

"I want everyone to know that my departure from the Basement Boys was one of the hardest decisions I've ever made in my life. It wasn't easy leaving all that history behind." SPEN

Teddy asks Spen

What your first paid DJ gig?

My first paid DJ gig was at the Baltimore Civic Center. It was also the first ever performance of The Numarx (the hip hop group I was with). That was in 1982 and the headliner was Davey DMX.

Who are some of your favourite DJs, past or present?

Tony Humphries
Teddy Douglas and Thommy Davis
Timmy Regisford
Louie Vega
Danny Krivit

Favorite records you produced?

'Another Day', 'Till I Found You' and 'Smile' by Jasper St. Company, 'Gabryelle' by DJ Technics, 'The Way You Love Me' by Marc Evans, and 'It's So Easy' by Ann Nesby & The MuthaFunkaz.

Where was your first international gig?

A Basement Boys night at the Ministry of Sound in London, I believe that was in 1995.

Who or what inspires you?

I would have to say my family. My beautiful wife Kelly inspires most, if not all, of my song writing these days. She is so beautiful inside and out, that it's not hard to find inspiration out of our relationship. Same for my daughter Sarah, who I just enjoy so much! My sons Kyle and Andres keep me grounded and on my toes and I appreciate the fact that they are around. With a family like mine it's not emotionally easy to be away doing gigs as often as I do, but that makes coming home a great experience every time.

Who's in your iPod?

Usually what I am working on in the studio. Currently that's my Aunt Louise's Southern Style Gospel Project and a remix that I am working on for Jovonn's 'First Nite To Love'. When I am not in work mode I listen to what we call at home 'quiet storm' songs...so I guess that would be more the radio than an iPod.

This 'Mix The Vibe' CD is the first collaboration in four years with your mentor, me (Teddy). Explain how this project happened?

Well one day I got a call from Hisa at King Street saying: "Hey would you be interested in doing the next 'Mix The Vibe' CD with Teddy?" I thought about it for a hot second - haven't worked with Teddy in a long time - and one second later I said: "Oh yeah! Sounds like fun to me. When do we start?" It was interesting to me that the project from conception was Teddy's idea and I was excited to be a part of it.

Worst night ever versus best night ever in the life of a DJ?

Worst night ever was with Teddy Douglas, New Year's Eve, in Sicily. The dude playing before us was playing 'Barbie Girl' and I did not have anything in my record crate that even came close to that! I believe for my first record I played Mousse T 'Horny' and nobody danced to it. The owners made us pack up and play in the teeny, tiny back room they had with five people in it!

Best gig ever - Easter Monday afternoon at Freak-a-Zoin in Melbourne, Australia in 2000. Unbelievably AWESOME! Haven't played a gig like that since.

What do you want M8 Magazine to know about your departure from Basement Boys productions?

I want everyone to know that my departure from the Basement Boys was one of the hardest decisions I've ever made in my life. It wasn't easy leaving all that history behind. It was like moving away from home... no one really wants to do it...but it has to be done. It was a normal part of growing, not just as a producer, but as a person. I am happy that Teddy and I continue to be friends and have worked through our differences! At the end of the day, that is the thing that is most important to me.

I got to give a shout out to my boys the Muthafunkaz (Irvin Madden, Gary Hudge, & Gary Deane) for sticking through all this madness with me! I really appreciate you guys. ■

TEDDY

'MIX THE VIBE: TEDDY DOUGLAS & DJ SPEN' IS OUT NOW ON KING STREET SOUNDS