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Kaiju Big Battel Mixes Movie Monsters, Wrestling To Conquer Universe

11.25.2002



Dr. Cube
Photo: Studio Kaiju LLC

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by Tanya L. Edwards

MTV News (www.mtv.com), November 25, 2002

NEW YORK ó In a dark nightclub, a giant foam slug slowly makes its way to the top of a chain link cage as twin plantains battle a long-necked spitting reptilian creature. As the slug ó guided via remote control by Dr. Cube, a sinister scientist with a large white blockhead ó launches itself into the cage and flattens the plantains, the rabid crowd of downtown hipsters goes wild. Welcome to the latest offering from Kaiju Big Battel ([Click for photos](#)).

One of the weirdest things you'll ever pay to see, Big Battel features performers dressed as twisted Japanese monster movie characters battling it out in a wrestling ring. Since its launch six years ago, the Battel has found a home in nightclubs in Boston and New York, sharing the bill with live bands and DJs including Les Savy Fav, the Lot Six, Piebald, DJ Spooky and Cannibal Ox.

The spectacle is the brainchild of Boston's David Borden, an ironically soft-spoken man, who has put together what he describes as "a live-event hybrid of professional wrestling, monster movies and pop culture parody."

"Originally, ... my brother was going to make a short film while he was in school. ... We did a little shoot with the monsters fighting. Then someone asked us to do a performance during Halloween at the Revolving Museum. ... It went really well and they asked us to do another performance and it evolved from there. Eventually maybe, we'll do a short film."

Kaiju (which means "mysterious beast" in Japanese) Big Battel (the misspelling is intentional), features four groups of giant city-crushing monsters engaged in an all-out war for control of the earth. The battlefield is a standard-size wrestling ring, contained in a 15-foot-high chain-link cage. Inside, four distinct factions ó the evil Dr. Cube and his posse (including Hell Monkey and Multimoog), the Heroes (including American Beetle, Club Sandwich and Los Plantanos), the Rogues (including Kung-Fu Chicken Noodle and Beefy L'Ox) and Team Space Bug (including Uchu Chu and Sky Deviler) ó battle for supremacy.

Adding a dose of the WWE to the intergalactic battle, an MC, with the fitting moniker Loudon Noxious, gives an enthusiastic, detailed play-by-play of all the action in the ring. The action outside the ring is almost as interesting, as Dr. Cube's human minions, dressed in hospital gowns and leather masks, run through the crowd distributing leaflets and dispensing evil.

The cheering crowd ó comprising a wide variety of fans including hip-hop heads, indie rock hipsters, headbangers, ravers and even a few suits ó all moved close to the cage despite the warnings of goo-spewing monsters. While some left with stains, many more left with souvenirs from the Kaiju merchandise table. Offerings ranged from the more obvious T-shirts, stickers, and videos to baby blue Dr. Cube thongs, temporary tattoos, and moustaches inspired by Big Battel referee Jingi, all of which can be found at the event's Web site.

While Kaiju ó and all its related merch ó is becoming an ooze-spewing cottage industry, the monsters in the ring have their own unique motivations for wrestling to the death ó or at least to abject humiliation.

"I Battel because it's what space bugs do," Uchu Chu explained. "I'm stuck on this god-forsaken planet, so I might as well create a little mayhem while here."

"I Battel for the glory of our great nation. USA all the way!" American Beetle countered, staying true to his patriotic leanings.

Hell Monkey kept it real, claiming that he does it all for "bananas, of course ... and a high rank in Dr. Cube's posse."

However, the rationale closest to the one driving the men behind Kaiju may come from Dr. Cube. "I do Battel for control of the universe. Why else would I fight giant city-crushing monsters and feeble super heroes?"

Good question. Thus far Battels have been staged only in the Boston and New York areas. However, much like Dr. Cube, the organizers hope to expand their empire nationwide.