



*Always when I hear some great music or djs, I'm prompted to get to know what makes them tick. This is after all why I started CGNY! **DatKat** is such an example. I had seen Kat Smith at various parties around the city but didn't catch her and her sister playing til last year. They bring their west coast cool to to east side and always super entertaining to listen to and watch. Here's a little dig into the reasons why!*

CGNY: I first heard you (and your sister) play last year at a gig in the Panther Room and I was quite frankly blown away by the energy and music of your set - this was as [Analog Soul](#) and

later at

[Sustain Release](#)

where you took the roof off the place! Tell me about your journey. How did you get into music and djing?

DK: I was always exposed to music as a kid. My fondest memories were riding in the car with my father, who only listened to jazz, like Thelonious. Coltrane, Miles, Chicorea. It was way too heady for me then but I appreciated it. I largely listened to 80s, post punk, new wave, RnB, hip hop (whatever was popular) until about '98 during a visit to L.A. My sister and I stumbled upon a party thrown by Eddie Amador. It was my first exposure to the underground house scene and I was blown away. It was such a spiritual experience. Really hard to put into words but at that moment my life completely made sense. I had never felt that kind energy or connection with music and people. This inherent feeling of love and community. Once I got back home I immediately started researching and collecting. I remember sitting in my room listening to Mark Farina "Seasons" (who I credit as my inspiration for djing) and thinking: this is what I'm supposed to do. This is my calling. I was 19.

CGNY: I believe you're from L.A from what I've read - what prompted the move to NYC or you just migrated here naturally?

DK: I was actually born in San Francisco but raised in Oakland. I moved for love but my sister moved a year prior to study at Alvin Ailey. It was only natural that I'd move to NY at some point. We can't be apart.

CGNY: You were one of the founding members of East Village Radio, which sadly ended its run there last year. How did that come about?

DK: We got the opportunity through a friend Blu Jemz who introduced us to management. It really happened so fast. But I remember feeling like I was a part of something special. The Analog Soul show was born and we really just wanted it to be a platform to play all the sounds that inspired us. I was so young then as a dj and wish I had taken it a lot more seriously.

CGNY: What are your thoughts about the HUGE interest there seems to be in electronic music - and the cross over that sometimes happen - good or bad for the techno scene?

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DK: I think it's great that there's so much interest in this music and culture. Any music for that matter really. But it becomes "bad" or "lost", because there's no real understanding of the history, especially when the term Techno or electronic is used. At [Movemen](#) t this year, the highlight of the whole weekend for me was Model 500's set. After Juan introduced the band members he announced that this is birth of Techno. It was such a moving and powerful statement, not only because it came from the Godfather himself, but to see how much this sound has grown was really emotional. Snoop and Skrillex were on the bill this year which made me realize just how prevalent this whole EDM trend is. My hope is that some of the younger generation was there to witness that performance and perhaps dig a little deeper.

CGNY: What have been some of your favorite gigs to play - here or abroad?

DK: Wow! There's been so many. Abroad I would have to say Moscow at Propaganda. They're

so hungry. And playing in Montreal; some of the best underground parties. Reminds me of my early days in San Francisco at places like the Endup. But the most memorable was probably playing in the middle of the woods in the Ukraine overlooking a lake, with only 50 people, grilling fish, meeting great people and watching the sun set.

CGNY: Does working as part of a duo stretch you in a different way musically?

DK: It can be a challenge but I think it strengthens me as a dj. I'm constantly learning, particularly from my sister. She was already established when I started to play publicly. There's definitely some healthy competition. Keeps me on my toes. Teaches you how to listen.

CGNY: What separates your Datkat moniker from Analog Soul Sounds? Do you and your sis ever disagree on what music you want to play?!

DK: As DatKat I tend to play a bit harder. Usually more techno/electro driven. But it really depends on my mood. We often go into a set with an idea of the sound we want to play, but just sort of wing it. Sometimes we disagree on selection but I think that's part of what makes our sound so diverse as Analog Soul. We never really know what the other is playing which allows the set to go so across the board.

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DK: There's a definite lack of women represented in this culture. However, I just want the music to speak for itself. I consider myself a dj not a "female dj". It's not about gender but quality. But I welcome being the underdog.

CGNY: Who or what is on your iPod at the moment?

DK: Actually don't even own one of those but listening to a lot French Synth Pop, Electro and Minimal wave lately. Cha Cha Guitri's been on repeat.



CGNY: Anyone that's leaping out at you that you find particularly inspirational?

DK: Always [Drexciya](#) . And any project by James Stinson

CGNY: What do you do to prepare for a set?

DK: Sometimes I'll go into a set with a clear idea of what I want to play so I'll pull records accordingly. I'll even arrange them in my bag in the order I want to play them. But I try to have enough varied music with me, because you never really know how the night will go or how the

audience will respond. And sometimes you need to take risks.

CGNY: Can you tell us if you'll be back to Sustain Release this year? (asked before SR released final lineup!)

DK: I'll be there to party but won't be on the bill this year.

CGNY: In terms of your work as producer - what kind of sound are you putting out?

DK: My sound is largely deep Detroit techno and house, but also ambient and drum and bass. very melodic. It really depends on my mood. I've made hip hop also. I never sit down with the intention of making a particular sound or genre.

CGNY: What are the new challenges as a producer and must one be a producer now as well as a dj?

DK: This one is difficult to answer because even though I make music I don't have any projects released so don't really have an opinion about what the "new challenges" are. Perhaps it's figuring out what medium works best for me. As a new producer I'm learning every day, as if I'm djing for the first time. However, it seems the argument is if you want your career to go to the "next level" you need to have music out.

Check out Datkat on [SC](#) and Analog Soul Sounds [here](#)

Analog Soul play here next - July 17th <http://www.residentadvisor.net/event.aspx?728921>

