



It's hard not to gush when talking to Paul van Dyk! And it's a fairly true statement that I and many others would probably not have gotten into EDM if it weren't for him. I had been listening to his music for years and finally saw him live at Roseland Ballroom in 2008- literally a life-changing moment. Paul has been around for some time having started out playing in clubs back in the 90's in his native Germany. The Grammy-award winning DJ/producer is back in New York City, the city that holds special place for him, on Saturday Feb 19th at Terminal 5 for what promises to be a mega show. We caught up with him via phone at his Berlin home.

**CGNY:** Paul, tell us a little bit about the Terminal 5 gig and what we can expect?

**PVD:** First of all I haven't been in NYC for quite some time, I always had a very strong connection with New York and the New York clubbers – my past being a resident at Twilo, the Central Park shows etc. So I'm really, really excited and really looking forward to it. I'm pretty

sure this is going to shine through big time. Obviously there will be a lot of new music. I'm finishing off the production phase of my new album which is going to come out very soon. And also alongside the album there is a whole new production theme that actually is touring with me. The album is called

**Evolution**

and basically the theme of what you see besides hearing is also about evolution and we're bringing not everything but quite a substantial part of the tour that's starting in April. So it's somewhat like a very early preview. We're working together with some highly acclaimed stage designers. So you can expect something that's rather amazing and rather exciting. But we're not going to show the whole thing because the tour starts in April

**CGNY:** Your shows always have an element of spectacle to them for sure. Your last Central Park show had two live drummers that were made of energy! You did start out here in NYC and the scene has changed quite a bit since then.

**PVD:** Well the thing is coming to NYC is always something rather special – definitely one of those places that left an amazing impact on my music and on me as a person. In terms of things being different these days than in the old days, yes I think they are very different. I remember let's say with Twilo, people were going out to enjoy the whole phase of an experience with the dj; the journey all the way through. A 10-15 minute intro wasn't something that was unusual at Twilo as an example. Everything became a little bit more "concert-y" in a way. The people are there, they listen to the opening dj – they're enjoying it but as a headliner, you kind of have to start with a big bang and play it out and treat the whole thing in a slightly different way in terms of how the flow of the evening goes through. It's a very different thing but then again I wouldn't say one thing was better than another. It's just different. It's a different approach in a way in terms of some planning ahead of how a set goes. Generally I'm just excited to play all the new music that's out and trying to leave a mark that impresses people beyond the music.

**CGNY:** You were one of the first musicians to go down the all digital route in terms of your djing and live sets. Was that a practical decision because you didn't want to be carrying crates of CDs and vinyl around with you?

**PVD:** Well first of all in terms of practical issues, we're carrying much more now than back in the old days with record or CD cases. So it's not really any more practical. Electronic music was always about pushing and breaking the boundaries and using technology to enhance the whole experience of this music. This is what I naturally do. I'm always looking for what's out there that enables me to do even crazier, better and more intense things. In terms of the set up I use now, it's the perfect combination between djing and producing and being a musician. And over the

years I developed the same passion for both. So being on stage with my keyboards, my computers and the possibility of creating and remixing things live, with the interaction with the audience; this is just the ultimate set up for me. This is how I feel these days electronic music has the most intensity of presentation

**CGNY:** Paul if you hadn't been a dj – what career do you think you would have chosen?

**PVD:** Maybe a chef of a restaurant!

**CGNY:** Ha! Both Mauro Picotto and Timo Maas said something similar!

**PVD:** When you travel quite a lot you really appreciate good food. Most of the time you end up eating something at the airport. So you're looking forward to eating something good. Creating music has something in common with creating a great meal. All those separate ingredients and then you create something unique with it. With music, people are listening to it over and over. With a meal you eat it once and then it's gone!!

**CGNY:** Almost like a concert experience but you have the lingering after taste which is often delicious! You're quite involved politically, taking part in the Rock the Vote campaign and working with your charity Ruckenwind.

**PVD:** We have different programs that support kids that come from rather unfortunate backgrounds. The youngest kids we have in the program are 4-5 and the older ones are 12, 13, 14. And it ranges from little theatrical groups all the way to computer classes. It's basically something that I saw was an issue; a problem with people who come from a let's say, a not ideal family set up. They are on a different level of education when they go to school so they have a completely different stress levels. They can't follow because they might even know numbers and we're trying to actually pre- educate them in a way through our courses. With the older kids – they may not have the money to have an internet connection in the house. And these days with schools is all about finding this – google this, check out this (oops sorry dogs

approaching me here!) We just try to help so they have the same options in their lives.

**CGNY:** Ruckenwind is based in Germany. But you also support an organization in India?

**PVD:** The first time I was in India, I was devastated by the kind of poverty that I saw. I was in contact with an organization called <http://www.akanksha.org/> – they educate the kids from the slums, give them medicine and food in order to have an option in their life.

**CGNY:** What are you listening to on your iPod right now?

**PVD:** I like a lot of different things. From the Tron soundtrack by Daft Punk to The Thermals which is really cool or The Wombats and a lot of electronic music as well because it is my favorite music!

**CGNY:** Any new artists on your own label that you're excited about right now?

**PVD:** We are constantly signing new people but what is exciting is seeing the development artists actually took and the careers they have now that we are working with. Artists like Filo & Peri, Tyler Michaud and Giuseppe Ottoviani. They are going to come up with some amazing tunes this year.

**CGNY:** You've played in Ireland and we have a sister site, [Clubbersguideireland.com](http://Clubbersguideireland.com) . How did you find the Irish crowds!? We're crazy right?

**PVD:** In a very positive way yes!

**CGNY:** Have you any plans to take your tour to Ireland this year?

**PVD:** We're doing a major festival in Ireland and I'm not allowed to say more yet!!

**CGNY:** Wonderful! Any plans to come back to NYC after February?

**PVD:** For sure. We have different plans laid out and I want to bring the whole **Evolution** tour to NYC at one point and show everything the whole creative team came up with. I've seen first rehearsals and sketches and it's just really, really special. One thing I didn't want to do – I didn't want to stand in front of a rather impressive LED screen and show people for 2 hours different kinds of bubbles!! This is what's happening most of the time. I wanted to bring something more than that.

**CGNY:** I've spoken to a lot of djs – and you're definitely one of more influential DJs whether they're playing house or trance or techno. A lot of people cite you as someone who's been an influence in their career. What do you think keeps you routed in this industry for so long?

**PVD:** First of all – it's the music. If I didn't love this, I would have stopped doing it a few years ago. As much fun as it is being on tour, it's also exhausting and there are many moments where you think "Oh holy crap – do I really have to get up now?" And yes you have to and you know why you're doing it. It's love for the music. I'm a musician and this is what I do. I make music, I love music and I love playing the music. The reason why it's working and while I'm still connected so well with my audience, I have a very clear idea about my sound and the music I like to play. The other part of it is I'm not a snobby ass dj on stage! I don't feel like being you know, 'whatever' on stage. If I wasn't on stage I'd be downstairs jumping up and down with the audience!

**CGNY:** Paul your top 3 tunes to take with you any where in the world?

**PVD:** Probably something by Massive Attack.

**CGNY:** What about Time of Our Lives?

## Paul van Dyk

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**PVD:** If I only have a choice of only 3 songs I know all my own music so I'd probably take something else!

The Wombats album because it always cheers me up! And maybe something by Way Out West because when I listen to them I feel really chilled out!

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