nobodyknows+

A J!-ENT INTERVIEW BY DENNIS A. AMITH

DESIGN BY ALLAN ABAD

Images courtesy of Sony Music Associated Records, Inc.

nobodyknows+

The stage is set for a special one night performance in Long Beach by Sony Music Associated Records, Inc. hip hop group, nobodyknows+.

Headlining the event is Sony Music Associated Records group nobodknows+, a hip hop group featuring 5 MC's and 1 DJ.

Hailing from Nagoya, Japan, the group represents a new generation of hip-hop artists continuing to break new ground that transcends the musical barriers between hip-hop and pop.

nobodyknows+ debuted back in 2003 on the Sony Music Associated Records label.

They have had several hit CD singles which include "Kokoro Odoru", a song that was used for the ending theme for popular anime TV series "SD Gundam Force".

They released their criticaly acclaimed first album "Do you know?" in June 2004 and debuted at number one on the Japanese Oricon charts. A rare accomplishment for hip-hop groups in Japan.

In 2005, the group wanted to help aspiring local artists, so they organized the "NAGOYA MUSIC EXPO" in September. The event brought in around 10,000 people.

In November, the nobodyknows+ released their sophomore album titled "5MC&1DJ".

The album featured their smash hit "Shiawasenara Tewo Tatakou" which was used as the theme song for the Japanese release of hit Chinese movie "Kung Fu Hustle".

The group kept in public eye in 2006 with a national tour in February as the group performed in every prefecture in Japan. Another accomplishment never done before by a hip-hop group.

The tour was captured and released In November, as a DVD and Blu-ray release and titled "nobodyknows+ tour 2006 "5MC&1DJ" - Kuribo no Menkui Dochu Hizakurige". Now the group will perform in their first overseas concert at Tokyo Night 2007 in Long Beach bringing their style of hip-hop/pop fusion to a US audience.

The group's upcoming CD single "Hero's Come Back!!" (rel. April 25th) will be the opening theme for the hit anime TV series "NARUTO SHIPPUUDEN!".

J!-ENT's Dennis A. Amith recently interviewed nobodyknows+ before their live performance in the United States.

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nobodyknows+ debut album "5MC&1DJ" (AICL-1665, released on Nov. 2, 2005). *Image courtesy of Sony Music Associated Records.*

J!-ENT: A question for everyone in the group, I'm curious how you each got your individual names "g-ton", "CRYSTAL BOY", "Yasu Ichiban?", "HIDDEN FISH", Nori Da Funk Shiberesasu" and "DJ Mitsu"?

DJ MITSU (M): I comes from my first name which is Hiromitsu.

g-ton (G): My last name is Goto.

CRYSTAL BOY (C): I got it from the name of the villain in an anime called COBRA.

YAS the NUMBER ONE? (Y): I got the idea from the name of a Japanese comedian "Haru Ichiban (note: Ichiban means "number one").

HIDDEN FISH (H): I just played around with my last name and got the idea.

NORI DA FUNKY SHIBERESASU (N): I sampled "DEL: tha funkee homosapien"

J!-ENT: Which leads to my next question, how did you guys come up with the group name "nobodyknows+"?

G: Nobody knows.

J!-ENT: Growing up, who were your musical influences?

M: Blue Hearts

G: I got inspirations through encounters in every day life.

C: I think what you saw that lives, leaves you strong impressions. In that sense, I would say hip-hop artists in my native Nagoya had influence on me.

Y: Too many to name.

H: Dance classics. Disco and club music from late 70s and early 80s that were played on TV when I was a kid.

N: ODB, Busta Rhymes and many more.

J!-ENT: If I was to look into your CD or MP3 player, who would you be listening to right now?

M: Compilation album from JAZZMAN RECORD

G: mirror system

C: Kanye West, Fabolous

Y: Our own song that's in the works.

H: Mix CD of Reggae

N: Jay Dee related CDs

J!-ENT: The six of you are from Nagoya, Japan. Having never been to Nagoya, if you had to recommend a cool place to visit or hang out, what do you recommend?

M: Misen, a restaurant that serves Taiwan Ramen.. Chinese soup noodle.

G: Neverland Nippon, aCurry restaurant.

C: Nagoya castle and Nagoya gals.

Y: A club called "lush the underground"

H: Oosu Shopping Mall but It's very crowded.

N: Toukichiro, a public bath.

J!-ENT: Let's talk about the formation of nobodyknows+, how did you all come together to form the group?

C: Each of us was in Nagoya's music scene and we just came together one by one, centering around DJ MITSU.

J!-ENT: When your "Kokoro Odoru" was released and was used for the anime "SD Gundam Force", what went through your mind to hear your song on an anime?

H: We were very happy and grateful for the opportunity.

J!-ENT: Your first album "Do you Know?" was released in June 2004 and debuted at number one on the Japanese Oricon charts. Not many Japanese hip-hop artists ever debut at no. 1, can you tell me your reaction when you first heard that your album debuted at #1.

C: I was confident with the album, so was very happy about the news but wasn't surprised.

H: I was surprised. I recall saying "Wow!"

J!-ENT: You released your second album "5MC&1DJ" in November 2005, did you put a lot of pressure on yourself because the first album did tremendously well?

M: Yes. I wanted to run away.

Y: I felt a good amount of pressure but going forward I want to take it easy.

J!-ENT: We talked about having your music on an anime but having

your song on the hit Chinese film "Kung Fu Hustle" must have been awesome. How was that experience?

N: I just thought that's great.

J!-ENT: Let's talk about the "NAGOYA MUSIC EXPO" that you organized to help local aspiring musicians? Did you ever imagine that the event would bring in 10,000 people?

M: I thought there would be more people (Laugh).

J!-ENT: Having organized the first event, do you feel you guys can continue to organize other events or do you feel it's hard to balance time for event organizing and working/promoting an album?

M: Regardless the size of an event, we're hoping to continue doing an event as one of our life's works and show our way of being through the event. Of course, it's not an easy thing to do, though.

J!-ENT: In 2006, nobodyknows+ made another accomplishment with playing in every prefecture in Japan. Something that hip-hop groups don't usually do. That is amazing! How was that experience?

Y: It was a tour that I'd love to do again.

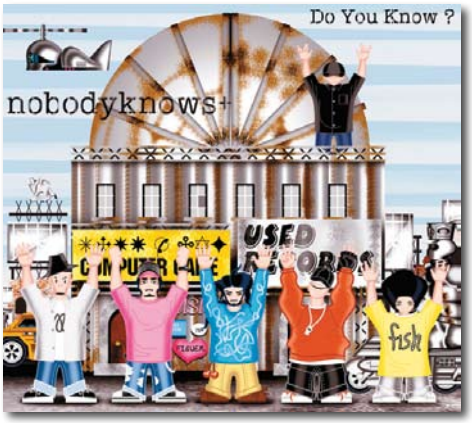
N: It was such a precious time and experience.

J!-ENT: You release a DVD titled, ""nobodyknows+ tour 2006 "5MC&1DJ" - Kuribo no Menkui Dochu Hizakurige". I'm sure there were a lot of crazy things that happened while you were on tour. Can you share with us any crazy moments that you each experienced that is not seen on the DVD.

Y: I did slot game on a spare time and made 230,000 yen (Note: approx. $200).

N: HIDDEN FISH got drunk after the show in Miyazaki. He wasn't in his hotel room the next morning and missed a flight returning to Nagoya.

J!-ENT You will be performing at TOKYO NIGHT 2007 in the United States. How does that feel to perform in another country?



H: It would be great if everybody can have a good time together. For those who don't understand Japanese, I want them to enjoy the vibe of our show.

J!-ENT: Since you will be near Los Angeles, was there anything that you wanted to experience in America?

M: I have to check out the vinyls.

G: Chatting with people

C: Shopping! Shopping! Shopping!

Y: I want to buy clothes, check out cute girls.

H: Don't know until I get there.

N: Checking out vintage clothing and vinyls.

J!-ENT: If there was a hip-hop artist in America you would love to collaborate, who would that be and why?

G: BEASTIE BOYS. Because it seems fun.

C: BIG DADDY KANE, GURU. They're my God.

Y: NAS, METHOD MAN. They're my idol.

H: No one in particular. Since I don't speak English, It would be hard to communicate with American artists.

N: BEASTIE BOYS, MAD LIB, artists in Detroit. I'd rather just meet them than doing collaboration.

J!-ENT: What is your opinion on Japanese hip-hop and what other Japanese hip-hop artists do you enjoy listening to?

C: I always check artists in our native Nagoya. I hope Nagoya would become like ATL.

J!-ENT: If there was one word to describe nobodyknows+, what word would that be and why?

H: Party dudes.

J-ENT: With each J!-ENT interview, we do a word play where I give you five words, you give me your definition for each word:

a. LOVE: C: No matter how much you give, you shouldn't demand it.

b. SUCCESS: H: Making efforts, working towards goal every day.

c. HAPPINESS: G: Is that the Earth breathes and smiles.

d. JAY-Z : Y: Someone who could make his living for the rest of his life with doing rap

e. NAGOYA: N: A treasure.

J!-ENT: What final words would you like to leave with your fans?

M: I'll bring you the show that we've been doing ieverywhere in Japan. I'm hoping that you'll simply enjoy our show as a kind of music rather than as "Japanese Rap" or "Japanese Hip-hop". I'm looking forward to seeing you all.

For more information on nobodyknows+, please visit their website at:

www.nobodyknows.jp

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WITH NEARLY A THOUSAND PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE FOR TOKYO NIGHT 2007, SONY MUSIC ASSOCIATED RECORDS HIP-HOP GROUP nobodyknows+ TOOK TO THE STAGE FOR AN EXCITING MUSICAL NIGHT AT THE QUEEN MARRY IN LONG BEACH, CA. **PHOTOGRAPHY BY NERGENE ARQUELADA**

J!-ENT

J!-ENT nobodyknows+/TOKYO NIGHT 2007 PICTORIAL

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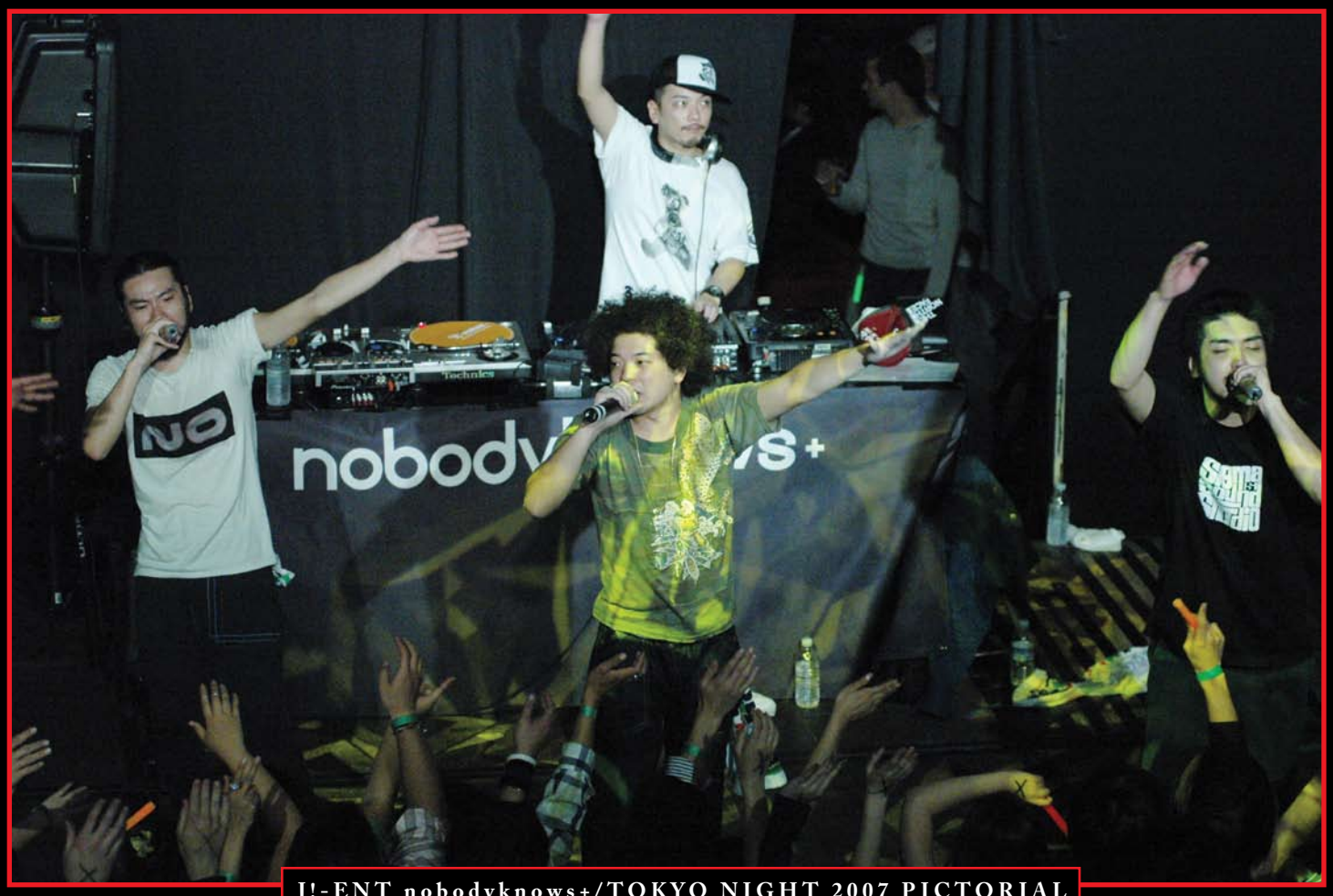

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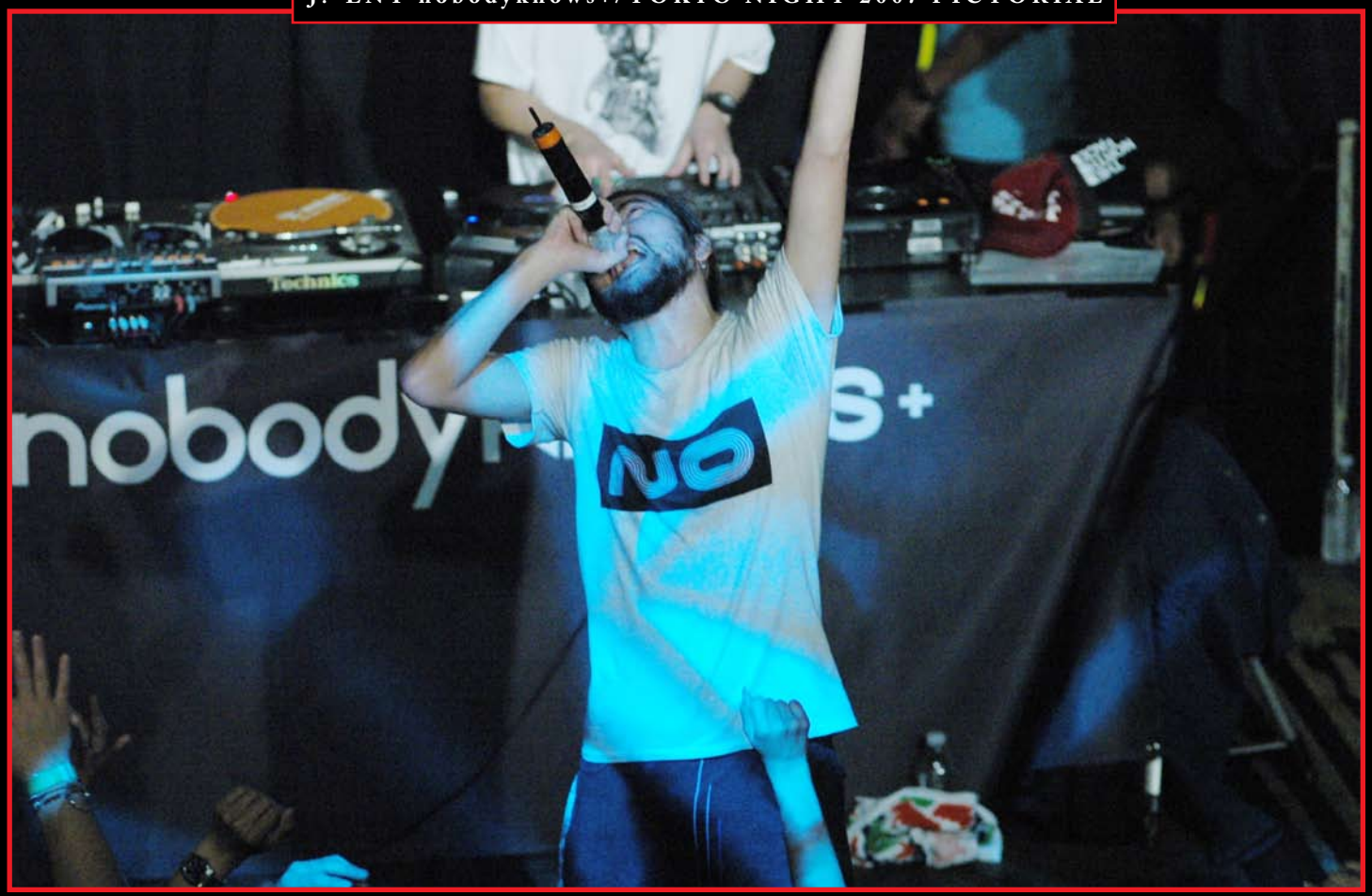

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