

Late-Night DJs Champion Obscure Hip-Hop

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Every Thursday at midnight, three DJs broadcast two hours of non-commercial hip-hop programming from the WTUL radio station in the basement of the Lavin-Bernick Center on the Tulane uptown campus. The show, "Bassmentality," is hosted by Mike Garrett ("DJ Mike 5"), Jessi Vojt ("Miss Lilly"), and Monte Marshall ("Monte Carlo"), all current or former Tulane students who expound on the nature and culture of independent hip-hop.



Get inside WTUL and hear what the DJs have to say about independent hip-hop in this video produced by Brandon Meginley.

The show on the student- and volunteer-run FM station is a perfect fit at a radio station that adheres to progressive programming guidelines in which DJs are required to play a mix of national and local artists operating outside the mainstream.

"Commercial music we can't play," says Marshall. "And most of the time we wouldn't want to play it in the first place." But while a strong do-it-yourself culture exists in the rap community, it is not uncommon for the more talented of the lot to "blow up," Marshall says.

Young artists such as Jay Electronica and Kid Cudi, both of whom are now getting national airplay, were championed in their fledgling years by DJs at stations like WTUL, which broadcasts at 91.5 FM. Which is not to say crossover doesn't occur between the 'underground' and mainstream, Vojt says.

"[Some artists] can be intellectually, socially and politically conscious, but then they can do just a fun record," Vojt says.

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