When a clip goes viral and lands a kid on *Ellen* or gets someone a few promotional gigs, that’s cool and all. But when a video hits the internet with gale force, then helps lead to success for additional artists, and goes on to create a platform for even more—then something really special has happened. This is exactly what went on in Brooklyn over the past year, shining light upon a loose-knit scene of young Brooklyn rappers, with nearly no help from the press or radio.

While many artists in this budding scene actively do not associate with one another, the most popular among them are working together, and the chain of events is directly traceable through their work. The defining moment in this perfect storm came when a track called “Gang Gang Gang” was recorded, shot as a video, and uploaded to a then-small channel called *Flowtastic TV* last November. The song features Curly Savv, Dah Dah, Bam Bino, and Money Millz.
Funny how often happenstance changes lives. There were no plans for it, and the artists expected to record something else when it began. “I knew Money Millz already from when I was in school, then we went up to the studio and Bam was there,” Dah Dah tells Mass Appeal. Since they were all there together and had been speaking on Facebook occasionally, they cooked up a new track, then went out and shot a video. Bam Bino had previously dropped a video called “Jug and Finesse” on FlowtasticTV, so they decided to record with them again.

The resulting video is an energetic, lo-fi night of hooded teenage kids mobbing under wild bright LED street lights, bouncing around to giant bass drums, and pointing gun fingers at the camera. The hook is literally just a few rapid bars, each ending with “gang, gang, gang,” creating a heavy, hypnotic flow. The verses are tight and dense, covering the basics of sex, money, and violence.

The video blew up, and is currently sitting at 4.5 million views after a little more than a year. Numbers for Bam Bino’s earlier video jumped up too—now in the hundreds of thousands of views. And fans were rocking with his follow-up a month later, “Allergic To Cuffin’,,” which now stands at 2.5 million. Curly and Dah Dah saw a similar repeat with “Word To My Mother ft. Zay G and Rah,” which has a currently reach of 1.4 million views and few more that did similarly as well.
“Bam Bino was the first big hip hop video to take off,” says Florian Roos about his FlowtasticTV channel. He says the viewers were mainly from Brooklyn, especially at the beginning. “From my end, it looked like it was pretty much different crews coming together, and people really didn’t see that before.”

Bam Bino says being known around his Brownsville projects and local high school probably carried him along into the rap world but isn’t entirely sure. “I don’t know what happened,” he explains. “I just posted ‘Jug’ to Facebook and people were fuckin’ with the song. That’s where most of my fans were at. It had 20K or whatever. But then the people I did ‘Gang Gang’ with, they had their own songs going on, and after that, that’s how it all came together.” There are a lot of people in New York generally, and he lives in an area with a dense collection of projects, so that’s a big audience. Plus he just only turned 19 this month, so he still had connections to his school.

Curly and Dah Dah are also very young, both only 17. But they’ve been shuffled around a bit, being raised in East New York, and going to school in Flatbush and Florida. “We’re not in school right now, Dah Dah says. “We had some altercations, so we just started chasing what we wanted to do. Our dreams.”

Phresher x Dah Dah x Curly Savv - “Wait A Minute” [Music Video]
https://web.archive.org/web/20170319025512mp_/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWJKdNegOR4

Despite being bounced though different states and schools and facing other troubles, they’ve managed to collect over 12 million Youtube views in about a year. They also dropped their mixtape, First Quarter, which had “Gang Gang” on it in addition to “Wait A Minute,” alongside Phresher.

Phresher went on to record a remix version with Remy Ma and FlowtasticTV directed both of them, although he posted the remix to Worldstar, which is up to 6.5 million so far. “What Phresher did was a good business move,” Dah Dah admits. “At the end of the day, ‘Wait A Minute’ was not our song. We did features on it and we got paid for it. It woulda been a pleasure to be on the track with them, but I ain’t really sweating it.”
Flowtastic became a central space for an evolving Brooklyn drill scene with videos commonly getting hundreds of thousands of views. Although most of the above artists don’t really consider themselves drill artists, it’s pretty clear that drill is a topic. **Bam Bino** says: “A lot of people do drill rap, and do consider me a drill rapper. I mean, I live in Brownsville. That’s like one of the most dangerous parts of New York City. A lot of shit I rap about really goes on. Shit crazy.” But he’s trying to spread out into different styles and be known for more than that.

Phresher isn’t mad at it. “It’s music, man. If it feels good, let’s continue to make it,” he says. Dah Dah doesn’t want him and Curly to be classified as drill rappers, but offers that they are definitely aggressive rappers.
“It’s just a part of culture, hip hop changes and right now it’s just drill,” adds Flow. “It’s the new East Coast-West Coast. People just gonna accept it or not.”

The sound gets heard mainly around the Northeast, online and off. Performances are a balance between gigs at strip clubs and sweet 16 parties. “I do a lot of day parties for the kids, ‘cuz I got a lot of young fans too,” says Bam Bino, who’s recently been low-key signed to Atlantic. “Proms and shit.”

Curly Savv x Dah Dah - “Told Y’all” [Music Video]
https://web.archive.org/web/20170319031511/mp_/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTYe_q5SAx4

Dah Dah says he also does many types of performances, but the majority are 18 and up: “If we did underages, it’d be 50 times as packed. We’re looking do to more underage events. We’re more connected with the youth.”

The internet is a real place now and often acts as a window into physical regions. Communities that embrace different corners of the web extend their local spaces online. Artists can get millions of views and plays on Facebook and Youtube, mostly by people from around their way, but remain invisible in other places online and on air. Partially this divide is a digital extension of how communities are segregated in the real world, so their priorities don’t get addressed online or IRL.

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