

London, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2009

**+ You have both been strong figures of London's nightlife for years now, exactly when and how did you first meet?**

Jerry: My brother Tom & I used to dj together way back and were big S-Express fans from day one. Mark seemed so interesting. A perfect pop star for us because he was a dj - in Smash Hits, which was new and exciting then - with a unique personality. He was a total inspiration... and still is.

Mark: We met properly when we were both playing the wonderful Chuff Chuff parties up north. Actually my brain is not functioning at its full capabilities at the moment... Jerry?

Jerry: One of the things that tied us to start with is when we both realized we both grew up with punk & new wave, as well as funk & hip hop, then house, up to electro... We like music ha ha...

**+ How did you come up with the idea of doing a night together? Is that something you had in mind for a while?**

Mark: I asked Jerry if he'd like to spend the night and I think he misheard me!

Jerry: Ha ha, yes something like that...it's a great idea cos we're definitely on a similar wavelength. We like fun, rockin tracks that ooze sexiness & attitude, no less ha ha, but go at it differently...

**+ Cable, the venue, is massive! How different is it to play in pretty intimate parties like Family RIP was compared to massive clubs and warehouses?**

Mark: I love a club where you can see the whites of their eyes. Luckily the club is divided into two rooms and an annex room, so it's not as cavernous as it sounds. On a first visit Cable is like a delightful rabbit warren with all sorts of surprises in random corridors. I still need a map for those various doors and passageways. Massive clubs are always great if you yearn for that Nuremberg rally feeling.

Jerry: In my opinion all clubs are different and somehow you always have to adapt... I would say that it's important to stick to your guns wherever you are. Take some risks. It's not the end of the world if things go wrong, you can pick it up again. As a dj it's easy to get trapped into whatever people are expecting from you at the time, which can feel uncomfortable. I think it's always worth taking the crowd where they don't expect you to. For me it's one of the greatest feels to be led by a dj not knowing where he's taking me next. I find often women (djs) understand this better than men because they're more emotional... and music is also about emotion.

**+ The lined up guests hosting room 2 so far are NagNagnag RIP and Kashpoint RIP, some of the most infamous clubs in London... Who's next? Are you thinking of inviting clubs from abroad like your French pals from Kitsune?**

Mark: Yes – we raised both Kashpoint and Nag back from eternal slumber ala Dr Frankenstein. Those clubs have given us so much pleasure that we feel the need to inflict them on those who missed out. Johnny Blue Eyes and House Of Blues is resurrecting Andy Warhol's Factory for his guest slot at Can Can. Expect wild projections, The Velvet Underground, Studio 54 disco and various Warhol Superstar looks. We are in talks at the moment to get Wolfgang Flür from Kraftwerk to come DJ with Berlin club Electrobot. Oh! And William Orbit + friends will hopefully be hosting room 2.

Jerry: Yes, lots could be done, it's only early days but it feels really exciting. London needs some new places to go right now.

**+ Where does the name Can Can come from?**

Mark: From the ambience of Parisian decadence and dressing up during times of hardship. Noah Crutchfield (the 3<sup>rd</sup> member of the Can Can team) came up with it. We feel it conjures up gaily dancing the night away but rather than fiddling while everything around you burns we have a vision of waking up in a stupor the next day and having coffee with Jean Paul Sartre and Jean Cocteau.

Jerry: Exactly Monsieur knows what he's talking about!

**+ Music wise, what's the deal at Can Can?**

Mark: As Cole Porter says 'Anything Goes!'. As long as it has a certain glamour we will be playing everything from electro, disco, rock and what we call underground pop. We love a vocal. Might even throw in a few show tunes!

Jerry: Expect the unexpected as we use to say at BoomBox. Life's too short to dress boringly...

**+ How would you describe each other's music?**

Mark: The sound of a thousand tomcats being neutered. I always have a large box of Neurofen at the ready. Just kidding! Jerry is always an inspiration to me. I love that we are on the same wavelength musically. He is upfront but not afraid of intelligent pop music... or vocals. So many DJs fear the vocal!

Jerry: Mark plays what he likes, no matter what, and that's the way djs should be, not being scared of not sounding like anyone else. That's why I loved 2 Many Djs, Alfredo or Larry Levan so much. I agree with Mark: what's wrong with songs and vocals? They have the unique ability to communicate something, a feel and not just a physical groove - why avoid it when making people dance? For me a lot of djs these days are like the prog-rock dinosaurs of the 70s, far too complacent and over-paid, if

not totally bored with the job! We need a kind of punk rock in clubs to bring new blood & ideas in!

**+ London nightlife has got quite a reputation. What is it? Are people in London really good dancers or DJs particularly talented, or a bit of both?**

Mark: People in London are not particularly good dancers but their strength is that they don't care! They throw themselves around with wild abandon like no one is watching or in some cases imagining that the WHOLE WORLD is watching! It's a beautiful thing.

Good dancing in clubs is hard to find nowadays around the world. Quentin Crisp once reported in the 70's that people no longer dance but rather... they twitch! Now more so than ever, people are twitching in clubs. The Electro-shock twitch is what people are doing. In my youth the best dancers were found in the jazz-funk and rare groove clubs. You would have to make SPACE for these people! They would leap and somersault and invent new moves. Heaven help you if you stood in the path of an Electric Ballroom Soul Patrol dancer!

But I've gone off the track... London is rulin' because the DJs are obsessive and pioneering due to their obsession. Meanwhile the crowds are what I would call creative and insatiable. They thirst and hunger for more... MORE!

Jerry: Yep Mark is right. I would add that the pagans in the UK have been famous for centuries for partying and having a good time, in a way nothing much has changed here ha ha... Also London for me is the central nerve of Europe, more cosmopolitan today than ever. At least as far as music & (street) fashion are concerned, many major trends like punk or rave culture have started in the UK. Could it be because people are more rock'n'roll over here? I think so.

**+ Do you think the scene today is really different from 15 years ago? How has it changed?**

Mark: The scene is COMPLETELY different from 15 years ago. Now if the question were 'how different is the scene from 25 years' ago I would have to say it's pretty similar! As the saying goes "Everything old is new again." Disco! Electro-pop! It's all back.

15 years ago is a different story though. We had the fallout of the Acid House revolution, which started out as a wonderful thing. But going to sweaty raves or dancing in fields meant glamour and dressing up went out the window for most people. And all that Ecstasy taking while initially being a lot of fun and enlightening, ended up placating the people and dampening their anger and rebellious spirit. It turned people into the Zombie Nation much like the Soma drug in Aldous Huxley's 'Brave New World'.

I felt the 90's were pretty bland and REALLY dumbed down. Everyone wanted to be a lad or ladette. The gay scene became about muscle Marys and everyone looking the

same. Drag went back underground. In the 90s, in London, there was only Kinky Gerlinky and Duckie where you could find signs of alternative gay life.

And where were all the outrageous popstars in the 90's? Off hand the most colourful ones I can think of were Bjork, Jarvis Cocker and Marilyn Manson. Today we have a whole heap of colourful popstars who seem to have their own voice and are able to get dressed in the morning without the help of a stylist

Jerry: Mark is fascinating to listen to as ever... Personally I feel clubs are still stuck in that 90s techno-house thing that can't be disassociated from ecstasy. Luckily electro brought back in clubs spirit & attitude, a bit of fun... I mean why clubs have to be so serious?! Life's tough enough, no? If I go out I want to let my hair down to good, fun music... I don't understand why you either have to play underground or popular? Music is music, there's good stuff everywhere, no?

**+ DJing has become more accessible to people with the arrival of the CD, the mp3 and internet, and it seems everyone has had a go. 'Top tunes and shit mixing' tends to be the order of the day... Do you think the DJ superstar and the superclub game born in the 90s is over?**

Mark: I think there will always be a market for a talented DJ. And why the hell not? But I think the reaction was against that whole 'BRANDED' mentality which Naomi Klein wrote so brilliantly about in her book 'No Logo'. Kids woke up and didn't want to be assimilated into some fat corporation's nicely packaged presentation of youth culture. In clubs in the 90s the DJs and even the superclub themselves became the star of the show. I think today when you go to a good club it's the dancer, the club goer, who is the star of the show once again. If they get behind the decks that's cool with me.

Jerry: totally, Naomi Klein's book was a real eye-opener, you kinda felt that was what was going on in culture but she really pointed at it brilliantly, she deserves a medal... I would add that yes today djs have access to more music than ever but that doesn't make it any easier to do something with it. It's like everyone has now access to (affordable) technology to make music but not everyone has any ideas and stories to tell... So in a way I think it's probably harder because you have to be extremely focussed to pick up the best stuff in all the music that you're now submitted to... Saying this I find it very refreshing that so-called non-djs are given the chance to play in clubs too... because in many aspects the dj fraternity these days is very safe and conservative, not an ideal situation for deejaying to evolve and move forward...

**+ Do you still use vinyls when you play? How does the digital (r)evolution has affected your DJ-ing?**

Mark: Vinyl sounds better than CDs end of story! In an ideal world I would have stuck to vinyl but have been forced to switch to CDs simply because a lot of the tracks I play are just not available on vinyl. I hate it but I stop my complaining when I go traveling around the world with my little CD folder happily wedged into the front of my underpants. Don't even get me started on mp3s - worst thing to ever happen to

music! Degraded music! You wouldn't eat a degraded banana would you? I try not to play mp3s but record companies are now mailing them out as promos! Not even a WAV or an AIFF file! Awful.

I do like the fact that mp3s feel quite 'punk'. You don't need to be rich and pay £6.99 for an import. Now anyone can have access to billions of tracks, which puts a certain power back into the hands of young people. But at the end of the day I feel mp3s should only be for iPods or when you need to listen to something quickly and easily via the Internet.

Laptop DJing with Ableton and the likes feels like cheating to me. With the exception that if the tracks are getting remixed on the spot and the end result is brilliant then I love it.

Another thing I miss about vinyl is the beautiful artwork – even generic disco sleeves were colourful. Not only did you have the energy of the producer and musicians but you had the added energy of a visual artist. You would flip through your vinyl in the record box making decisions by remembering the record in relation to the cover. You were thinking in an audio/visual dynamic.

Now, unless you've got creative on your burnt CDs with your crayons and felt tips, you are forced to think like an office filing clerk. It disconnects you artistically.

Jerry: Yeah I agree. Record covers are ace and use to be really helpful visually when looking for the next record to play. However things change, now you compile cds with lots of tracks crammed in, so yes designing sleeves with different types etc helps a lot, it's worth having a bit of a graphic designer mentality... I'm personally up for embracing technology. I used to really be into vinyl and now I'm totally fine with cds. Pioneer CDJs are offering so many more possibilities, it's far more creative than mixing 12"s and it's fun too. I also really enjoy the 'out of music business' perspective when you download stuff from blogs. Where does it come from? Who did it? And when? It used to be such a drag to do a track in the studio and then having to cut an acetate to play it out... Saying this like Mark I find deejaying with Ableton a bit of a cheat and flat. It's like going to a gig and everything's on tape. There's nothing wrong with bum notes! When you deejay you juggle with plates and are always on the brink of fucking it all up, it's exciting, a challenge.

**+ You guys are both renowned producers. (see article bit) Jerry, when resident at Boombox you mixed the brilliant Boombox Kitsune compilation back in 2007. Will your collaboration go beyond the dj residency with Cancan? Can we expect a Can Can music project, like some sort of theme or something?**

Mark: The fact that Jerry and I have not collaborated musically yet is beyond me! I'm sure something will be arranged!

Jerry: Too right, ha ha, that would be nice. My brother Tom - bless his soul - would be proud.

**+ Mark – your trademark is a red telephone you use as headphones, can I ask you where did you get it from?**

Mark: My friend Eon aka Ian B made it for me. He made classic rave tracks like ‘The Spice Must Flow’ and nowadays works with Ignition who had that track out with Ali Love. He’s a genius space cadet nerd-master.

**+ What track did you both play last?**

Mark: Oh dear... ‘Theme From S’Express’ (King Roc Remix). Promoters often make me play that so I’ll sometimes end with it. One promoter refused to pay me unless I played it!

Jerry: What? That's madness! Saying this The Stones still play ‘Satisfaction’. That's why you should never release a record you're not 100% behind because you never know which one will work, and then you're stuck with it forever ha ha... The last record I played is our JBAG re-edit of Phoenix's new single ‘Lisztomania’ remixed by Classixx on Kitsuné.

**+ What do you think of Lady Gaga? She seems to divide opinion at the moment! Will you be playing Poker Face at Can Can then?**

Mark: I really like her! I love how she divides people into the fiercely for her or fiercely against her camps. Reminds me of when a new girl on the scene appeared called Madonna! I think Lady Gaga’s music is great pop and I love how it’s so inappropriate for children (singing along about getting wasted and the likes). That’s what good pop should be – subversive. All the early rock ‘n’ roll hits were about fornication but thinly disguised as harmless nursery rhyme nonsense (‘Shake Rattle & Roll!’). Subversion and sex is what good pop songs are all about not this innocuous boy band and manufactured pop which we’ve got so used to that has given pop a bad name.

Much of the best pop is dismissed by the musical ‘intelligentsia’ at the time until it is reassessed years later. Off the top of my head: T-Rex, Abba, Blondie, The Carpenters were all dismissed by critics for being pop and successful (another crime) but are now thought to be genius. I have the Lady Gaga CD and I’m not afraid to use it

Jerry: I think exactly the same! I guess a passion for (good) pop music is what truly unites us... What's wrong with having a good time? It's almost like those religions preaching you can't have sex! All these people terribly lack of fun and desire... Lady Gaga, I'm warming up to her... I really like 'Poker Face', I like the fact that she's different & doesn't care what people think, like Madonna. I wished the tunes were a little less Swedish-sounding though ha ha...