



Globe-trotting house music DJ Marc Kinchen a.k.a. DJ MK went from jamming in basements to a major Twitter shout-out from Mercedes-Benz for his Look Right Through remix. CONTRIBUTED

# House brings DJ MK to life

EDM

**After a bunch of dead ends, Mark Kinchen hits a groove**



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For Metro Life

DJ MK was a sleeping giant.

It's safe to say that you're kind of a big deal when Mercedes-Benz is gushing about your songs on Twitter.

"It was totally random. All my friends were texting me about how Mercedes said

they love playing my remix of Look Right Through in their vehicles!" laughs globe-trotting house music deejay Marc Kinchen, a.k.a. DJ MK, who started his career as a DJ/producer as a teen in the late '80s.

"Growing up in Detroit, music was really big, I had a band in high school and it seems like everyone was influenced by Prince. Everyone wanted to be in a band, sing and write songs."

Like most kids making music, they jammed in their basements. "It was unorthodox. We didn't know what we were doing. It's not like we spent a lot of time with record producers, but we thought we knew what we were doing. You

mix their pop artists. In 1993, his remix of Celine Dion's Let It Go became a surprise No. 1 Billboard hit in the dance division, but the label still had no idea he even existed.

"I looked up to Quincy Jones at the time and that's where I wanted to be. Outside of the cool kids, house music wasn't getting the respect from the higher-ups in the business."

Instead, Kinchen worked his connections and wound up producing for Jay-Z, but the pop world was disillusioning. While he earned the respect he always wanted, the power politics of the industry turned him off. "It became too political. It became all about who you know, and who you can

give kickbacks to," he shrugs with an audible "meh!"

That wasn't for him, either. He then scored a stint in L.A. as Will Smith's in-house producer following his Big Willie Style album, but wound up working on his films instead. Another dead end.

It wasn't until Pitbull sampled his catchy, but ever-so-cheesy horns for Hotel Room Service from one his classic '90s records that he was rediscovered as a House music deejay, and MK was on his way back to the top, rubbing shoulders with the Diplos and Calvin Harris of the day.

"In the '90s where hip hop was the biggest thing, now house music is what that was."

House music is pop music really, he says, and business is booming.

"The roles are totally reversed now. Record label presidents are now calling to get an MK remix. That's what I wanted it to be like in the '90s, but it just wasn't ready yet."

While there are still a few months to go before his first studio album drops, his new single, a summery '90s-tinged anthem Bring Me To Life featuring the 18-year-old vocalist Milly Pye, has just been released.

MK is a regular on the Ibiza club circuit but you can catch him in Toronto on Friday Aug. 7 at The Hoxton as part of their Focus Fridays series.