

Web site spreads the gospel of soul

Where did a Toronto-born Russian Jew like Asya Shein get all that soul from — and why does she have such a passion for promoting it?

“Detroit, 1996. Eleven years ago. Moodymann. Theo Parrish. Loft party. They played everything from old school hip-hop to funk to house to obscure music from Brazil. I closed my eyes and danced, and when I opened them, it was 6:30 in the morning, and it was me and one other guy,” she says.

“From that moment on, I knew what I was going to do, and that was help



KELLEY L. CARTER

step up the game of this soul music genre. I feel it doesn't have a platform. Look at BET. Look at VH1. Look at MTV. Every once in a while, someone like John Legend slips through the cracks,” she says.

“The music industry is so dominated by BS commercial radio music. I feel like that has enough power. ... I wanted to give back to the music that gave me hope. You just feel good listening to it. To me, soul music just means good music because it's music from the heart.”

At 28, Shein doesn't edit herself when she speaks about the music she has dedicated her life to. While she was an international studies and environ-

See **CARTER**, 4F



Asya Shein, 28, lives in Los Angeles.

@Last Events

John Arnold, Korie, Kiley & Jim Stone
Midnight Sat.
Fi-Nite Gallery,
1370 Plum St.,
Detroit. \$5.
www.fusicology.com

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mental science student at Wayne State University — and for the record, she knows just about everything there is to know about global warming and climate change — Shein worked as a booking agent, finding venues for obscure soul music and hip-hop that otherwise wouldn't find stages.

She was transformed when she realized that friends were asking her what was hot and happening over the weekend and that she was becoming the go-to girl for all things hip, cool and under the radar.

She got so many requests that she started sending out a mini-mailer in early 2003, three years after she left Detroit for Los Angeles' sunnier skies. By August, her mailer was so popular that she started a Web site that listed events happening in both New York and Los Angeles.

The result?

Fusicology.com, which is far larger than a listings Web site. It's a cultural hub. It's the

place where like-minded people can find events that don't break down until 4 in the morning, events that play the kind of music that isn't found on commercial radio, traditional concert hall stages or popular music video shows. In a relatively short time, the site has become a beacon for soul music and has spread to providing handpicked event listings for New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Toronto, Detroit, Atlanta, New York, Washington, D.C. and the San Francisco Bay area.

On the site, you can see who's performing and where and also buy tickets, buy music and listen to music.

The Detroit version launched a year ago, and it has been one of the most successful cities, surprising even Shein.

The site gets more than 160,000 unique visitors a month, giving frequent visitors a soulful stamp of approval for the events and the musicians it features.

There's always some type of cool event happening in

Detroit — something that people otherwise might not hear about until weeks after it has happened.

One this weekend is @Last Events, a monthly music-themed outing that Shein sponsors. (See box on Page 1F.) On Saturday, she'll present an evening of broken beat, nu jazz and deep funky house with John Arnold, Korie, Kiley & Jim Stone — and get this, the show doesn't start until midnight.

"If you Google hip-hop and Detroit, you're going to get a regular wait-in-the-line,

thugged-out sort of thing. But this is our scene. It's the more real soul for lack of a better term: neo-soul, progressive hip-hop and deep house," Shein says.

"I am a music aficionado. I love a certain kind of music. It has spread. But I call it the soul diaspora. Everything that comes from soul music. It's got that vibe. You know, that sort of progressive vibe. It's a cut above."

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