

## Spotted



British pop singer Rita Ora (left) on a Chanel photoshoot near the Burj Khalifa and at the

Little Black Jacket Exhibition. Bollywood actress and Canadian glamour model Sunny Leone and Indian actor John Abraham at Ibn Battuta Mall.

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## Hot seat Jazzy Jeff

Fresh from spinning at Dubai's Cirque du Soir, Rob Garratt cornered the 48-year-old DJ to discuss hip-hop, Nelson Mandela, and former musical partner Will Smith



### How are you finding Dubai?

I've come to Dubai a number of times. I love the people, love the music, love the vibe.

### You played our Music & Nightlife Awards after-party at People by Crystal last March. Tell us you had a good night.

It was a great night! I was able to play a very eclectic set – it was beautiful. We're doing an online video tour diary, Vinyl Distortion, and the last episode to go on my website shows the last time I was in Dubai – check it out.

### You've been in the game a while. How has your approach changed?

I haven't changed – everything else has changed – but I've always adopted the philosophy that, like anybody, I don't like just one type of music. If you play a two-hour set, you don't have to satisfy everybody for two hours – you can satisfy

three different groups for 45 minutes each.

### And you never take requests.

Not at all. To me, requests are what you get from a jukebox. You used to come to hear a DJ because you like what they do and feel what they're doing, in the way you would see what your favourite director did next.

## 'As much as Will loves movies and Hollywood, he's a musician at heart'

### You get some flak for moving away from your hip-hop roots.

A lot of the old hip-hop heads understand and respect what I'm doing. When I started I was carrying crates of records. I had hip-hop, R&B,

rock and reggae sets. I've been through all these genres to this musical path. It's not about playing just one thing.

### Where do you think hip-hop is at today?

My biggest issue is the fact that most big R&B superstars are doing dance music. Justin Timberlake has just come out with the most R&B album in seven years. I'm not necessarily a puritan or against people expanding their passion, but when you get these guys doing straight dance records... I love Usher to death, but I can't remember the last R&B record he did.

### What's the biggest misconception people have about your former sparring partner, Will Smith?

I don't know what misconceptions people have – but I will say first and foremost he is a producer of music.

As much as he loves movies and Hollywood, Will is a musician at heart. He's just trying to find a balance between being the biggest movie star on the planet and making a record. And that's why, every chance we get, if I'm spinning at an event he's back on the mic.

### Who's the most intimidating person you've met?

I sat on a plane next to Muhammad Ali and watched him sleep for four hours. But it was probably Nelson Mandela. He was great, we were able to sit down and he asked me questions. I have a picture on the wall with him and that's the one people stop and go: 'Was that real?'

### Describe your personality in five words.

I'm super laid-back, and a lover of life. That's seven, right? [www.dijjazzyjeff.com](http://www.dijjazzyjeff.com).

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