

AFTER 12 YEARS, *GIRL*, A REVEALING FILM ABOUT FEMALE DJs, IS ALMOST COMPLETE



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In 2003, Kandeyce Jordan began work on a documentary about female DJs – and one DJ in particular, Sandra Collins – called *Girl*. Twelve years later, in the midst of an [Indiegogo campaign](#) to raise the final funds for music licensing, she's finally about to finish it.

Dance music and DJ culture have changed drastically since Jordan began filming. "I was following girls pulling their records," Jordan says of the early years. "Then they had their CDs with them. Now everything is on a drive." EDM blew up along the way, too, going from a club-centered and more underground culture (at least in the United States) to massive festivals and mainstream recognition. "It used to be, we're going to go to a club and listen to a DJ. At least from my experience, it's such a bigger world [now]."

But some things have stayed the same – including, unfortunately, female DJs being far outnumbered by their male peers on most club calendars and festival lineups. Nevertheless, Jordan says that she knew early in the process of making the film that zooming in on gender issues wasn't going to work.

"A lot of times, people were insulted if you even brought it up," she says. "They really took it the wrong way." Instead, as Jordan met with many of the top women in the field – including DJ Irene, DJ Rap, Colette and Lady D – she chose to focus primarily on their personal stories.

"It isn't about girls versus boys," Jordan stresses. It is however, a look at the dance-music scene at a pivotal point in time, when women were rising to the top of their field.

The film takes a turn when Jordan meets Sandra Collins. At that point, Collins was a successful trance DJ who had already been playing for years and was highly regarded as one of the top spinners in the world. On the night she and Jordan met, Collins beat out nine guys to capture the "Best DJ" Dancestar Award.

The two hit it off immediately and Collins wanted to be an important part of Jordan's film. Jordan couldn't pass up the opportunity, but it turned out that Collins' globetrotting life was difficult to capture.

Jordan spent two years chasing after Collins. She followed the L.A.-based DJ through her promotional events surrounding an album release. She went to Burning Man, Mexico City and a boat party that came to a halt when someone overdosed. When she was able to get footage of Collins, Jordan had difficulty getting the DJ to open up to her. Eventually, after a series of personal and cinematic setbacks, Jordan grew disillusioned with the DJ life she had been trying to capture and decided to shelve the film.

Flash forward seven years: Jordan, now a painter, meets a friend of Collins' at her art opening. Soon, Jordan and Collins reconnect, and she's able to finish the film.

"I never intended to make the film about my life at all," Jordan says. But while she had lots of footage and plenty of stories, she felt the film needed something to link them together. At that point, her producing partner suggested that she bring her own story into the mix. "It took me a long time to even get my head around that," she says. "All of these girls sort of then became my story."

Girl is about a lot of things but, at its core, it's a diary of the adventures of a documentarian and the superstar DJ that she's trying to follow. There are awesome parties and travel nightmares, moments of great joy juxtaposed with total frustration. By capturing the everyday life of Collins and her peers, *Girl* reveals more about the lives of women in the DJ booth than any thinkpiece on "women in EDM" could.

Somewhere along the way, the similarities between DJs and filmmakers become apparent. "There are a lot more female DJs out there than there were 12 years ago, whether or not they're really being highlighted," Jordan says. "Maybe there are some parallels to that with filmmaking. There are a lot of female directors and filmmakers, too, and it's kind of a hot topic right now in Hollywood, 'Where are the female directors?'"