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Banner Art by: Keith Gidlund

Heavyweight Dub Champion and Sly & Robbie – June 18th

June 26, 2009



If you know of [Sly & Robbie](#) (and god help me if you don't), without ever hearing [Heavyweight Dub Champion](#), you'd probably assume that based on their name they'd be a perfect match to tour together. While it is true they are a perfect match, it isn't immediately apparent when HDC drops the beat. They're more of an [odd couple](#) – HDC playing Oscar their party-rockin', loose and layered style and Sly & Robbie as Felix with their we've-been-playing-for-years-and-have-a-super-tight-sound, consummate professional and always classic riddim onslaught.

For their homecoming show, HDC featured the backbone of the group, Grant Chambers (aka Resurrector), working the console onstage, Totter Todd on a midi guitar, sax, in addition to tossing in a healthy dose of effects, Stero-Lion holding down the toasting and adding verses to a few tracks, and finally Jillian Ann not only providing beautiful vocals but the good looks as well.

Despite being a hometown affair, it took a couple songs for the crowd to warm up to Heavyweight's warped, bent, filtered, and flipped-on-it's-head flavor of dubstep/dub hop. The positive grooving of the crowd spread like the smoke from the numerous joints and/or blunts that lit up throughout the crowd. During the first song there were 15-20 people really getting down, but by the third song of their set they had damn near the whole building swaying and bobbing. In an awesomely awkward moment I noticed a 50+ year old couple who looked like they made the trip from Russian Hill grinding...yes grinding...and making out on the dancefloor. Most definitely awkward, but awesome seeing the music transcend ages both older and younger.

The excitement was not restricted to the crowd either. Totter Todd let loose some of his signature spastic bouncing and at one point pulled a move like the girl from the Exorcist violently shaking his head back and forth while seeming screaming at the heavens. Resurrector was primarily occupied with the business at hand – making the music – but would punctuate the performance by whipping his thigh length dreadlocks out of his face. Stero added a great interactive touch by performing several songs from the set in the middle of the crowd. Big ups on that. As previously mentioned, Jillian brought the looks for the crew and exuded a sensuality that smoothed over the aggressive edge of the music.

To be perfectly honest, much of the evening was a blur. HDC's set was over almost as soon as it began, despite its 1hr+ run time. I've previously described their music as trance inducing and this evening was no exception. One of the many shining moments was when Return of the Champion blasted out of the speakers, the bass acting as a pacemaker and keeping my heart beating with its thunderous thump, and hearing people all around me join in on the hook.

I got the chance to hang out with the guys (and gal) from HDC backstage after their set (more on that in an upcoming post), so I missed most of Sly & Robbie's set. I made it a point to ask the concertgoers how they did, and as expected, they absolutely killed it, and from the descriptions from most everybody, Sly & Robbie made it look effortless.

If you're doing any of the festival circuit summer, be sure and keep an eye out for Heavyweight Dub Champion as they will be playing several of them. Rise up with the champion nation and check them out.

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