



AMBAS- SADORS

CHAMPION SOUL GOT WHATCHA WANT—DANCE MUSIC

PHOTOGRAPHY RICHARD KOEK

Andrew Brown and Malik Williams are ambassadors from the black music in exile. Together they are Champion Soul, a production team that connects a lot of the music you don't hear on your strangleheld radio—classic funk, dub, reggae, Latin roots, broken beat—and flips it with something mildly unexpected, like an off-kilter vocal or a deep bassline running under '70s soul string orchestration, before running it through their own crisp production process until the lush vibe that results is a sort of ticket to an intercontinental holleration station. Or something like that—what I mean is, you're going to want to meet whoever else is setting up camp there.

Brown is from Philly and Williams is from Boston; the two met in the early '90s and eventually linked as DJs who dabbled in various bill-paying enterprises in NYC before turning to production in order to take the energy from their club sets to a wider audience. They look like mau-mauing anti-social Afropsychopaths but compared to the rest of the personalities on the scene they're regular, stable guys. Champion Soul are further set off from the others in their milieu in that they actually make music instead of just hanging out downtown and talking that talk about it. And so when Brown tells you "there's a lot of things happening right now" he's speaking on both the current cultural moment of innovative forms bubbling in the NYC or West London underground, as well as about the music coming out of the twice-weekly studio sessions to which Champion Soul strictly adheres. The DUMBO studio that birthed the bruk up beat of their "Wha' Cha Got" buzz single continues to churn out a number of 12"s and remixes, including more releases on IG Culture's Mainsqueeze label, and *Excursions*—their first full length project. *Excursions* is a comprehensive immersion in the sound of Champion Soul, as it shows them tweaking beats and pushing at-hand vocalists—all of them pulled from Brown and Williams's Brooklyn circle of collaborators—into perfectly fitted performances. This is dance music for people who like music and like dancing. There isn't nearly enough of that out there.

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