



Sulata

The independent Auckland label Deepgrooves released their fourth compilation last month. *Deepgrooves 95* pairs proven artists Grace, Greg Fleming, Three The Hard Way, and Urban Disturbance, with new young hopefuls, Sulata, Ermehn, and Jordan Reyne. With new in-house production facilities, and a three year publishing deal, the label is looking overseas and onward. Yet there's still plenty of work being done on the homefront.

The Deepgrooves label was formed in 1991 by Kane Massey, producer and musician Mark Tierney, and Bill Latimer, owner of Auckland's Lab Recording Studio. Within two months they'd released a compilation album, designed as an introduction to the Pacific flavoured style of dance, hip hop, reggae, and soul, Deepgrooves was looking to promote.

The fledgling label released two singles and a Projector Mix album the following year, before signalling a shift into top gear with a second compilation, *Deep In The Pacific Of Bass*, released in 1993. A move that Massey, by that stage in sole charge of Deepgrooves, described as, "relaunching the label".

The last two years has seen a prolif-

ic number of single releases come from the Deepgrooves stable, including Three The Hard Way's Number One smash 'Hip Hop Holiday, plus albums from Urban Disturbance, Fuemana, Grace, and Three The Hard Way, while the now defunct Deepgroove's subsidiary label Lost, released singer/songwriter Greg Fleming's debut album in 1994.

That year, Deepgrooves also signed a publishing deal with Sony Music, the music publishing wing of major label, Sony Records. Each Deepgrooves release signed to Sony Music has publishing representation in six territories overseas — Canada, the United



Ermehn

Kingdom, Japan, Germany, Australia, and France. The plan is for Sony to work to secure the release of Deepgrooves artists on Sony affiliated labels, or outside the company if necessary. Massey is hoping any one of the ten artists on *Deepgrooves 95* ("designed as a sampler") will impress the ears of any one Sony Music representative overseas.

"The way it works, is it gives us a

foot in the door, so we could go to Germany, do presentations to the Sony people there, and it is their responsibility, to a degree, to 'hit' other people within the label, to try and get the material released. We only need to nail one territory, there's ten chances in each of those territories that someone will like one of the acts and that's all we need. If one act gets away it opens up the door for other acts as well. But at the end of the day it depends on the people in each office being a fan, it's going to take time."

Never one to kill time, Massey is kept busy by the expansion of his business, now known as Deepgrooves Entertainment. The major additions in '95 have been the construction of a MIDI studio, and a video editing suite, in Deepgrooves' Victoria Street office in central Auckland.

"Deepgrooves turns over a lot of money, but at the end of the day who gets all the money? Not me, not the artist. We do all the work, and the studios get the money, and the people who make the videos get the money. We didn't want to keep spending money at other studios, and we didn't want to spend money getting other people to make our videos. It's a business thing, it's not pie in the sky."



Jordan Reyne

DEEPGROOVES

An Exclusive Interview With Label Boss Kane Massey.

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