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George Acosta : The DJ Times Interview



http://www.djtimes.com/issues/features_current.htm

Beginning with a Late-Night Boat Ride, George Acosta's Journey to the Top of the U.S. DJ Class Has Shown Uncommon Drive
Miami—Think you can find a success story from the DJ realm that's more compelling than George Acosta's? Good luck.

This past August at El Hotel Pacha in Ibiza, after he accepted his plaque for winning DJ Times' second annual America's Best DJ vote, Acosta celebrated, then quietly revealed his life history. Sure, he had finished another chapter in a goal-oriented career, his professional dedication and entrepreneurial spirit paying off in hardware and lasting accolades. But the eventful journey was worth noting because, at that moment, Acosta knew better than anyone how his globetrotting life and career were things he could never take for granted.

Long before he won industry awards or produced any hit records, before he regularly played the world's top clubs or thrived as a teen DJ/promoter in a then-gritty Miami Beach, Acosta was a little boy living in Castro's Cuba. Dissatisfied with the state of affairs on the island nation, Acosta's parents were determined by the late 1970s to leave their homeland. But, because Cuba's restrictive government was less than fond of granting exit permits to its citizens, the Acostas made their own break and hopped a speedboat in the middle of the night. One-hundred-and-six miles later, young George—just 5-years-old at the time—woke up in the United States with a new set of possibilities.



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As another Cuban exile in Miami, Acosta assimilated fairly easily and DJing played a big part. He rose from a middle-school mobile to an entrepreneurial teen—he even had a radio mixshow while in high school. He organized and DJed wildly successful warehouse parties and gained notice from Miami Beach’s elite club promoters. Like many of the most successful DJs, he had become adept with the music and the hustle.

A defining moment came when preparing for a Miami Beach rave. Challenged by the notion of sharing the bill with Josh Wink, who was riding high with a succession of club hits like “Higher State of Consciousness,” Acosta created a special track for the event. It was “Set U Free.” Fronted by the late Nadine Renée and released on Strictly Rhythm in 1995 under the moniker Planet Soul, the trancey breakbeat track went onto sell 1.2 million copies worldwide. Since then, he’s further embraced the trance sound and released a slew of tracks and mix comps—including 2007’s double-CD A State of Mind (Moist). He continues to travel the world and build on his substantial fanbase, which supported him enormously in the America’s Best DJ vote. Still, he remains eager to push himself artistically and, to that end, he recently enrolled in SAE Institute, an audio engineering school with a campus in North Miami Beach. As Winter Music Conference neared, we caught up with our America’s Best DJ winner to relive moments of his life, both triumphant and harrowing.

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