

Mixing it up for hometown fans

By Derek Paiva

ADVERTISER STAFF WRITER

Like any other proudly defiant music collector who judges the weight of his or her worth by the amount of Springsteen or Morrissey bootlegs in their record collection, Superstar DJ Keoki will eagerly talk at length about his "finds."

"I have an album with Björk and her original band from Iceland, where she's singing everything in Icelandic," boasts Keoki, via telephone from his newly-occupied Bronx apartment. "I've got 50 copies of 'Saturday Night Fever' just because every time I see a copy I want to buy it. It's the first record I ever bought."

Wait a minute, though, interrupts the proudly defiant music collector working days as a newspaper staff writer: A pre-Sugarcubes Björk on vinyl?

"Yeah," says Keoki, this sudden interest raising the obvious pride in his voice several notches higher. "She autographed it for me in New York years ago. It was very cool. She couldn't believe I had it. She was like, 'Where did you find this?'"

Long distance high-fives are exchanged.

One of the most recognized and talented DJs on the '90s electronic dance scene, Keoki is also a former Hawai'i resident — raised in Kāhala, graduated from Kailua High School and a former teenage Wave slave.

"I was 16 or 17," remembers Keoki, of mid-1980s high school evenings spent hanging outside the venerable Walkiki nightclub. "Sometimes I

Superstar DJ Keoki

At "Supa Luv II", with Gearwhore, DJ Koa, DJ Quiksilva, G-Spot

9 p.m., Saturday

Laniākea YMCA, 1040 Richards St.

\$15-\$20

591-3500

would get in. Sometimes I wouldn't." Looking to travel the world, Keoki moved to New York after graduation, pursuing a job and free airline travel with TWA. A part-time job as a busboy at Manhattan's Danceteria nightclub to support his no-frills jet-set lifestyle led to several in-house substitute DJ gigs where Keoki and the rest of the club's resident deviants discovered that the kid from Hawai'i with the crazy record collection was a natural born mixer.

Dubbing himself "Superstar DJ Keoki," the former Keoki Franconi soon became one of the most sought-after New York DJs in the country, working himself in and out of 1990s club and rave culture via constant gigging and a growing collection of well-received mix-albums and original works such as 1997's "Ego Trip" and 2001's "Jealousy."



Troy Rasey

Kailua High School grad Keoki Franconi is a big-name DJ in the dance halls of Manhattan. He's home for a little relaxation and the chance to spin his mixes at local gigs for the hometown crowd.

Of late, Keoki has been trying to make a habit of returning to Hawai'i at least twice a year to unwind in Kailua with his family, tend to his two beloved custom-built Harley Davidsons, and spin the best of his vinyl vault at a local gig or two (such

as Saturday's "Supa Luv II" event downtown).

"It's really exciting when I come back and there's a line around the block," admits Keoki. "When I come to Hawai'i, I always try to bring the best of everything that I'm doing and

try different things. I really go through my set, the records I'm going to play, the stuff that I've done, to bring a package that says, "This is what's happening right now in the world."