



Glass Tung getting ready to perform at Galaga: From left, DJ AMills (Andy Malosky), Moral (Al Ross) and Junes (John Wilson).

PHOTO/MARK EARNEST

Smooth surfaces

Glass Tung

It may be rivaling country as the most commercial sound right now, but hip-hop in the Reno area is a little rarer to find, at least on stage. The trio called Glass Tung is one group that's taking it to the fans instead of staying in the digital cloud.

Not that it's been easy. The three band members—rappers Moral (pronounced more-AL) and Junes, and DJ AMills—all agreed that it's been harder in recent years for local artists to put on their own shows.

"It's really weird because it's evolved for better and also for worse in some ways," Junes said. "There are a lot more larger shows where the promoters will give locals the opportunity to play for bigger crowds, and that's always awesome. But there aren't a lot of venues small enough or willing to work with you, because they're afraid they'll lose money."

"'Rough crowd' is what I've got before," AMills said. "I asked one place if they were doing hip-hop shows and they said, 'No, that brings in a rougher crowd. We stick to electronic dance music.'"

Of course, the hip-hop and EDM crowds aren't mutually exclusive—far from it—but the Glass Tung members still feel that hip-hop is on an upswing in Reno in recent months.

"It has gone up and down, but right now I feel like it's got a fairly big buzz," Moral said. "The thing is that it's out there, but people have to go out and get it."

Glass Tung's journey started in 2015 when Moral and Junes, both vets of the local hip-hop scene and in other groups, decided to work together on a song. That expanded to a five-song EP that became their debut, *Adamantine*, in 2016. AMills

was another known name in the scene, and Junes reached out to him to add his distinctive scratching to their work.

"We played a few shows with him before the album came out, and we felt like he should just be the third person in the group," Junes said. "It fit too good for it not to be that way."

AMills has been a turntablist for about 15 years. "I just started because I've always been around them," he said. "One of my friends growing up purchased some turntables, and I was always messing with them and never stopped."

AMills is featured more on the band's second album, a seven-song called *Congratulations*, which will be digitally released on July 6. Moral and Junes do most of the music writing and production themselves, while AMills adds his scratching and turntable skills over the top. It was important, Junes and Moral agreed, to have more turntable work on *Congratulations*.

"It's definitely a part of hip-hop that's almost gone away," Moral said. "When we listened to hip-hop growing up, it was integrated into the songs more. We're just trying to create what we like to listen to anyway."

As for the music, Glass Tung manages the neat trick of sounding up-to-date and retro at the same time. There are no trendy beats per se, and there are musical hooks aplenty. If you like artists on the Rhymesayers label, you will probably like Glass Tung. As Junes puts it, "it's very boom-bap."

"If we tried to do a trap beat or something, not that we knock it, but you could tell it would be fake," Moral said.

"It's like a soccer player being like, 'I'm gonna try tennis.'" Junes said. "It's not necessarily the right forte." □

Glass Tung opens for Chris Webby and Grieves on June 21 at Jub Jub's Thirst Parlor, 71 S. Wells Ave., and plays its EP release show on July 12 at The Saint, 761 S. Virginia St. Find out more at instagram.com/glass_tung

ANNOUNCING THE

24TH ANNUAL

ROLLIN' RIVER LINEUP

EVERY FRIDAY IN JULY
AT WINGFIELD PARK
FREE + FAMILY FRIENDLY

**7/5
TAPWATER**
+ THE SNAKEBOY
JOHNSON BAND

**7/19
MOJO
GREEN**
+ WEREWOLF CLUB

**7/12
THE
SEXTONES**
+ JONNY ROLLING

**7/26
THE
NOVELISTS**
+ RENO HIVEMIND

PRODUCED BY

RN&R
Reno News & Review