

By Jeff Stiles

Philadelphia—What you are about to read is a true story: Steve Croce of Silver Sound

Entertainment was once entertaining for a Philadelphia bride who was infatuated with Baltimore-style club music. The DJ says one particular song this bride was dead-set on hearing was the DJ Funk hit, "There's Some Hoes in This House."

"I tried to hold off playing the tune for as long as possible, but eventually had to play it in a room filled with senior citizens," recalls Croce with a sigh. "And sure enough, about 30 seconds into the song, the bride's grandmother comes up to me and asks, 'What is this song you're playing?'"

Croce basically had two options. He could tell the woman that her granddaughter apparently had a thing for promiscuous women. Or he could reply with something a little more clever.



DJ Duality: Bosco (top) rocks the Serato, while Croce (bottom center) connects with another happy couple.

PHILLY DJs FIND DANCEFLOOR YIN & YANG

"This is actually an old gospel song," Croce replied to the grandmother. "You know how Jesus was a carpenter? Well, what the singer's saying is there are some 'holes in this house' and Jesus is going to patch them up."

Needless to say, this DJ recalls that the highlight of this particular wedding video was watching footage of grandma getting down on the dancefloor to "There's Some Hoes In This House."

Today, Croce is the general manager and wedding entertainment director of Silver Sound Entertainment. And oh yeah, he's also still an interactive reception performer for the company.

Croce, who grew up listening to what he describes as "naturally-cool-without-trying" bands such as The Smiths, Velvet Underground, and Stevie Wonder, at the time thought it great that these alternative bands could perform great music without blasting pyrotechnics on stage or screaming on the mic. "I guess that's why I try to be smooth on the microphone without seeming conceited or fake," he says nowadays. "I think the 'I'm-Cooler-Than-You' mentality is a plague in this industry."

Croce says Silver Sound makes a personal investment in every one of its clients, and one recent wedding was a particular affirmation of his own dedication to their happiness. "The location was Normandy Farm, a historic farm converted into an elegant French-styled facility," says Croce. "There were approximately 125 guests in attendance, and what made it so cool was that the bride and groom just seemed to 'get it.' Despite the large sum of money they spent, they actually took my advice and concentrated on the reason why they were there—versus the execution of the preparations they had made.

"It's an indescribable validation for me to receive an authentic hug and high-five from the bride and groom who are genuinely amazed at how the evening's entertainment unfolded."

Silver Sound charges a little more than most DJ services in the Philly market, and Croce says that's because their company completely empowers its clients. "We not only allow clients to select the DJ they are most interested in, but they can meet the DJ before signing anything and speak with actual past clients of that DJ and get 'non-salesman' answers to their questions about the services we provide," he explains. "No matter what a client wants, they will always get complete transparency with their DJ considerations."

That transparency is there whether a potential client chooses a more

conservative DJ like Croce or a more flamboyant entertainer such as Gaetano Bosco. Croce's style is in stark contrast to that of Bosco, the special events director for Silver Sound and one of Philadelphia's most sought-after choices for any nightclub-style reception, high school homecoming, prom or college formal.

While Croce uses PCDJ for his mixing, Bosco dabbles with PCDJ and Virtual DJ, but prefers Serato (and is today performing with the Video-SL plug-in). Croce makes the most of his microphone and bonding techniques at receptions, while Bosco is literally a master of the mix.

Silver Sound founder Paul Evans took a personal interest in Bosco at an early age, and taught the young jock how to take his natural-born skills to a much higher level. Evans showed the young man how hip hop and house music aren't the only sounds that can move a dancefloor, how to set up large sound systems and light-shows so they look symmetrical and deliver the best audio/visual impact, and how to make the most of the art of VJing and digital DJing.

While both Croce and Bosco occasionally use mixers and games to spice up dancefloors at wedding receptions, Bosco says at his school gigs no games are necessary—thanks in large part to a 20-foot-wide truss with Martin MX1s and Elation Design Spot 250s, along with a Martin Atomic Strobe, stretch screen, projector and a Numark AVM2 video mixer.

"I give the high-school kids a nightclub feel, bringing a high-energy approach to every event," he explains. "My old-school style with a new-school flavor of mixing music from hip hop to

trance and back to hip hop is enough to give someone a cardiac arrest."

In fact, even Croce is impressed with Bosco's skills. "Gaetano provides a much more dazzling audio and visual presentation," says Croce. "He works really hard to go above and beyond the expectations of student groups in playing the best new music, using the highest forms of all technology and displaying the most vivid light shows. He's like a mobile-DJ Ibiza."

