

Logline:

These records changed Ali Coleman's life. This is Ali's story.

Synopsis:

For DJs, life revolves around records. Around sounds. Every life is a story, and every DJ is a narrator. Every stack of records is an endless collection of stories, myths, and memories. Can we know someone's life through their records? For some, we can even know their impact.

Full synopsis:

Ali's Story follows key turning points in the life of a New York DJ who's been part of the scene since the birth of underground dance and house music. Ali Coleman selects records that mark chapters in his life sonically, as the film visualizes his experience in part through interpretive dance performed by Chicago-based dancer Anthony Wolfe.

As Ali begins to tell us how he became a professional DJ in Brooklyn, his story is literally interrupted—in a needle-scratch moment—by the history of the Cabaret Law, a dance prohibition dating back to 1926 that imposed arbitrary regulations on community spaces and small businesses.

Over time, the law became a legal precedent that administrations like Giuliani's used to justify raids on nightlife parties throughout the 1990s and 2000s. We learn Ali was a witness to these shutdowns, and ultimately became an important part of the movement to repeal the law in 2017.

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