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DARIN EPSILON: ALWAYS KEEP YOUR EGO IN CHECK

by James Gill

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America's no1 progressive artist Darin Epsilon has risen to the top through sheer hard work and dedication to the scene.



Darin Epsilon, thanks so much for taking the time to chat with us! To start off, can you give us an idea of how you became an artist, and what influences really moulded your sound into what it is today?

Really great to be here and thanks for inviting me! Well, music has always been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. I grew up playing two instruments and wrote my first track at age 14. I was lucky enough to attend a basic music production course in high school and that was what began to fuel my interest.

Being from Chicago, the birthplace of House music, I was exposed to a lot of electronic music growing up. I used to be an avid listener of 96.3 FM (known as B96) where **Bad Boy Bill** (<http://www.badboybill.com/>) was a regular. The early 90's was the earliest I remember electronic music really hitting the mainstream in the form of euro-pop and Italo disco. Then came the Electronica boom in the late 90's from bands like

Prodigy, Chemical Brothers, and Underworld.

Around the turn of the century I discovered **Paul Oakenfold** (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Oakenfold), **Sasha** ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sasha_\(DJ\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sasha_(DJ))) & **John Digweed** (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Digweed), and that's when everything changed. After witnessing them together live during the Delta Heavy tour, that's when I understood how dance music could take you on a journey. These days I'm still very much into tracks with deep groovy basslines and big epic melodies, especially because of my musical upbringing.

Achieving the notoriety to be able to play overseas is every DJ's dream. Can you tell us what your first international show was like? Where was it and what was it like to play in front of a completely new crowd the first time?

My first international gig was in Omsk, Siberia on September 1, 2007. It was a group of friends that invited me and they were all really big fans of my Perspectives radio show.

Believe it or not, the event was held inside a car garage and packed with 1500 Russian ravers! It's still my favorite event to this day and was so lucky to have had the opportunity to fly to the other side of the world so early in my career.

With that said, what has been your favourite place to play, and why? Is there something particular about the vibe of this place you'd like to see in other parts of the world as well?

Mexico is where I've experienced the absolute craziest parties. I've played there at least 15 times and the crowds in general have a much bigger appreciation for non-mainstream dance music. Some of my other favourite places to play include Kenya, India, Argentina, and Russia.

DARIN EPSILON | VIBE's 30 DJs To Watch In 2014



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With the blossoming of new cultural centres for progressive-oriented dance music in Argentina, Israel, and Eastern Europe, the modern landscape of the underground sound has seen the

emergence of new driving forces behind it's growth and innovation. For North America, gone are the good old days of the epic Twilo sessions with Sasha & Digweed and the massive Florida raves that saw the debut of international talent playing in the western hemisphere. But where do you think we stand now? Are we on the rise again, or are we transforming into something new?

I definitely feel that underground music will experience a growth spurt in the next couple of years. Commercial dance music will always be around but eventually people are going to crave something new and exciting. The same thing happened to me: I was into a lot of hard dance and cheesy club music early on, but my taste in music evolved over time.

Also, how can I not mention the importance and role of social media in all this? It has changed the game completely and flattened the barriers of entry for new artists. Now anyone can create a track and have the chance to be heard by millions around the world.

On one hand, this is good because the music is spreading faster to more listeners than ever before. On the other hand, it's bad because there's a real lack of quality control and overcrowding. A lot of great artists that deserve to have a career in music are getting overlooked as a result.

What is the scene like for you in California right now? Do you feel this is indicative of the North American scene in general or is there a unique, diverse feel to different places in the western hemisphere?

California has been great to me. I really feel it was the best decision of my life to move out here. It was not easy at first but eventually it did lead me to a residency at Avalon, followed by a residency at Exchange LA for Insomniac Events.

I think most people will agree with me when I say that LA and NYC are trendsetters within the US. Whatever makes it big here tends to trickle down to the smaller cities. I do feel we have a long way before we can be compared to South America though.

Do you have any cool shows coming up that you're excited about?

I've just completed my Argentina tour which was really amazing! I made a cut from my gig in Buenos Aires for your podcast. I will also be performing with **Nick Warren** (<http://www.djnickwarren.com/>) on Memorial Day here in LA. Nick is someone I've looked up to for quite some time.

I know there are people looking forward to my Las Vegas debut at AFTER, but unfortunately the promoters are currently relocating to a new venue. Keep my fingers crossed that we'll reschedule soon.

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You're known as an all-around nice guy Darin, and anyone who's worked with you can testify to it, but is there anything out there in the music industry, or any experiences you've had in your journey,

that really makes you angry? Why?

Now you're getting to the juicy part of the interview 😊 There is quite a lot to be angry about actually, but I try to remain focused and positive.

I guess my biggest peeve is the younger generation's lack of ability to think for themselves. They're stuck in this group mentality that "EDM" is the cool genre and everything else is unappealing. One of the major reasons why I was drawn towards electronic music in the first place was that it was so unlike anything else I had ever heard.

Musicians who had once pushed for innovation and creativity (many of whom spent decades dedicated to their craft) have been replaced by button-pushers that appeal to the lowest common denominator and are there purely to generate ticket sales.

Also, amongst the underground, the scene feels fractured and spread out. In my opinion, it shouldn't matter if you play Deep House or Progressive or Techno. We're at a point now where music either falls under "commercial" or "non-commercial". I don't understand this mentality that I can't play your club because I don't sound exactly like **Richie Hawtin** (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richie_Hawtin) .

Changing gears to the studio, what have you been working on recently? Any exciting or fun projects in the pipeline?

I have 6 releases slated for the summer including Hernan Cattaneo & Soundexile's remix of my track 'The Conclusion' on Perspectives, followed by new releases on Sudbeat, Black Hole, Armada, Manual Music, and more.



Darin Epsilon

[PSDI 027] Darin Epsilon & DeeProgressV - The Conclusion (Marcelo Va

Do you have any gear or plugins of choice you are currently digging at the moment? Or perhaps a “go-to” weapon of choice in the studio?

I'm using **Spectrasonics Omnisphere** (<http://www.spectrasonics.net/products/omnisphere.php>) , **Synplant** (<http://www.kvraudio.com/product/synplant-by-sonic-charge/details>) , **Rob Papen's Predator** (<http://www.robpapen.com/predator.html>) , **Z3ta+** (<https://www.cakewalk.com/products/z3ta/>) , **Sasha Soundlab** (<http://audioraiders.com/>) , and **Native Instruments' Guitar Rig** (<http://www.native-instruments.com/en/products/komplete/guitar/guitar-rig-5-pro/>) on just about every project that I do.

What is your biggest piece of advice to young producers, perhaps something they should be focusing on when trying to write that “big” track?

Be patient and don't expect to blow up overnight. Network, network, network. Good quality relationships are the key to success.

On the other hand, what's your biggest “don't do” that you might want to share to artists who are currently trying to get their tracks out there?

I think it goes without saying that you should always keep your ego in check and never create unnecessary drama. A reputation takes a lifetime to build but only seconds to destroy. Also, do your homework when deciding which label to work with. It's always very obvious for me as a label owner who gets it and who doesn't.

We talked a little about the North American scene from a performance standpoint, but along the lines of the production side, are there are any producers out there right now that are doing it for you?

I've been hearing great stuff by **Hugo Ibarra** (<http://www.beatport.com/artist/hugo-ibarra/186156>) & **Uvo** (<http://www.beatport.com/artist/uvo/291732>) , Issac, Simply City, James Gill, Zack Roth, Konektiv, and Levente. Also, I bumped into Maceo Plex at the airport recently by accident and didn't realize he's from Miami.

We've heard rumors of some massive releases slated for your label Perspectives Digital in the coming months. Care to share any hints on what's to be expected?

Haha thanks, we have a stacked schedule for 2014 including new music by Hernan Cattaneo & Soundexile, Roger Martinez, Ricky Ryan & Kosmas, SQL, Marcelo Vasami, Paul Hazendonk & Noraj Cue, Mike Griego, Shimmer, Jaap Ligthart, Michael A, and more.

Who's on your wishlist to work with the future? Both personally and/or on Perspectives?

There are way too many to mention but **Sasha** (<http://www.djsasha.com/>) , **BT** (<http://www.btmusic.com/>) , **Way Out West** (<http://www.wayoutwest.mu/>) , Liam Howlett from the Prodigy, Quivver, **Guy J** (<http://guy-j.com/>) , and **Eelke Kleijn** (<http://www.eelkekleijn.nl/>) rank high on my list.

Thanks so much for taking the time with us Darin! Catch you soon!

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James Gill is a DJ, producer, audio engineer and partner @ Push The Night, a club brand which hosts some of the biggest shows in NYC underground. A former promoter @ Sullivan Room, James has built a strong reputation on the NYC DJ circuit and has warmed up for the biggest names in the business. As a producer, his productions have been supported by greats like Nick Muir, Anthony Pappa... he was also placed as a runner up in Jamie Stevens remix competition and is currently in the studio working on new material.

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