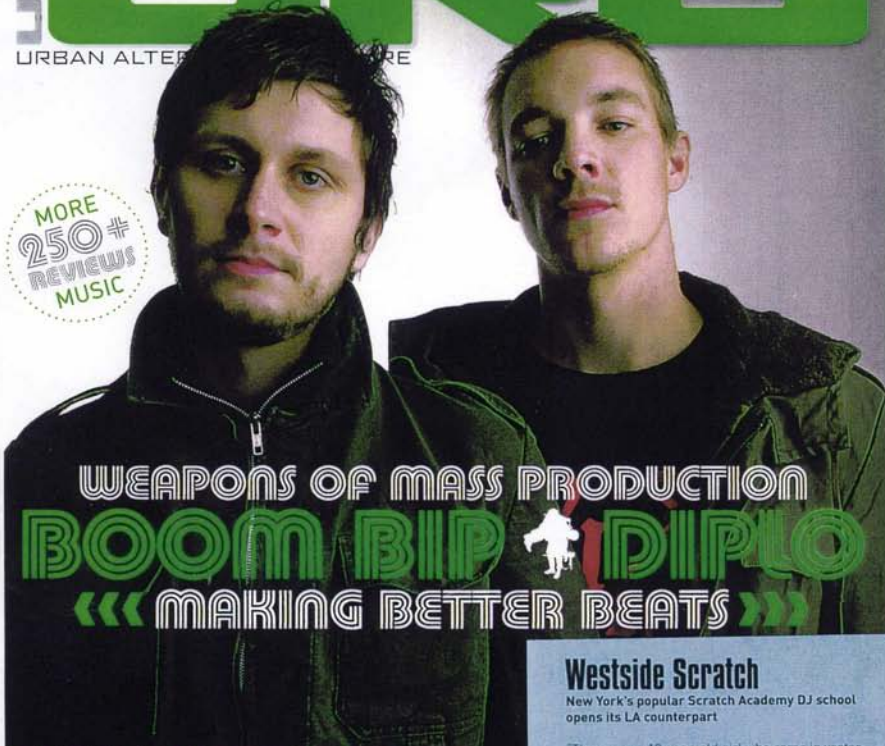


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Westside Scratch

New York's popular Scratch Academy DJ school opens its LA counterpart

"There was a 12-year-old girl who came in yesterday with her father to sign up for classes," Scratch Academy LA Director Hapa recounts. "The reason why she wants to DJ is because she really loves music and hears ideas in her head that she wants to do something with. Her dad said, 'Thank god you opened up in LA; she wanted to fly out to New York for classes every weekend!'"

Such stories are typical for the U.S.'s most eminent DJ school. With the Scratch Academy's New York campus in full swing, the educators decided to school the West Coast in proper turntable etiquette. Apparently, folks in LA are as gaga for the Academy as New York; more than 200 people showed up for the school's open house, despite torrents of rain.

With resident professors including the likes of Mr. Choc (Beat Junkies), Scratch Academy LA offers unprecedented expertise at the decks while also holding a distinct Angeleno flavor. "The whole goal is musicianship," Hapa explains. "I want everybody to know how much work goes into DJing. It may not be for everyone, but we're giving everyone the opportunity to at least try it."

Offering classes from the very basics ("We get people who don't even know what turntables are," Hapa admits) to advanced scratching, the Academy is adamant that anyone can be a part of the DJ world.

"Today I gave a private lesson to a 34-year-old lawyer, probably making like \$250,000 a year," Hapa says. "He scratches for release after work. And on the other hand, you've got a 12-year-old girl who might be the next battle DJ, the next prodigy. This is really for everyone." **Antero Garcia**



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