

SOME LIKE IT HOT!

*THIS FRISCO DJ
GIVES NEW
MEANING TO THE
TERM "HOT SAX"*

Picture a Michael Keaton look-a-like (sort of) on stage with his Mobile DJ equipment. The crowd numbers over 1,000. A guest approaches and shouts out a request for a popular song by the Beach Boys. The DJ acknowledges the request with a nod and reaches into his box of CDs. Suddenly, standing next to him on stage is the actual group performing the very song that was just requested! Alongside them, our DJ is blowing fire from his saxophone and then wailing on guitar, keyboards or drums!

Wait a minute... a DJ? On stage? Playing real music? With famous entertainers?

A musician/DJ?

My mistake. I got his shows mixed up! That's easy to do with Phil Chapman of Party Central Entertainment from San Francisco, Calif. Not content to conquer just one entertainment industry, Chapman bills himself as the "Live Musician/DJ."

"I've been playing live music professionally since 1976," Chapman says. "I began my career in Florida doing session work in recording studios with artists who achieved a number of hit songs on the top 40 charts."

A few years later, Chapman moved to California and hooked up with a number of nationally known bands. Tours with these bands soon followed, taking him several times throughout the United States, Central America, and Europe.

Or a DJ/musician?

In 1984, Chapman entertained for the first time as a Mobile DJ. He was at a cast party for a play. The DJ was either having an off night or his heart just wasn't in his work. While the DJ was in the bathroom, the song ended. Chapman went up, figured out his system and started another song. When the DJ came back, he asked if everything was OK and Chapman responded "Yea, thanks." The DJ then walked away and never came back.

Chapman recalls, "It was pretty weird. Obviously it was not his equipment! I loved it so much, I bought another turntable and started doing parties. Now I use CDs and minidiscs, but the fun is still there!"



Since then, Chapman has developed a unique style of entertainment. "At the beginning of a wedding reception I play saxophone, flute, or clarinet to a variety of songs on CDs," he says, "This quiet background music can range from new age to jazz, adult contemporary or classical music styles."

Chapman plays live from the time guests arrive until the meal is completed. He uses five wireless microphones to roam the banquet room to add something interactive and special to the occasion.

"It's like having a live band for the price of a DJ!" he exclaims, "After twenty-two years of playing and recording with bands, I know how to make myself sound as if I'm actually on the CD."

Chapman recognizes that the bride and groom are the stars of a wedding reception so he reverts to the more traditional CD music format once dancing begins for the majority of songs.

"After the meal is finished, I don't play my musical instruments as frequently," he says. "When I do, it's with more energy!" Chapman frequently adds live guitar riffs to Jerry Lee Lewis' version of "Great Ball Of Fire." He can also be found leading conga lines with his saxophone wailing to "Hot Hot Hot."

Or pyro saxophonist?

And no party could be hot, hot, hotter than a party with Chapman on stage demonstrating his unique pyro sax technique! "In 1984, I invented my pyro show," Chapman recalls. "I got the idea during a brainstorm session with a fellow musician. We were trying to think of the stupidest things that we could do at a show." It has taken Chapman 10 years to perfect this technique and make it both safe and impressive.

To achieve the red hot fireworks, Chapman simply... wait a minute.

You don't really expect him to reveal the secret that has made him the world's only fire-breathing musician/DJ do you? Let's just say that he somehow activates something over his sax. Then, like magic, poof! It's the Fourth of July!

"The first time I tried it the audience went wild!" he remembers, "Since then, I've learned how to tease an audience with it, and to save the smokin' sax until they reach a fever pitch. I've even created a few variations to its presentation. This shtick has made quite a name for myself!"

Mobile vs. musician

As a musician and DJ, Chapman has a unique insight regarding the similarities and differences between performances. "It goes way beyond the fact that band members split the fee, and DJs keep the money for themselves," Chapman remarks, "I usually get more respect as a musician. This is especially true when people notice that I am playing live music to recorded CD songs. It's something that they are not used to seeing."

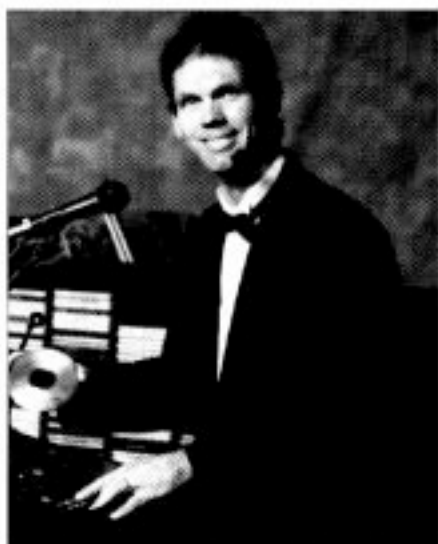
Other times, Chapman is not so sure that musicians receive extra attention. "It just humbles me greatly," Chapman admits, "when I'm playing a monster sax solo and someone walks up and asks me to make an announcement or to play at a lower volume."

Fan fervor is a benefit for musicians that few Mobile DJs receive. "While touring with a band in Holland, a crowd of 40,000 people greeted us," Chapman recalls. "They were so excited; we had to sign hundreds of autographs each day for six days! Can you imagine a Mobile DJ being asked for even a single autograph?"

The availability of songs is another area that Chapman

differs from a band. As a band member, you are limited with just thirty songs, while a Mobile DJ often has access to thousands of songs to reach audiences with broader musical

tastes. As a DJ, I can play songs that are easier to reproduce. It's buy, push, and play for a DJ versus days of rehearsal for a band member."



Reflections

Party Central currently owns and operates two Mobile DJ sound systems, two live band rigs, and a diesel truck to carry the equipment. "I'd eventually like to add more live musicians who could double as DJs," Chapman forecasts. "I think people all over the world would appreciate a live trumpet or guitar player who could also spin discs and professionally MC an event."

His formula for success? "I don't play the money game," he remarks. "I come from a background where quality should always reign over money. I'm polite, believe that the customer is always right, and I go out of my way to assist in tasks which are 'not my job' at an event. I do this because I truly love it. I will never retire!" Chapman exclaims.

