

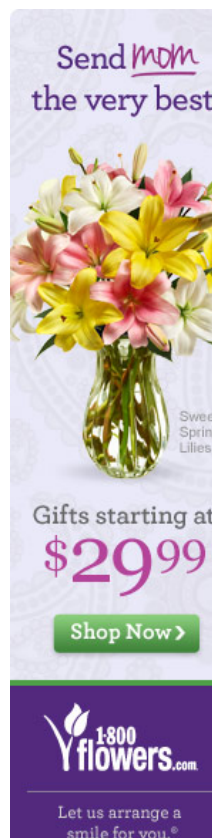


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I Can Give You Kenneth Thomas [Interview]

Posted on May 2, 2013 in [House](#), [Interview](#), [Progressive House](#), [Trance](#)



This week **I Can Give You House** had the pleasure of interviewing house/trance producer **Kenneth Thomas**. Originally from Detroit, Kenneth's illustrious career has seen him on the Beatport Top 100 over two dozen times, providing direct tour support for **Paul Oakenfold, Calvin Harris, Chuckie, and Tiesto**, as well as signing records to **Perfecto, Armada, Coldharbour, Hope**, and more. Just off from a recent tour in China, Kenneth was gracious enough to supply us with some keen insight into his career and the state of dance music today. Full interview below:

I Can Give You House: For those not yet familiar, who is Kenneth Thomas?

Kenneth Thomas: A musical minded DJ that delivers a fresh, bright sound mixed with some of your current favorite tracks as well as many of your next favorite tracks.

ICGYH: How has being from Detroit influenced your sound?

KT: There is a blue-collar mentality that comes from living in Detroit. We are sort of an island to ourselves; as a city, we don't look for others to make it happen for us. The mindset here is you need to make it happen yourself. It's on you, go do it. I hold tight to that mentality and drive. I am not afraid to work for my success.

ICGYH: Though trance music has always been an intrinsic part of EDM it has not broached the mainstream as aggressively as other genres. How do you explain that? Where do you see trance moving in the future?

KT: I actually kinda see it in another way. I see Trance as having been a huge influence on where mainstream dance is right now. A lot of people

call this new pop sound “House” but if you ask any true house-head if it’s house, it’s really not. That’s not a bad thing though, I love where the big room sound is, but it isn’t really house music. Though the speed is more in the housier range as well as the basslines, the leads, the vocals and really the entire big room back-bone in that sound is obviously influenced by trance music. It’s basically trance that has been processed to be more mainstream palatable. Now, where do I see Trance in the future? I think its going to continue to be where it’s been heading for the past few years. I love where “trance” is today – slower with so much chunk and dancefloor vibe. My new single “**These Chords**” although peaking high in the trance charts could easily get hammered in a Swedish House Mafia set as well as a Markus Schulz set. Look at what Zedd and Porter Robinson are doing, Spectrum & Language are just trance tunes. Forward thinking modern trance, but trance nonetheless. I think the future of trance is just like every other genre, and that’s becoming harder and harder to put a genre label on it.

ICGYH: How has your sound evolved over the course of your career? Has it changed much in the wake of EDM’s commercial takeover in the US?

KT: My sound has always been a blend of genres, I’ve always pulled from house, electro, breaks and of course trance to make my sound. The EDM culture in the US has led a lot of my set to be a little more big room/prog-house heavy. I believe a DJ needs to have range in what they carry in their bag so they can adjust to the many different crowds, venues and timeslots they play. And when playing in North America, I often find myself in settings where the crowd expects and only knows that Beatport Top 10 commercial sound. In those settings I do pepper my sets with those big room house elements but I also make sure that I bring my own sound across as well. Its about walking a fine balance between doing my job and rocking a party as well as educating them at the same time.

ICGYH: What inspires you to make music? Where do you find inspiration?

KT: A lot of my inspiration comes from being out at events, not playing, just sitting back listening, feeling the crowd’s energy as a spectator vs being the DJ. Hearing really great tracks with stunning production also gets me fired up. Right now stuff from **Audien**, **Nigel Good**, and **Dinka** really jazzes me up and makes me want to make better music!

ICGYH: Give us an under-the-hood of your studio setup. What software DAW/plugins and hardware pieces do you use to produce?

KT: I’m on Logic Pro with Rokit 8s and a Rokit 10 sub from KRK. I use a ton of the Logic stock plug ins. I feel it’s important to not overload yourself with too many plug-ins. Instead, it’s better to focus on a few great ones and really learn how to use those. I love Sylenth and I’ve been using a great cheap \$89 synth called Vanguard for years. When touring I can’t survive without my V-Moda headphones for producing on the road.

ICGYH: What element/aspect of the electronic music world would you like to change?

KT: Probably the shelf life of tracks. Its a shame that tracks only really live for a month or sometimes less. 10-15 years ago you would hammer an anthem for 6 months. Now its a faux pas if you are a touring DJ and play a big record 3 or 4 weeks after it’s released. I like to invest in tracks, So I try to avoid the big obvious records that I’m only going to be able to play for a month and try to find those amazing tracks that are just under the surface that I can hammer for years. I have a number of bombs in my bag that are years old yet every time I drop one the trainspotters come running up yelling, “What is that track?!?!”

ICGYH: Name one dance music and one non-dance music artist you would like to collaborate with and why.

KT: Just off the cuff, I love what **Nigel Good** is doing right now and **Rank 1** has such full and chunky trance sound – those two dance artists would both be great. **Coldplay** would be a dream to collaborate with. They walk that line between stunningly emotional melodies and pop appeal, and then **Chris Martin** vocals to boot? Im sold.

ICGYH: What has been your greatest gig to date? Why?

KT: Probably my first touring gig supporting **Paul Oakenfold** back in 2005. He let me play deep into his timeslot and was just rocking out in the booth with me. Then later that night he officially signed me to Perfecto which was the first big break for my career. I was on cloud 9 for 6 months after that gig!

ICGYH: What releases can we look forward to later this year?

KT: Im still riding high on my latest singles, “These Chords” which has been my staple finale record for months now and “**Hiding**” a dream collaboration I did with **Molly Bancroft** from **Gabriel & Dresden**, Tracking Treasure Down fame. Forthcoming, I have a follow up to These Chords called “**Heart on Fire**”. Word is it was the biggest track of Oakenfolds last tour. Also, I have a more pop-minded electro track called “**Best Night Ever**”. Straight up party rocker anthem! There’s quite a bit more in the pipes as well, aiming to be a very big year!

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