



DJ profile: Miss Frances Chan (Ak)

Lava: Hi.

Miss Chan: Hola!

Lava: How's it going?

Miss Chan: Great, thanks. I'm enjoying a peaceful night at home before I go off on tour tomorrow with Drumtalk.

Lava: You write, dj, host the bFM Zambesi Jazz Show, play in Drumtalk, you were awesome in Ava . . . is it a special diet or something? How do you do so much stuff?

Miss Chan: Well, when people ask me to be involved in what I think is a really creative and positive project, I do find it hard to say no! And if you're passionate about something, you find the time to do it. Editing is my day job at the moment, but I'll always want to do my shows on bFM and take up opportunities to play music or dj. No, I don't have a special diet, but I'm big on sleep and food, I've even been called the Don of Snacks cos I always seem to have munchies in my bag! I also tend towards an Ayurvedic philosophy, which involves meditation and yoga, but hey, I have my indulgent vices as well.

Lava: What was it like performing the nude scenes in Ava?

Miss Chan: Ha, ha. Somehow I knew you were going to ask that question! Firstly, we do wear something so we're never completely without clothes. But more importantly, the white paint is our costume. Once you go through the process of covering yourself in that stuff you look and feel like a completely different person. Which is essential for the performance because I'm not 'me' when I'm on stage, I'm just a vehicle for portraying certain movements and feelings.

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Lava: What's Drumtalk been up to since you were in Lava last year (May issue)?

Miss Chan: For a casual drumming group, we seem to have a steady flow of gigs. After our residency at Papa Jacks, we've done the bFM Private Function and Summer Series, more parades for the Auckland Ballet, Grey Lynn, Devonport, Mt Eden and Auckland City Festivals, Fat Lands Winter Solstice at Leigh Sawmill, and we put on our own DrumDance events at community centres. And by the time this issue comes out, we would have done gigs for the Nelson Arts Festival and in Golden Bay.

Lava: What sort of music do you play when you dj?

Miss Chan: On bFM on Saturdays (4-6pm) I play a real mixed bag - drum'n'bass, trip hop, hip hop, reggae, funk, latin, electronica, even the odd guitar track, and I like to mix in diverse forms like the Bulgarian Choir or Steve Reich or trance music from the Naqshbandi Sufis of Turkestan . . . you know what I mean. And I like using voice samples from movies and people like Frank Zappa, John Waters, Deepak Chopra. Sundays is the jazz show and for me, anything that embodies a jazz feel, that is, improvisation and experimentation. When I dj in bars I go for groove-orientated stuff - retro funk, downtempo funk, rare groove, drum'n'bass, latin, afro-cuban.

Lava: What was the first record you bought?

Miss Chan: Apart from my parents buying me The Wombles and Abba's Arrival (both great records by the way!), I remember really liking Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye and Ashford and Simpson in my pre-teens. Then I became a Duranie and was into bands like Japan, The The, The Smiths, Aztec Camera, A Certain Ratio, Ryuichi Sakamoto and jazz from the early 60s.

Lava: The last?

Miss Chan: A new band called Finger on Milk Recordings - eclectic dub/breaks/drum'n'bass styles, new Photek and Baby Mammoth albums, Wagon Christ's The Power of Love ep, Sly Stone's Remember Who You Are.

Lava: Where can we catch you djing at the moment?

Miss Chan: I'm doing Soother every Thursday at the Angle from 9pm. Groove-laden, laidback, soothing beats for people to hang out, play pool, drink cocktails etc. Come up for a drink before you head off to the clubs. I also do the occasional stint at Tabac and Leigh Sawmill.

Lava: Thanks for your co-operation. Any last words?

Miss Chan: Thanks for having me . . . be kind to yourself and your environment, respect those who support you, and when all else fails, have some miso soup! Or those deep fried crunchy things from the Chinese grocer!