

**3rd Party** is the union of three distinct, free spirits who have joined together in search of the groove. The trio features Maria Christensen from Pittsburgh, Karmine of Puerto Rican descent, and Philippine Elaine Borja, who was born in Queens. All three of these young women share the common quest of molding their own destiny.

Maria Christensen first met producer Ric Wake through a dance track she had recorded in Florida which was receiving sizeable airplay in the market. The Grammy Award winning producer (Celine Dion) was approached to record a re-mix. After seeing her perform, Maria relocated to New York on the invitation of Wake. And now, a short time later 3rd Party is set to release an album. The crucial element surrounding these sessions is that the direction of the project is following 3rd Party's vision, as opposed to the historical formula where girl groups are the creation of a producer. Maria mentioned, "I never wanted to be affiliated with a project where I was simply plugged in to be a face. We've been very involved with the arrangements and the mixes. I think that the writing is a key element, and four of the tracks on the release are my compositions." With songwriting credits on projects across the musical spectrum from Eternal to Nana Mouskouri, there is no doubt Maria's talent has evolved from her first songs written at the age of eleven.

The prerequisite for a great dance track is certainly the beat. As artists, each member of the group knows explicitly what constitutes a good dance track. To Karmine, "It's like a four on the floor driving production, which is all about how music is going to move you." For Maria, "It must set a mood and give you feeling. '*Can U Feel It*' makes you want to have a good time, forgetting about everything except for 'this' good time." To Elaine Borja, "The deep beats and bass combine to get you up, make you feel uplifted, and you subconsciously are dancing,

feeling the music, and moving and grooving." From one listen to the debut, there is no doubt about the simple fact that 3rd Party know how to express movement in the

universal language of music.

The influences of each member are all over the map, and this undoubtedly is visible in the vocal range heard from track to track across the release. Karmine grew up in Spanish Harlem and listened to predominantly disco and Latin. Maria looks upon Janis Joplin, Aretha Franklin, Donna Summer and Annie Lennox for inspiration because, "They are all writers like I am, they've got soul and they sing from their guts." For Elaine, who grew up in Woodside, Queens, "When I was a kid, I listened to the music my parents played around the house in the 70's. Yet, all around me there was a multi-cultural, open-mindedness because the neighborhood was filled with practically every nationality imaginable. All of these cultures merged, and I think my taste and musical interests reflect this."

Each of the members of 3rd Party have stuck with the dream which have brought them to this point. Perseverance and Persistence have paid off. With the group's single "*Can U Feel It*" doing well at radio, and a debut album ready for release, things are looking good for 3rd Party. Keep your eyes and ears out for a local appearance near you soon because it is sure to bring good times.

- July 1997

For further information, contact Liz Morentin/A&M Press Department (213) 856-7169

or [Lmorentin@earthlink.net](mailto:Lmorentin@earthlink.net)

[bio](#) / [music+video](#) / [photos](#)