"One thing you will never hear about me is that I am not a professional when it comes to my art. I take that very seriously. So thank you Cleveland for your support in advance." - Na'im Lynn

Kevin Hart’s Plastic Cup Boyz come to town this Friday

By BAKARI SIMPSON

Contributing Writer

Brace yourself Cleveland. Some of the hottest comedians slanging jokes and melting stages all across the country are coming to town in the form of Na'im Lynn, Will "Spank" Horton, Joey Wells and Lavar Walker better known as The Plastic Cup Boyz.

After headlining a weekend's worth of shows to record-breaking numbers of Black folks at a Cuyahoga Falls comedy club (sounds like an oxymoron, I know), I caught up with Na'im at a meet and greet with his fans at Edgar's restaurant in Akron. We sat down and discussed everything from his start in the business to the upcoming tour that kicks off in Cleveland this Friday, March 1 at the Ohio Theatre and his future as one of the opening acts for the biggest little comedian in the world, Kevin Hart.

Toting 16 years in the comedy game, Na'im has gone from one ferocious solo act to matriculating into what is currently the biggest and most successful comedy tour hitting dates all across the nation in the form of the "Kevin Hart Presents: the Plastic Cup Boyz" tour. Being the person that he is, even though Na'im is a major component of one of the most lucrative comedic projects up and running today, the savvy young comedian still has his eyes set on much, much more for himself and for his fan base.

In what has been nearly two decades in the game Na'im has crafted a well-rounded style of comedy that is inclusive of all and flat out alienating to none. He has arrived at this style for two reasons. The first being his theory that "funny is funny." The second, is that he has realized through life experience (and much traveling) that what works in this place will bomb in another so the most strategic plan is to stick with more universal themes.

Due to his powerful diligence and his professional dedication to his craft, Na'im has successfully garnered an impressive reputation in the eyes of both his fellow comedians and the audiences that have graced his sets. Long time friend and fellow comedian Kevin Hart recognized this talent and intense fire and thought wisely that Na'im would make a great addition to the comedy tour that he was planning on creating. After some deliberation, both men thought it to be a good idea and the historical tour that followed and continues to this day is history. However, as it often is with powerfully determined people, their goals and motivations (even when a part of the hottest tour in the comedy game), naturally seek more and a higher elevation.

While the tour has been no less than a magical experience, Na'im, who opens for Kevin Hart, has reached the point where it might be time to leave the nest. The rationale for this decision has absolutely zero to do with bad blood or a souring of the relationship between Kevin and

Na'im. The two started as good friends, they still are and plan on remaining in each other's high esteem. Yet in still, Na'im, as many men come to this conclusion, realized that his star can only burn so bright while still under another's banner and this epiphany has him wrestling with the option to stay on the tour or to once again blaze his own trail. "Part of me does not want to be in anyone's shadow, even if it is to the biggest comedian in the world." However, no matter how that cookie crumbles we have quite a while before that decision has to be made because Na'im and the rest of the crew are gearing up to begin another year long leg of their immensely popular tour and it all starts right here.

That's right, Cleveland you have the wonderful opportunity to go see Na'im do his thing first hand at the Ohio Theatre this Friday, March 1. Decide for yourself if he's worthy of stepping out from beneath the shadows to shine all by himself.

And to those who plan on coming to see Na'im and the rest of the Plastic Cup Boyz crew, Na'im had this to say: "If you are already coming to see me you already know me, so, thank you for the support one more time. My goal is always to deliver a great show no matter what type of mood I am in. I respect you as a fan, and I gladly take that responsibility of being a professional. I appreciate you! One thing you will never hear about me is that I am not a professional when it comes to my art, and I take that very seriously. So thank you Cleveland for your support in advance. And for all the new people that are going to jump on board… I'm here to stay!" Don't be silly Cleveland, come check out some of the funniest guys telling jokes on planet earth.

Tickets for this Friday's "Kevin Hart Presents: The Plastic Cup Boyz" tour are available at all Ticketmaster outlets and Playhousesquare.org.