

ONE ENTRANCING DJ

Paul Oakenfold made his mark on pop and dance music

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Paul Oakenfold's first DJ gig, as a teen? Spinning funk and soul in a London wine bar. As a musician's son who was born in 1963, it's no surprise that pop and rock music are a major influence on his style, and that may be one of the secrets to his flash and widespread appeal.

At 21, he moved to New York and eventually became a hip-hop label scout, signing DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince and Salt-n-Pepa. Later in that decade, he landed in Ibiza and found his own groove, as one of the originators of electronic music emanating from Ministry of Sound and Cream in London. His Perfecto record label, founded in 1988, was at the forefront for the breakout of trance music.

Oakenfold became known for his ability to captivate huge crowds as a DJ, but he's often collaborated with singers and musicians, producing records with Madonna, including

"SATURDAY NIGHT SESSIONS HAWAII"

With Paul Oakenfold (U.K./L.A.), DJ Reza (L.A.), G-Spot, Michael Fuller, Superstar Nikki, Tide, Scard, KALL, Big Daddy Dave and Miko

Where: Makapuu Meadows, Sea Life Park, 41-212 Kalaniana'ole Highway

When: 5 p.m. Saturday
Cost: \$30, \$75 VIP (plus service charge); \$10 parking

Info: fla.vor.us, 855-235-2867, www.pauloakenfold.com

2009's "Celebration," and playing supporting sets on world tours with Madonna and U2. He also earned worldwide notoriety for playing a show at the Great Wall of China and headlining massive sold-out concerts at the Hollywood Bowl.

In recent years, Oakenfold has been a cornerstone of the Rain nightclub in Las Vegas, with "Planet Perfecto," a show with circus performers, multimedia and special effects designed to keep a crowd of 3,000 dazzled. His residency closes out with a major New Year's Eve show this year, but Oakenfold said "anything's possible" as far as a return in the future.

Even if you don't think you've heard Oakenfold, you have, on film scores for "The Bourne Identity," "Matrix Reloaded," "Collateral," even "Shrek 2." His latest project, "Pop Killer," expected out early next year, has been in the works since at least 2009. It's a collaboration between Oakenfold and talent including Cee-Lo/Gnarls Barkley, Ryan Tedder of OneRepublic, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, B.O.B. and Matt Goss. Follow him on Twitter, twitter.com/pauloakenfold, for links to his radio show and other tips about his globe-trotting appearances.

We sent Oakenfold some questions via email while he was in South America last week, leading up to his Oahu appearance at "Saturday Night Sessions." Here's what he had to say:

STAR-ADVERTISER: Aloha, Paul! It's been a number of years

since you last spun here, so hard-core dancers are looking forward to experiencing your talents. Where are you right now and, in reflection, how's your year been?

PAUL OAKENFOLD: I'm in Argentina at the moment, on the final part of this South American leg of my "We Are Planet Perfecto" album tour. This year has been great. The new team we have in place at the Perfecto office, the new artists we have been signing and the singles and albums we have been releasing — there's so much going on. I feel privileged to be where I am right now, and truly, 2012 is going to be a massive year.

Q: Madonna will be doing the halftime show at the Super Bowl. Will you be working with her? What effect has she had on your career? What's the reason behind you two working so well together?

A: I will not be working with "M" at the Super Bowl — that's her stage; however, working with her in the studio and opening up for her on tour, she made a big influence on me and on my work. In my opinion she is the most complete artist I have ever worked with. Over the years we have nurtured a mutual creative friendship, which for me is the basis of why we work so well together.

Q: I know two of your biggest gigs have been the Great Wall of China and the Hollywood Bowl. But I want to know what has been the best intimate gig you've ever done and why.

A: The one I did just recently in Ushuaia, Argentina, the "Party at the End of the World" ... a party in the middle of the wilderness, literally the middle of nowhere. Sharing the experience with a thousand people, it was so intimate and special, just phenomenal and really emotional. As with the Great Wall, these kinds of gigs are so special and are moments to really cherish.

Q: Tell us a bit about your upcoming "Pop Killer" album.

A: My intention was to create an album of great songs sung by equally great vocalists accompanied by big, fat, edgy beats. It's a sound I was drawn to, which took me in a totally different direction.

Q: You've mentioned that you've come to appreciate doing edgy, melodic music with great songwriters and singers. Could you mention some of those collaborations, in light of the recent volume of "Planet Perfecto," and who you may or would like to work with in the future?

A: I could ... but then I would be talking about "Pop Killer" again!

