

A Statement from DJ Soul Sister regarding Mimi's in the Marigny

Earlier today, a [NOLA.com article](#) was published announcing that Mimi's in the Marigny had been issued “a city-issued mayoralty permit allowing live music to be presented legally,” after having been halted from presenting music in April of this year. Despite this great news, this lawsuit is far from over as the bar is “still subject to noise regulations.”

Between several comments that I spotted around the Web anticipating my return to Mimi's, and a sentence in the article itself hinting at “the potential return of DJ Soul Sister’s popular 'Hustle' DJ night,” I want to issue the following statement, which comes directly from me and is not influenced or advised by the legal counsel or staff of Mimi's in the Marigny – a staff who I referred to lovingly as my family for nearly a decade.

When the lawsuit in question, as discussed in the article, halted live entertainment at Mimi's in the Marigny in April of this year, exactly one week before I was to celebrate the 9th anniversary of “Soul Sister presents HUSTLE Saturdays,” I received an overwhelming outpouring of support and invitations from many local venues and businesses to continue my weekly dance party at their locations. The Hi-Ho Lounge on St. Claude Avenue is the venue I wound up choosing. Not only has that been the successful home of [HUSTLE Saturdays](#) since April, but I am thankful to announce that it is now my permanent Saturday night home.

I have made the decision to not return to Mimi's in the Marigny for the following reasons. (By the way, I have spoken with Mimi since the article came out, have shared the following thoughts with her, and we both continue to support each other in every way.):

Why I will not be returning to Mimi's in the Marigny:

- 1) **I want the neighbors who sued Mimi's in the Marigny to leave Mimi/Mimi's alone.**
- Deep down inside, I know that it was my HUSTLE Saturdays that the few neighbors in question had the problem with. My parties are not the first, and they won't be the last time that people have complained about dancers of all races and types coming together to dance to soulful music. At one neighborhood association meeting that I attended, one neighbor announced, in response to me explaining that the type of music I play ranges from jazz to soul to underground disco, that if she had known she had moved next door to a “jazz disco place,” she never would have. To me, that speaks volumes. I hope that when the neighbors learn, with this announcement, that I am happy at my new home and will not be returning to Mimi's, and that they no longer have to fear the *dangerous* “jazz disco” music and people of all types coming into their neighborhood to dance, that they will leave Mimi alone and allow her to continue to be the respectful and caring neighbor that she has always worked hard to be.

- 2) **Mimi's in the Marigny is now, apparently, not “allowed” to have “DJs.”**

- Regardless of the fact that I (am grateful to) have won practically every local major music award and public opinion poll for my work over the years, performed worldwide, opened for internationally-renowned award winning artists, played at major festivals like Jazz Fest, have volunteered on WWOZ FM for nearly two decades, etc. etc., I am not deemed acceptable to perform live in the Mimi's in the Marigny neighborhood by someone making this decision. I could win a Grammy Award and a Nobel Peace Prize, and the decision makers (whether this is a neighborhood association, the city, neighbors, etc.) would still banish me to the "DJ" ghetto. And that's OK with me because, as an underground DJ artist who has *chosen* the craft and art of mixing, beat-matching and musicality to share the soulful music I love, I am proud to represent for DJ culture and will continue to do so in the neighborhoods and venues, large and small, that have accepted me and my followers since I began performing live in clubs when I was 21 years old – quite a long time ago! (Also, in our conversation, Mimi also stressed that "DJs" are no longer allowed, per the new rule.)

3) HUSTLE Saturdays have outgrown Mimi's in the Marigny.

- I personally think it's unfair that the neighbors who sued Mimi's in the Marigny would limit the bar's success, punishing Mimi (and, particularly, my Saturday nights) for being too popular. With that said, I have made the decision to keep my HUSTLE Saturdays at the Hi-Ho Lounge out of respect for the few neighbors of Mimi's who do not welcome my party (always a positive affair) or my guests. The HUSTLE party really has grown by leaps and bounds since moving to the new, larger space. So much so, that if the neighbors involved in the lawsuit did not like my Saturdays before April, then they'd hate it even more now. I, on the other hand, continue to love seeing people come from not only around New Orleans, but from all over the world to continue to dance to soulful music, loud and proud – making HUSTLE Saturdays *still* the best place to dance all night. Because we have no time restrictions, I'm able to entertain the greatest variety of people, including many musicians who like to come and see me perform after they finish their own shows.

I would like to again thank Mimi and the staff of Mimi's in the Marigny for being the home of my HUSTLE Saturdays for 9 years, and to Mimi for all of her love and support over the years. And when I celebrate the 10th anniversary of the party this April 2014 at the Hi-Ho Lounge, I know that I will see many of my Mimi's family, who I love, there to congratulate me. I also am looking forward to the day when I, hopefully, can congratulate them on being able to present live music again, without the threat of lawsuits.

I'm thankful to all of you for continuing to support Mimi's in the Marigny, and for supporting me through the years with my "right on party situations" and other happenings. I will continue to present quality, positive events for all who enjoy. If the neighbors and lawyer who sued Mimi's wish to attend any, they are invited and more than welcome, as long as they understand that I will always keep it soulful.

With love, and the volume turned up loud,

Melissa A. Weber
aka DJ Soul Sister
September 10, 2013



Photo by Stephen Elvis Smith. Taken at Mimi's in the Marigny.