

DJ ANARCHY: TROPICAL & MORE

If you're in Houston hitting the clubs, partying at a high-end private event or attending a football game at NRG Stadium with the hometown NFL Texans, there's a good chance you'll be hearing jams spun by DJ Anarchy.

Born and raised in the music-rich Caribbean island nation of Trinidad and Tobago, Anarchy – aka Alinton Brereton, 36 – has made himself a fixture in the Houston market, playing a variety of genres – Caribbean-influenced and otherwise. But, as his brand has become synonymous with the island flavors like dancehall, soca, reggaeton, etc., he's also become known nationwide for his show, "Tropical Takeover," which runs on SiriusXM Channel 13 – Pitbull's Globalization – every Sunday night at 10 p.m. Central Time. We caught up with the versatile jock, who's also recently made headway into the artist world with the release of a new collab single, "Let Me See It."

DJ LIFE: Where did you grow up and how did music enter your life?

Anarchy: I come from humble beginnings in the countryside of Trinidad and Tobago. Music's just in my DNA – my dad and uncles were all musicians in local bands, so that rhythm flows naturally through my veins. Watching them rehearse in those band rooms, that's really where it all started for me.

DJ LIFE: What was the music and DJ scene like in Trinidad when you were coming up? Did you have any inspirations?

Anarchy: I came up in the early 2000s, but was heavily influenced by the 1990s, which were the golden era, straight up. We had this incredible mix of dancehall, reggae, and soca just flooding the streets. I was soaking up everything from our local heroes like Ishmael "The Demolition Man" and Tweez to name a few, while also getting inspired by those American mixtapes from legends like DJ Clue.

DJ LIFE: How'd you get started DJing? Do you remember your first DJ system?

Anarchy: My first "turntables" were actually my mother's pot covers! I'd post up in front of the radio, using those pot covers to mimic the scratches and mixes I heard from local selectors. But the real game-changer came around age 10 when my father was managing a sound system. That first time touching real turntables, feeling those vinyl records – man, that was it for me. I played around with different software after that, but my first real setup was a pair of Pioneer DJ CDJ-800s and a Gemini mixer. That's when things got serious.

DJ LIFE: What were the gigs like when you were young? What kinds of venues and events were you



A Trio: Anarchy's Current Faves

Gunna: "Him All Along."

Fisher: "Losing It." ["It's still my all-time favorite."]

Lojay, Sarz & Chris Brown: "Monalisa."

playing?

Anarchy: Pure vibes, man! I DJed at block parties, beach parties, and local bars. The Caribbean party scene back then was something else – no phones, no distractions, just pure energy on the dancefloor from start to finish. We'd keep it going until sunrise – or until the bar ran out of drinks [laughs]. Those were special times.

DJ LIFE: What kinds of remixes and mixtapes were you putting together?

Anarchy: I was heavy into making remixes and blends tapes, mainly focusing on Caribbean sounds – dancehall, reggae, soca – but with my own twist. I loved experimenting, maybe taking a Caribbean vocalist and laying them over American beats, or flipping it the other way around. I would also occasionally get my homies who were reputable local Trini artists to host my tapes, plus featuring my own remixes from heavy hitters like Vybz Kartel, Mavado, etc.

DJ LIFE: How did they help raise your profile?

Anarchy: Those tapes really put me on the map. I'd be out there in the streets hustling, handing physical copies of CDs to taxi drivers, leaving them at barbershops, anywhere people would listen. Then the online music sites started picking them up, and my following began to grow on MySpace, Hi-5, and other social media back then. That's when things really started taking off.

DJ LIFE: As you were growing up, your father became known as a producer. I'd imagine that was quite an influence, right?

Anarchy: My dad, Anthony Brerton, is an incredible character. He sang and entered various calypso and soca competitions while he was a police officer. After he retired from the force, he built this home studio that became like a hub for local talent. That's where I really started getting my hands dirty, working with and recording all these amazing Trinidadian artists. It was like my personal music university.

DJ LIFE: Which artists did he work with? What did you learn from being around that experience?

Anarchy: He worked with so many Trinidadian talents, like Orlando Octave and Kerry John, just to name a

few. Being in that environment from a young age, I picked up the whole art of putting songs together – from songwriting to musical arrangement. On the technical side, I learned production skills like recording and mixing vocals. That early exposure really developed my ear for talent and great music.

DJ LIFE: How many events do you personally spin each year? Which ones are your favorites and why?

Anarchy: I play over 250 events per year. It's tough to pick favorites because every type of event is unique and teaches me something new. But if I had to choose, I'd say opening up and performing for global artists like Lil Uzi Vert and Gunna at their sold-out Houston shows. The energy from those crowds is just unmatched.

DJ LIFE: What goes into your SiriusXM radio show? How do you put it together?

Anarchy: My show is "Tropical Takeover," and the name's got two meanings – I'm showcasing talented Caribbean artists to the world, plus I'm this "tropical" dude taking over mainstream airwaves [laughs]. But we're not just playing Caribbean music – it's all about feel-good sounds from all around the globe like Afrobeats, Amapiano, etc. I'm interviewing established global artists and up-and-comers, using Zoom for the interviews, Serato for the mixes, and Logic Pro 10 for the final master. It can get time-consuming with all the editing, but I love every minute.

DJ LIFE: American sporting events have become DJ-driven forms of entertainment. What are your responsibilities when you play a Houston Texans game?

Anarchy: I'm on the decks inside NRG Stadium two hours before kickoff, during halftime, plus my pre-made three-hour mixes play all around the outside of NRG stadium, while 70,000-plus people are coming in. It's about keeping that energy high – when our fans are in party mode, that translates to bigger support for the team during the game.

DJ LIFE: What makes spinning at an NFL game different or challenging for a DJ?

Anarchy: Everything has to be clean, edited and family-friendly, and

because our Texans fans are so diverse, you've got to stay versatile. You can't stick to one genre too long. The toughest part? Those early-morning starts after late-night gigs – sometimes with just one hour of sleep. But once I'm set up and the fans start turning up, that fatigue just disappears, and it's party time.

DJ LIFE: Currently, what DJ-gear set-up do you usually use?

Anarchy: At home, I'm running Pioneer DJ PLX-1000 turntables with a Pioneer DJ DJM-S7 mixer. For mobile gigs, I use the Pioneer SRT-1000 controller – it's lightweight and way easier to transport than turntables.

DJ LIFE: When you're playing high-end events for corporates or celebs, what do your clients want from you? How do you deliver?

Anarchy: Professionalism is key – being punctual, making sure the equipment and sound are perfect, dressing right for the occasion. Some events have specific themes where I need to tailor the playlist. I usually prep a week ahead just to make sure everything's dialed in and the event is memorable.

DJ LIFE: Tell me about your artist career and the new single, "Let Me See It." How did that get recorded?

Anarchy: I was inspired by DJ Khaled's path and wanted to connect deeper with fans through original productions. "Let Me See It" started with my boy, Classy FP, another Trinidadian in Houston. We brought in Pee Supreme and Platinum-selling recording artist DJ Chose to add their flavor. We spent about three or four months in the studio perfecting it. It's this fun, "sexy drill" track about turning up in the office [laughs].

DJ LIFE: What kind of material do you expect to release in the future?

Anarchy: Looking ahead, I'm planning to drop music across every genre – hip hop, pop, EDM, Caribbean music, including dancehall, soca, reggae, plus reggaeton, Afrobeats, everything. That comes from growing up in such a diverse environment. I dream one day of winning a Grammy, and to also return home to Trinidad & Tobago to help talented youth break into the mainstream market worldwide.

– Jim Tremayne