

STUDENT LIFE

Wedding helps to heal from break up

By Eric Edwards
The Orlando Sentinel
(KRT)

I have the honor of being the best man at my younger brother Ethan's wedding. I am sharing this honor with my youngest brother, Patrick.

This bit of uplifting, love-focused public speaking comes to me at a time when I'm feeling quite un-uplifted and un-love-focused.

Having recently closed the book on a relationship that I thought would be a keeper, I'm suffering from that hollowed-out, slow-burning depression that makes me unbearable.

Since I wasn't all that bearable before this bout of selfish wallowing, this blue streak makes it difficult for friends and acquaintances, who are struggling not to slap me silly.

But here I remain, jotting down thoughts on small pieces of paper, thoughts I hope to pass on to the wedding attendants. Unfortunately, most of the grist I have milled makes material better suited for a Sam Kinison special than my brother's wedding.

The attitude adjustment I will require in order to fulfill my oratorical duties will demand more therapy than a week's worth of Dr. Phil can provide.

No matter how easygoing a person may seem, a good bruising of his heart will twist even the happiest of demeanors into something sour.

I've been swimming in this sorry state for about a month now, so it's high time I get over myself and shape up for the future - if not my own, then at least my brother's.

In fact, there is probably no better time for me to break from this wretched despondency.

Weddings are glorious ceremonies that start new families and bring old families together in celebration. About half of the families that will gather are the people I grew up with, the people who have known me for my whole life and the people who, by the laws of nature, must love me no matter how unlovable I might be feeling at the moment.

That's what healing the heart is all about - accepting that though one person didn't give you the love you felt you deserved, there are others who will. Your family loves you first, and girlfriends and boyfriends love you second. It almost never feels like that at the time, probably because of the intensity of physical love, but the slow burn and the incredible reliability of the love of family is something we can never break with.

So at my brother's wedding I'll wrap myself in being close to the people I care the most about; I'll throw back a couple of Manhattans, and I'll knock 'em dead with the finest best-man speech ever.

And if making 200 people chuckle at my brother's expense doesn't speed up the healing process, nothing will.

Hip-hop ambassador to planet

By Greg Kot
Chicago Tribune
(KRT)

Few hip-hop artists have stretched the definition of dance music further than Afrika Bambaataa. While many deejays now specialize in a particular style - trance, chill-out, jungle - Bambaataa brings the world to his fingertips.

In a span of two years in the early 1980s, Bambaataa provided a blueprint for hip-hop and electronic music, collaborated with James Brown and Johnny Lydon and turned German art-rockers Kraftwerk into the hippest band in the ghetto.

"I learned from James, Sly and Uncle George," says Bambaataa, referring to the funk trinity of James Brown, Sly Stone and Parliament-Funkadelic's George Clinton. "But I was also listening to Yellow Magic Orchestra, Kraftwerk and Gary Numan, and getting off on the electronic music in John Carpenter's 'Halloween' movies and 'Assault on Precinct 13.' I wanted to be the first black group to come out with that sound. So I formed Soulsonic Force and invented electro-funk."

With electro-funk, as immortalized in the now-classic singles, "Planet Rock" and "Looking for the Perfect Beat," Bambaataa planted the seeds for myriad styles of dance music in the last two decades: Miami bass, techno, hip-house, drum 'n' bass and electro-clash.

"They keep renaming it, but it's all electro-funk," says Bambaataa. "We added the break beats of hip-hop and the bass sounds of funk to electronic music, and created something that was the best of many worlds: rap, funk, electronic. It's all dance music. To me, all music is dance music."

Bambaataa proved as much to his audiences at block parties in the '70s, where everything from old soft-drink commercials to Nancy Sinatra B-sides were liable to pop into one of the deejay's dusk-till-dawn sets.

Born in 1960 to a nurse and a construction worker, the young Kevin Donovan drifted into trouble with the Bronx, New York, street gang the Black Spades. In a neighborhood of crumbling high-rises that was over-run by drug dealers and gang bangers, Donovan was a charismatic thug-leader. He saw friends put in jail, and another was killed in the streets. He began to take to heart the words of black leaders such as Malcolm X and Elijah Muhammad Muhammad.

"I saw it was time to move the gangs in a different direction, before we all wound up dead or in jail," Bambaataa says. He had started deejaying in the housing projects before he was a teenager, before the era of two turntables, light shows and echo chambers turned deejays

into stars.

"I'd bring my parents' stereo to parties, and someone else would set up with his home stereo on the other side of the room, and we'd go back and forth, shining a flash light on whoever picked the next record," Bambaataa says.

Dance parties were commonplace in the streets, parks and community centers, and deejays such as Kool Herc elevated deejaying to an art form with their canny song selection, booming sound systems and cut-and-mix manipulations. Herc zoned in on the most exciting rhythmic passages in his vast array of vinyl albums and singles and stitched them together into audience-pleasing break beats. One of Herc's most attentive disciples was the young Bambaataa, whose extensive knowledge of music earned him the title "Master of Records." After his mother bought him a pair of turntables for his high school graduation, his deejaying career took off.

"I would come with 16, 20 crates of vinyl, and play from 9 until 4 in the morning, switching records every minute or two," he says. "We were always trying to outdo each other, play records more obscure than any other deejay, scratching out the titles so other deejays couldn't copy us. People would tell me they didn't like salsa music, but I'd slam some on 'em with a break beat, and they'd be dancing to it. I'd work in calypso and rock, the Monkees, Kraftwerk, James Brown and just for kicks an old Coke commercial or 'My Boyfriend's Back.' You came to my shows, you were going on a musical journey."

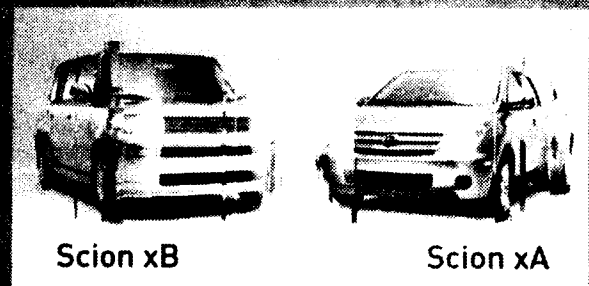
The next stop was taking those innovations to the recording studio. For Bambaataa, access to electronic gadgets such as the TR-808 drum machine, Fairlight digital synthesizer and Roland Vocoder made the pioneering single "Planet Plant Rock" possible.

With producer Arthur Baker and keyboardist John Robie, Bambaataa took hip-hop and dance music off the street and into an outer space by melding Kraftwerk's "Trans-Europe Express" and "Numbers" with Captain Sky's funky "Super Sperrn" and the melody from Ennio Morricone's "The Mexican."


The recording was both avant-garde and popular, rising to No. 48 on the pop chart in 1982 and selling more than 500,000 copies. It's equally audacious follow-up, "Looking for the Perfect Beat," declared: "We are the future, you are the past." Together, these mind-blowing tracks ushered in dance music's future, a sound that influenced everyone from Dr. Dre to the Chemical Brothers, and brought James Brown ("Unity"), ex-Sex Pistol Johnny Lydon ("World Destruction") and Screamin' Rachel ("Fun with Bad Boys") of Chicago's house scene to Bambaataa's door for collaborations.

Want your band featured in the *Beacon*?
E-mail us at behrendbeacon@aol.com

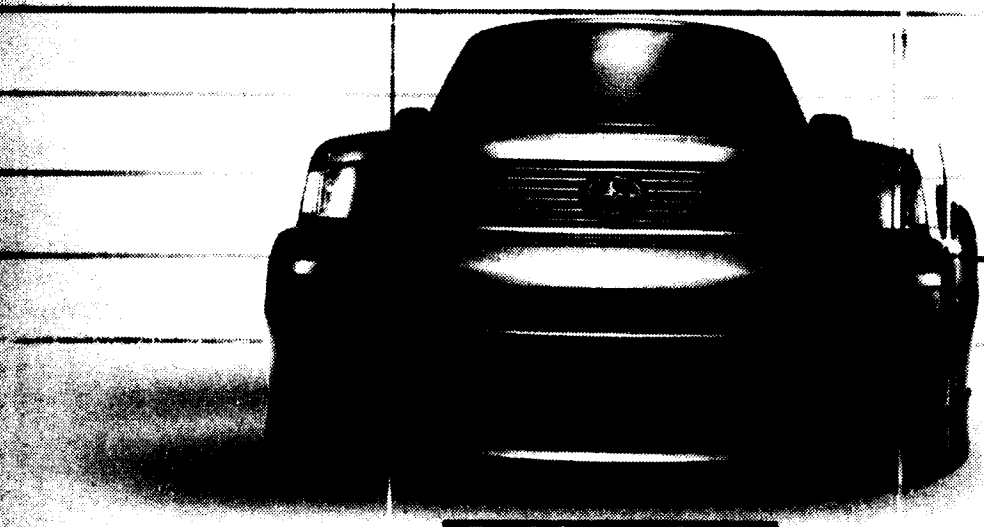
Scion xB By Rudy, Police Photographer




Scion xB Scion xA



MOVES YOU
forward
to your nearest
dealer at
1-800-SCION



5c10n - xB
POLICE DEPT.



5c10n.com
Out On Bail: 02-01-04

xB pricing starts at \$14,165* well equipped, including A/C, Pioneer AM/FM/CD system, power windows, door locks, mirrors, chrome exhaust tip, anti-lock brakes and vehicle stability control, and choice of 3 wheel cover options. Vehicle price as shown is \$16,040. *MSRP includes delivery, processing, and handling fee. Excludes taxes, title, license, and optional equipment. Actual dealer price may vary. TRD USA, Inc. [Toyota Racing Development], an aftermarket performance parts company, markets a line of parts through some Scion dealers. These aftermarket parts are not Genuine Scion parts, and cannot be utilized for Scion warranty replacement. TRD parts are warranted by TRD, not Scion. Note that certain aftermarket equipment may not be street legal in all states and may impact your vehicle's performance or safety © 2004. Scion and the Scion logo are trademarks of Toyota Motor Corporation and Toyota is a registered trademark of Toyota Motor Corporation. For more information, call 866-70-SCION [866-707-2466] or visit scion.com.