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**Music**

**Gem Arsenal**

*"My nerves were all over the place."*

Published July 21, 2005  
[Music Feature from [previous weeks](#)]

"I have turntablism in my blood," says 23-year-old Santa Maria-native DJ Chris Cutz, one of the new vinyl spinners that have been cropping up in San Diego's club/bar culture. He considers himself a veteran of the local scene, though. "Right now I'm lucky -- DJing pays all my bills, so I guess you can say I'm living my dream. But it would be nice to pick up more gigs in different cities, like New York or Las Vegas."



Chris Cutz  
Photo By Chris Morrow

"My forte is hip-hop," he adds, "but you will find a vast array of vinyl gems in my arsenal -- everything from hip-hop to downtempo and rock to funk."

"Thursday nights I play at a bar and lounge called Excelsior, which is located in La Jolla. I play at a club called Aubergine on Fridays and Saturdays." He was recently seen in Little Italy's Airport Lounge, working the turntables. Outside, the smokers were heard to say:

"Mellow."

"Cool."

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"I can dig it; my nerves were all over the place, but now I'm feeling more centered about the universe."

"That's weird."

"This bar is weird."

When he's not gigging, Cutz produces and records at Sleeping Giant Music, which has released DJ Niques, Blest, and Fresh One.

#### **TRICKEST PROBLEM DOING GIGS?**

"The trickiest problem with live gigs is that sometimes the club or bar you're at might not have the proper equipment for your style of playing. I do a lot of scratching and mix tricks, so sometimes a venue might have a mixer that makes it a little harder to do some of those things -- yet I always try to do my best no matter what kind of setup I'm on."

#### **LIST OF EQUIPMENT?**

"I use two Technic 1200 turntables and a Rane TTM 54 mixer."

#### **LIST OF INFLUENCES?**

"9th Wonder, Pale Rock, Diamond D, Jay-Z, Dr. Dre."

#### **MOST POPULAR SONGS?**

"People always request all the new commercial stuff like 50 Cent or Usher, but sometimes they request for older stuff like Michael Jackson, or Prince, to Stevie Wonder. Which I have no problem playing."

#### **TOP FIVE DESERT-ISLAND CDS?**

1. Digable Planets (*"The first LP."*)
2. A Tribe Called Quest, *A Low End Theory*.
3. Gangstarr, *Hard to Earn*.
4. Wu Tang Clan, *36 Chambers*.
5. Pharcyde, *Bizarre Ride*.

#### **BRUSH WITH THE FAMOUS?**

"I've DJed in front of celebs like Jamie Foxx, the Wayan brothers, Brian McKnight, and the actors on the Real World."

#### **BEST GIG?**

"Two years ago I played at a New Year's Eve party in Balboa Park at the Prado for, like, one thousand people, and it was a lot of fun. Everyone was real hype and energetic and really into the music. It didn't matter what I played -- could have been the new hottest hip-hop joint or some James Brown. I could have dropped a country song on them and they would've liked it."

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