



As a waypoint for eclectic musicians perform as they blow through town, maybe on an international tour, maybe at a house party for friends, Los Angeles has certainly seen more than its share of talented music shows. Hailing from Spain, music producer and DJ David Tort has been tearing up the charts the world over for years now. On a recent visit to LA, as he prepares for a show, Tort invites me into his hotel room and graciously takes the time to chat with me.

Wonderful to meet you, David. What are you spinning with tonight?

I don't use vinyl anymore. I did for 18 years of my life, then I switched to CDs. I never liked those, but now I am using USB sticks and my life has never been easier.

It certainly makes life easier not having to haul round a backpack full of vinyl. What do you think about the sound quality from vinyl to CDJs to USB?

Right now the music sounds really good. When we changed from vinyl to MP3, I don't think a lot of sound systems were ready for MP3s, but it is much easier to buy and carry around.

Where is the beginning point when you are making an original track.

Everything starts in my head. It's for different reasons. Sometimes I'm coming back from the club and I have something I want to make.

When you go out and play, do you feel at all like an ambassador from Spain or that you represent Spanish house music at all?

I don't feel that way.

And yet it feels like you are the number one producer and house DJ coming out of Spain.

I don't feel that way. There are more professional DJs coming from Spain. There are four or five in the house music scene. There is big talent in techno. We are taking over the world, man. I am from the world, and everything looks the same all over the world.

So being an international DJ, what country do you think shows you the most love?

I make the same kind of set worldwide, but I have to say United States and maybe Brazil are places I feel more love from the crowd. They are really into it.

You said house music is taking over the world. What do you think the international appeal of house music is?

I don't know, man. I'm just happy where we are right now. I discovered house music in 1998 and before that I was into house type techno and stuff. A lot of different types of music.

What were you doing in the early '90s?

I was partying. I went to the club party when I was 14 years old and kept going. I first played acid house, which was big at the time, in 1988. From there I was investing.

How do you feel being nominated for so many different awards as a DJ?

You know what? I don't really give a sh-t.

It doesn't affect you when you play live or produce?

Don't misunderstand me, it feels good to be nominated and it feels so good when people tell me they voted. I just don't mind because every day I have to go to work in the studio and in the club. There are some very good actors who have never got an Oscar.

It's all politics, but I'm sure it's a great affirmation to know that people genuinely enjoy your music. Can you give me a brief rundown of your extracurricular music production? For example, I know you've made music for TV shows and the like.

I did music for MTV and they put it in the show. Any show they want, I don't know.

How did you get involved with that?

MTV just asked me for a track and they will run like 4 seconds of it in a bunch of different programs. They need a lot of music. It's a different type of production than I'm used to. I also produced a punk rock band. It was an amazing experience I would love to do again.

Sounds exciting. Tell me about that.

It was a punk rock band from Spain. It was two years ago. They came to me because they heard me playing in the club and the bass player came to me and said, "Hey, man, can you do this with our music?" They wanted a DJ, not a rock producer. I also did three chillout albums under another name. Every time I can I try to make something different because I have something inside me I have to put out.

And if it doesn't align with the David Tort style of music, you put it out on a different name or label?

Yes, I have to. Like, if I wanted to make some mariachi music.

Haha! I understand that if you were to put out some mariachi, you couldn't release it as David Tort.

No. I would release it under the name Jose Perez.

[David's tour manager cracks up laughing.]

What sort of music software are you music to produce?

Yes, I always use Logic. For maybe 10 or 15 years now. The best program is the one you know. You can use Logic, Cubase, Pro-tools, whatever. I sometimes use Pro-tools to record guitar but I have to go to Logic to make the track. I use Ableton for my radio show.

I know you have a very popular radio show, "Rock Da House". How would you describe the style of that?

I try to play the music that I cannot play in the club. Well, I play the tracks I play in the club, plus others I cannot. I cannot play deep house, for example.

Does your radio show feel like a DJ set or a track by track showcase of music?

It's a mix show. I try not to talk too much. I'm not a radio guy and I don't speak English very well.

Any remix coming out you are excited for?

I stopped for awhile because I did too many remixes recently.

Too many remixes?

I did too much, man. I finished myself. I did so many and it was like, I don't know what the fuck to do now. It was too much so I stopped. Now I remix for my friend, Norman Ray, because he asked me to and I loved the original. New things are coming but I really cannot say right now.

Any collaborations coming up?

Yes, lots of collaborations. Now I see it is time for collaborations. Everyone is doing it and I don't want to be...

Left in the dust?

Yes, the lone Spaniard guy.

Haha, the lone Spaniard, huh? That is a good name for a side project, or an album title.

Lonesome cowboy.

What would be your dream collaboration, even if it's not realistic?

[David giggles] I don't want to say it in public. No, I don't know. Sometimes I think I love this guy and his style of music and I would love to make a track with him, but it just doesn't work. Some things just come naturally and some don't.

Do you not play well with others?

There has to be chemistry.

With the advent of all of these new facets to release digital music, like Beatport, Addictech, Soundcloud, what is your choice application to release music?

I make a track and give it to my label manager. He is working [with] only my music. When I do the track I am the one who says which label I want. Say I make a track and I feel it is for Axtone. My manager sends it to them and usually they will ask for it. After this, I cannot decide anything. It is in the labels hands and they decide where to put it. Then motherfuckers go and illegally download it.

With single tracks it is a lot harder to pirate them rather than whole albums.

If it's one guy at his home downloading my music, it is not a problem for me.

It's because he loves your music.

Don't forget, I need to eat. I cannot download an orange. I am not made that they are taking my music, I am mad because they don't respect the music anymore, and that is what really hurts me. When I was a kid I had ten bucks to buy a vinyl. I remember looking at all of the vinyl in the shops and picking out just one and it was my treasure.

Those are the hardcore fans who will come to your shows and buy the vinyl just to support you.

Music is a beautiful thing we need to treasure, because if we don't it might disappear. The worst thing is the DJ whole illegally downloads the music because he is getting paid to play the music that he stole. That's the real problem because I make music for DJs, well, I make music for everybody, but it is music to be played by DJs.

You can't be expected to memorize your entire tour. Was there anything else you want to add, David?

I really love L.A., as you can see by my L.A. tattoo here. I came to L.A. in 2001 and was shocked at how great everything was.