



B I O G R A P H Y

Remember when there were dance music vocalists who successfully merged mass-appeal accessibility with underground savvy? Alas, club music's increased fragmentation during the past several years makes that seem like ancient history.

Clearly, the dance music world needs someone like SK8 right now. Luckily, she needs them as well, and she is more than ready to keep them satisfied.

"If there's one thing I want to get across, it's that I will always be making dance music, regardless of trends or how the radio market has changed in America," the 24-year-old New York transplant insists. "It will always be part of me, and I love that I don't have to stick to one thing when it comes to this genre."

Indeed, SK8's musical evolution is interesting. The Boston native and Vassar College grad first tasted the limelight with her 2000 club hit "My Imagination." Todd Terry (famed for his smash house remix of Everything but the Girl's "Missing") produced the single, which was released by the defunct BMG imprint Logic Records. SK8 proclaimed herself a "raver girl" at the time, but she went outside her own persona for "My Imagination," which fused straight-ahead pop hooks with jerky electro breakbeats that pre-dated the subsequent electroclash wave.

"Working with Todd was an amazing experience," SK8 says. "He taught me a lot about how to make a record from scratch. Ultimately, I didn't release an album because of creative differences between Logic and my management company at the time, but the Logic staff was so great to me – they were truly like a family. I learned so much about recording and the business side as well."



Although a full-length release wasn't in the cards for SK8 back then, she made the most of her time with Logic. She opened for boy band LFO on the national tour that supported their platinum debut album. She was also a featured performer on the DJ tour for Logic's mix compilation *The Beat of America*.

SK8 and Terry joined forces again on a cover of "Amazing Grace" that began impacting DJ record pool charts following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C. Then she seemed to disappear from the radar until recently resurfacing, thanks to several collaborations with producer/remixer Chris Cox (formerly of Thunderpuss).

"It seems like I dropped off the face of the earth, but I wanted some time away from the city and began seeking work upstate," SK8 explains. "I wrote hooks, performed background vocals, and helped out with arrangements in sessions. For example, I recently did backgrounds for Coheed & Cambria, a rock group whose new album will be released on Columbia Records in August."

The seeds that are currently blossoming for SK8 were planted in early 2004 during an impromptu trip West. "As it turned out, a friend of mine in Los Angeles invited me out to work with him. He is friends with Chris, who happened to be DJing in L.A. that weekend. My collaboration with Chris happened unexpectedly."

Chief among their ongoing collaboration is "Nation," the lead single from Cox's upcoming Tommy Boy Records album *12 More Inches of Cox*. "Nation," a booming, vocal house anthem recorded as a tribute to the renowned Washington, D.C. nightclub. The song takes SK8 in another direction, casting her as a full-on dance diva driving a party record to its hands-in-the-air climax. "Nation" stakes its claim as the definitive soundtrack for all-nighters on the former warehouse's sprawling dancefloor.

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“There’s something magical about this club,” SK8 says. “It has all the elements I want in a venue. It’s big, and with just the right amount of people for the room. The DJ booth is great, and the lighting is unbelievable. The staff is amazing, and everyone in the room always has a great time. It’s like shutting the real world off and going out of this world for a few hours.”

One only needs to see SK8 in action at Nation to fully grasp the mutual pull the two have to each other. Every appearance, even on non-performance nights, is immaculate. Skintight dresses stop just low enough to qualify for a PG-13 rating. Go-go boots that take serious effort to wear hug feet that are still twirling to sexy house beats at 6 a.m. Brown hair is piled high atop SK8’s head, cascading well past her shoulders. One minute she leads the charge to the dancefloor, the next she holds court in the VIP lounge as if she were throwing the party herself. The gay men in the room offer effusive praise; everyone else’s mouths simply hang open in wonder.

However, SK8 is ultimately a denizen of the world’s dancefloors, not just Nation’s. She added vocals to “More Intensity,” the Ibiza anthem by Cox and BBC radio DJ/global tastemaker Pete Tong. The three teamed again for “Deep End,” a focus track on Tong’s *Pure Pacha 2005* album in conjunction with the famed Ibiza nightspot Pacha.

Both “Deep End” and “More Intensity” reveal yet another layer of SK8’s abilities: that of underground siren. “Going over to Europe is a whole other thing,” she says. “There’s a different kind of dance music that’s popular there. ‘Deep End’ is basically a couple variations on a single hook. It’s the kind of track that may not be big in America because audiences are conditioned to a more formulaic structure here. I love that I can go to London and do something there that I wouldn’t do in America.”

SK8, who is currently taking time off from working on a master’s degree at Fordham University, seems assured that the coming months will be a whirlwind, even if she doesn’t know exactly what that entails.

“There’s so much going on, it’s almost hard to believe,” she admits. “I’m excited to get back on stage again—I really value the connection with my audiences. It’s the one thing I can’t get in the studio, and I’ve missed it. I’ll be in Europe at the end of the summer for club dates and more recordings -- I couldn’t be more excited! ‘Deep End’ is already getting airplay in that part of the world. Both ‘Nation’ and ‘Deep End’ are about losing yourself in the night and having fun. This is the vibe that’s inspiring me right now.”

Written by Pete Glowatsky



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