

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 0:00

Hello, today we are with Mustafa and mostly to talk about the underground music scene in Egypt, especially the electronic music scene. Room stuff.

Mostafa El-Masry 0:09

Hello, hello. It's a pleasure to be talking to you today. Well, how are we going to solve this?

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 0:18

Well, we're I'm going to ask you a couple of questions as an introduction, and then we'll go talk about the topic, Sheriff. So what is your age?

Mostafa El-Masry 0:28

I'm 29.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 0:32

Where did you live?

Mostafa El-Masry 0:33

I live in Cairo. And as a medic,

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 0:35

how long have you lived in Egypt

Mostafa El-Masry 0:36

for almost 27 years.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 0:42

Whereas

Mostafa El-Masry 0:43

I've been living in Kuwait for a while I used to work there. Then I came back

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 0:50

can ask what?

Mostafa El-Masry 0:53

For work reasons. And I started back then working in the music industry when I came back, so it was a good reason to come back.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 1:04

What is your marital status?

Mostafa El-Masry 1:06

I'm single.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 1:08

What is the highest education degree you have completed?

Mostafa El-Masry 1:11

I have a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 1:15

Which country did you in the education degree

Mostafa El-Masry 1:18

from? From Egypt?

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 1:19

Which institution

Mostafa El-Masry 1:21

MSC university?

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 1:24

What is your employment status at the moment?

Mostafa El-Masry 1:27

Currently, I have a day job. I work for the Volvo Trucks dealership. I work in the spare parts department, the head of supply chain. And by night, I'm a party promoter.

And DJ

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 1:52

How long have you been in this wasteland of work?

Mostafa El-Masry 1:58

It started back in 2008 as a hobby because I used to live in Schlumberger. We used to casually mix my friends discotheque in his hotel. Then, back in 2012. Me and my best friend Muhammad sada. We went to the DJ competition. That's how we started professionally. It was student DJ,

who lost

the final eight rounds. By that time, it was with electronic records. And I met awesome tech. And Julie, they gave us our first DJ gig invent. That's how we started DJ. Up until I left Cairo. And when I came back, I started working with my friend, Tim Roth, who was back then doing some weekend. And then that's when it started back in 2008 18. Sorry.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 3:03

So how has music revealed? that you want to do music? Like how did you decide that you want to work in the music industry,

Mostafa El-Masry 3:14

it came by chance, I've always been looking to see to the crowd what they want the kind of lineups they would be preferring the the kind of music, the experience itself. And

when you DJ,

you are getting booked by promoter. And you see the difference between each each promoter how like the experience they give or they promote. And then I started liking, like maybe a certain style. And I started studying was with certain friends like them, who had a very similar vision to mine. So that's how I started working with them.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 4:02

How has music helped you feel connected to others?

Mostafa El-Masry 4:08

Definitely when you play something and you see people dancing, and

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 4:18

so how has music helped you feel connected to others? Well, as a DJ,

Mostafa El-Masry 4:23

when you play a track and you feel the crowd connecting to it and dancing to it, this is a special moment. And as a promoter. When you feel the night building up, you feel the success in the crowd interaction, the experience they're having. How's it

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 4:42

how's it efficient helped you discover your talents and capabilities and then to bring them to life?

Mostafa El-Masry 4:52

Well,

definitely DJing has been very educational. In a way, where do you always seek improvement and you always seek how to build connection with the crowd. And so, you feel like every time you learn something new about yourself about the people, and you meet new friends. Okay.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 5:25

How can you talk more about promoting parties in Egypt? Okay.

Mostafa El-Masry 5:34

Well, you definitely, you start like, with a party, you see how many people would like to attend, you build a fan base, then you could play with, like, different sounds. And then, if you build a reputation, it gets bigger. And we started, I started working with them in like different locations, it was a nightclub, it was like open events or outdoors. Then I started working with my friend, my very good friend,

mega MC. On his outside concepts, which also like had, like a following. It's been running for now seven years, almost. Then we had another experience, we started a new nightclub, back then in 2018, with a team, which also had mega. When you start miked up, it's different, you open it to almost weekly, you need to have people you need to promote for the events. And yeah, it was a journey.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 6:51

How would you see any? From the first outside you guys made to like the last outside you guys made? What was the difference in the organizing of both?

Mostafa El-Masry 7:03

It's usually the same formula. We introduce live ads, and DJs. And we probably book international DJs as well. The sound may differ from

each

each party, but the formula is almost the same day event would stay to maybe one.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 7:35

So tell us more about the struggles that you face as an employer organizer or like promoting or

Mostafa El-Masry 7:46

definitely it's a growing scene in Cairo, the nightlife, it has been there. But introducing electronic music has been relatively new. We always face the bureaucracy of like how to do things properly, how to be aligned with the government requirements, and also adapting with the season and things that might occur. Yeah, that's it. But yeah, you get used to it. You you know that you know how to like work around eventually.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 8:26

Well, how does it differ booking an international than a local in Egypt.

Mostafa El-Masry 8:32

Of course, when you approach an international booking, you will need to talk to the agent, you need to, like, strike maybe a deal or see when they are available. But booking locals, they will be in town maybe and of course you check the availability, and you would maybe do like a proper programming for the whole night in terms of booking.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 9:02

How does how does the different genres of the electronic scene differ in context of the crowd?

Mostafa El-Masry 9:11

That's a nice question. Well, the way I see it, there has been like a popular wave of you could say Progressive House. That was back in 2008, where I started going to parties like shabby chic was the hot spot back then and they used to get the biggest bookings. Then back in Cairo. The Deep House scene was there like the bookings and even then, the day I started working with, he had the was the first to introduce these bookings to go on his quality series or damiana. Then you could feel now the younger crowd, they demand faster music electrotechnical the BPM is now like 140. It's definitely nice to see this change. But yeah, it looks

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 10:16
good. What problems do you face as a DJ?

Mostafa El-Masry 10:23
In terms of bookings? When here The point is now are not as many you could say. So maybe if you stick to a certain sound or a certain genre or certain,

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 10:38
like a group,

Mostafa El-Masry 10:40
maybe you wouldn't get booked a lot. If you if you do your home party, maybe you can book yourself.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 10:48
And everyone does.

Mostafa El-Masry 10:49
I think so.

But it's definitely going in the right direction people are getting together. Like we all know each other. We're all friends, we're all supporting each other. That's the most important thing.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 11:06
What do you think of when their entire world was closed on the Egypt was partying until?

Mostafa El-Masry 11:16
You mean what I think of it? I think we got Lucky.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 11:24
That's really true. really lucky. So can you please explain to us the difference between organizing a house party, then organizing, big party then organizing a festival a two day three day festival?

Mostafa El-Masry 11:41
Okay, it's basically the same if you can believe it. House Party, you

need some friends and light, probably a proper sound system that would be enough for not for the neighbors not to complain. So it's easier, you can just invite your friends come over whenever you want. If it's on a larger scale, like a party and the venue sells tickets, you could start like with planning, how the night will go the programming over the line of the bar if you're doing the bar as well. The sound system the atmosphere like also, if it's an open air event, you will see if it's gonna rain. How people are gonna get there, how are they going to leave? Are there the parking spots? If you talk about a festival, it's on a much larger scale. You need to maybe do a year of planning beforehand. festival is usually like the ones I worked on, I worked on one that had different locations, different clothes in two days. So like you need to plan all of this sounds as we need to move everything for each location. It's definitely hard work but at the end, it's very the results are like very peaceful. They

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 13:23

for for the festivals. How like the more details are in it, of course. So how do you deal with all these details? Like the hotel, the movement? The equipment, most festivals are outside of Cairo? So I think that would be that's a problem in itself I guess like because you need to move all the equipment and you need to move everyone. So how does this work all work out?

Mostafa El-Masry 13:53

Okay, you need you need a very connected and dynamic team. Because the team is dynamic as I said, things will be smooth, not come across some hazards. For example, I worked on my first job was a festival called some weekend. I usually handle a certain like how can you say like certain things I have in my responsibilities. So for example, back then I was in charge of the bookings, some of the logistics of the hotels and the stage the sound. That's how I started because I'm a DJ as well. So like the sound and setup is usually the thing I know

about the most

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 14:54

you choose the booking as in you contact the DJs or you choose the DJs

Mostafa El-Masry 15:00

Have a bit of both.

The need to fit in too much.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 15:09

Can you compare the difference between the music scene back in 2008, for example, and now

Mostafa El-Masry 15:18

of course, back then it was very limited. And the faces you will see

are the same, because maybe only a couple of parties Cairo doesn't have much. Back in 1000 leads to his show machine was the hotspot. I was a kid like they're not teenagers. But they actually they started big like they had the biggest bookings back then and I used to go weekly to the house each night.

That's where I started falling in love with this kind of music. That's how I started getting the ideas and wanting to be a DJ and working wanted to be working in that.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 16:05

I think that's about it. Thank you so much for stuff for coming here today. Thank

Mostafa El-Masry 16:09
you, Carlo.

Ahmed Hesham Ahmed 16:10

It was a pleasure to have you and like this. Think

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