÁ



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THE FLYER ERA | late 90'S >> 2007

- PORTO >> **THE HOME OF DRUM N'BASS**
- + PARTIES
- + PUBLIC
- + EXPENSIVE TICKETS
- LACK OF DEMOCRATIZATION
- DECLINE STARTS



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THE FLYER ERA | late 90'S >> 2007



PUBLIC

Audience expands to
younger generations
(-25 years)



DIVULGATION

Flyers era



SUB GENDERS

Emergence of musical
sub-genres (Technoid
and Neurofunk)

DIGITAL ERA | 2007 > ...



- Validation of artists through their digital popularity
- Consolidation of virtual communities
- Networking
- Nostalgic groups
- Sharing information (music, events, experiences, photos, flyers...)



- Underground contaminated by the mainstream
- Heterogenization of the public
- Mischaracterization of the environment
- Event prices
- the party hiatus



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COVID ERA

- + release
- + live sessions

- Growth of online radio stations

Cabine.pt | Rádio Yé Yé | Rádio Quântica | Rádio Baixa|Collect
Alinea A

- Artistic diffusion hub

- Support network for actors in the scene

Audience, Musicians, Producers, Markets, ...



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POST COVID ERA



- Revitalization of the scene with a focus on Portuguese artists
 - Emergence of new producers
RIJA | Quartas Bass | Counterpoint | Sonic Sessions | Nerve Attack | CVRSD | Franzine (Garagem) | Drums and Babes
- “Old DNB residences” remained
 - New spaces for Drum n’ Bass
Sarcastic Porto | Ferro | Era uma vez no Porto

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POST COVID ERA



PUBLIC

Generational mix,
amalgamation of locals,
immigrants and tourists.
very young (18-21 and
+ 30)



SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Synergies between
producers & less
competition and greater
cooperation.



COLLECTIVIZATION

Strengthens the scene,
allowing it to adapt and
evolve over time.

CONCLUSIONS

- DRUM N' BASS scene in Porto is a vibrant cultural phenomenon in constant evolution.
- It has managed to adapt to socio-economic, technological and cultural changes, always maintaining its essence and attracting new fans.
- DRUM N' BASS scene in Porto is an aggregator of other urban music scenes (hip-hop, punk, other underground electronica).

“(...) there is no resistance without memory ” (Godard, 2001)

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Thank
You!