

Spotted



Marco Pierre White (left) mooching around La Petite Maison in DIFC (despite telling Time Out

that he only goes to his own restaurants). British D-grade celeb and TV personality Danny Dyer smoking shisha at Karma Kafé. **British-Indian actress and MTV India VJ Sophie Choudry at the airport.**

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Hot seat

Paul van Dyk

The acclaimed German DJ returns to Dubai to play Peppermint Experience's eighth anniversary next week. *Rob Garratt* cornered the 40-year-old for a chat



What brings you back to Dubai so often?
I really like Dubai as a place. It's a cool place to play, the crowds are really open and easy. Electronic music requires a lot from audiences and in Dubai I find them very responsive.

You've won more awards than any other DJ. So what's the secret of your ongoing appeal?
In the past 20 years, electronic music has taken itself from [being] a small subculture to the [most] popular music in the world. I think my audience appreciates that I'm not playing the next trend because it's a trend – I'm trying to do electronic music in my own way. I interact with the audience and together we make for a great electronic night out.

How much of your set changes each night?
The major elements are composed, but I establish everything live on the spot. It's not about the right track at the right time – it's about the right elements at the right time.

'Hardly any of the new artists are outstanding'

When did you decide you'd outgrown the label of playing 'trance'?
I never was a trance DJ, and if you compare me to the guys that are happy with that label my music is very different. You find elements from all genres

of electronic music in what I do, and this is what makes it interesting. Focusing on just one part is very boring.

But surely electronic music has been diluted by all this commercial amalgamation...
I don't really call that electronic music, I call it 'danceable-sounding pop music'. Some of these younger artists, they just feel the moment, they want to be rich and famous. This is one of the reasons they all sound the same. They're not feeling, there's nothing new, they're copying something that's already been done. There's hardly any of these new guys that are outstanding. But I still think electronic music is the most creative and expressive art form.

How long can it stay on top?
For me, it always will be. There will always be something new and interesting. A guitar will always sound like a guitar. You can't manipulate it. If you take a synthetic bass sound you can discover many things. There are endless possibilities.

You're known for your political activity. Can music have any real effect on the world?
The popularity I've enjoyed because of my music enables me to be outspoken about things [I care about], and may enable me to inspire people to go ahead and do things. I really believe democracy is the best chance we have on the planet, but it's not perfect and we all have to be part of it. If you can do something in your own neighbourhood to help somebody, you should.

Paul van Dyk plays Peppermint Experience's eighth anniversary at Dubai World Trade Centre on Friday June 1, 9pm-3am. Tickets Dhs150 from www.timeouttickets.com

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