

A NEW KIND OF WEDDING DJ

THE HI-SOCIETY ENTERTAINMENT TEAM IS BREAKING DJ CLICHES ONE GIG AT A TIME

PHILADELPHIA—Tom Wright attended a friend’s wedding a few years ago and found himself shaking his head at the DJ.

While two hundred guests socialized among the classy, big-budget affair, the hired entertainment could be found outside smoking cigarettes, making friends with Johnnie Walker on the bride’s dime, and letting iTunes do the hard work. There is a slight chance this may have been acceptable if the music filling the air wasn’t a collection of early ‘90s movie soundtracks that found Wright and his tablemates competing to “name that movie.”

The next morning, he called his long-time friend Jon Holmes who had been an accomplished turntable DJ since his college days at Haverford a decade ago. “The wedding industry needs a hand.” And with that, Hi-Society Entertainment was born.

Wright and Holmes work every wedding as a team. Holmes mixes the music on the Technic 1200 turntables and a MacBook Pro (*the same setup as the late DJ AM and DJ Jazzy Jeff*). Wright handles the mic and coordinating the evening.

“We’ve both fairly recently gone through the wedding process and as music lovers, it’s impossible to fully trust that you are going to be recognized as individuals.” He says too often couples can only cross their fingers and hope their DJ will play at least one of their songs.

Hi-Society believes this anti-DJ approach is the reason they have been lucky enough to provide the music at so many unique weddings, finding themselves entertaining punk rock brides and grooms, setting the mood for old-school hip-hop dance parties, and jazzing up swanky affairs. It also helped the duo earn The Knot Magazine’s Best of Weddings 2010.

The turntables are getting Hi-Society a lot of attention, as well. Holmes says, “The turntables give the sense that someone is there, constantly moving for four or five hours, working to read the crowd and get people dancing.” Adding that there is also an undeniable cool factor about having a live DJ.

Hi-Society accommodates forty to fifty events yearly and Wright says each

reception is better than the last.

“Beyond getting to know the couples and the pride of providing a great time, I get to stand next to Jon. Each night he mixes or matches something that makes my jaw drop and the crowd roar... The best idea I ever had was to exploit my talented friend.” ■

Additional information can be found online at www.hisocietydjs.com.

