



A Conversation With **KC**

by Melanie Hulick



HULICK: It's great to be talking to you today. I have to tell you that at the office whenever one of your songs comes on the radio, and that happens several times throughout the day, somebody will yell out, "There's the man!"

but it's even stronger today than it was in the 70s. Even hip-hop artists are doing dance music now. So when I was creating the music, I was just creating songs to make people feel good and to bring happiness into people's lives. You know, you never think about the outcome so any outcome is another reward in the whole process.

KC and the Sunshine Band set to 'Shake, Shake, Shake' up Seneca Allegany Casino

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Everything turns retro on Saturday, May 22, at Seneca Allegany Casino when KC and the Sunshine Band take to the stage and start the party.

The 1970's most progressive and popular band, led by Harry Wayne Casey, KC for short, will have them dancing in the aisles with their hits "Shake Your Booty," "Get Down Tonight," "That's The Way (I Like It)" and "Boogie Shoes."

Playing more than 100 shows annually all over the world has not only kept fans from the 70s coming back time and time again, but has also garnered a whole new following of younger fans who are finding out what the Disco Era was all about.

With three Grammy Awards, an American Music Award and the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences' top honor, the Governor's Award, KC is not one to rest on his laurels. He continues to write music and released an album of all new material in the fall of 2001 and the proceeds from the title song, "I'll Be There For You," were donated to the Sept. 11 relief effort.

A staple of pop culture, KC and the Sunshine Band can be heard everywhere from your radio to your TV in commercials for Old Navy, Burger King and General Motors, as well as in hit TV shows "American Idol," "Dancing with the Stars" and "Desperate Housewives." You have probably even recognized their undeniable sound in feature films such as "Forrest Gump," "Rush Hour," "Carlito's Way" and "Austin Powers in Goldmember." Don't forget all the times we've rung in a new year with KC and his band, as they hold the distinction of having made more appearances on "Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve" than any other artist in the show's history.

When I talked to KC recently, we touched on his Grammy Awards, the occupation he hoped to have since elementary school, his contribution to the Disco Era and his live shows. I asked the singer-songwriter if he had a message to the readers of The Orchard Park Press, to which he replied, "I'm just looking forward to coming there and having a good time with everyone and reliving some old memories and creating some new ones."

For ticket information, visit www.TheSenecaCasinos.com.

For more information on KC, visit www.kcsbonline.com.

KC: (Laughs) That's great!

HULICK: Let's get right into your awards. You've won three Grammys, which include Album of the Year and Producer of the Year, for your work on the "Saturday Night Fever" soundtrack. Does it get any bigger than being part of "Saturday Night Fever"?

KC: (laughs) I don't think so.

HULICK: You also won a Grammy for songwriting for "Where is the Love," recorded by Betty Wright. Which one of these awards meant the most to you: the validation as a songwriter or, as a producer?

KC: Well I've had nine nominations and so just being nominated was validation for me because this is by your peers. To win the awards is like icing on the cake. You have all these dreams when you're writing and creating, and wanting to become an entertainer. So winning those awards solidified the answer to the American Dream for me.

HULICK: Did you always want to be in the music business, KC?

KC: I did, as far as I can remember, clear back in elementary school. Each year going through school you had to fill out this questionnaire and put down what you wanted your occupation to be and I always put entertainer. I'm sure they thought, "We've got a winner here (laughs)—class clown or something—hey, this guy wants to be class clown when he grows up!" (Laughs)

HULICK: (Laughs) Funny! You are credited with the song "Shake Your Booty" being among the first songs that launched the Disco Era. Did you think at the time that it would be something that would define an era?

KC: Well, I think when they started emulating our music it's what became the Disco Era, which has not died. It's gone through a lot of name changing,

HULICK: Your big break came with the song "Get Down Tonight." You have said that when you finished recording that song you knew it was going to be a hit.

KC: Yes, right.

HULICK: What was so different about that song versus your debut song, "Blow Your Whistle," that made you think, "This is the one that's going to be the hit"?

KC: They all had something special, but "Get Down Tonight" had a feeling that was just like the first time I heard "Rock Your Baby." There was something hypnotic about it, something like an out-of-body experience that when I heard it, it seemed like everything was perfect about it, that certain feeling.

HULICK: You are well known all around the world as a "dance party king," if you will, when it comes to your sound and your music. You've said that you didn't particularly like albums that had up-tempo and slow songs mixed together. You thought that was a downer. Why then the decision to record "Please Don't Go," which was not the norm for you, even though it is a terrific song.

KC: (Laughs) What I said was...first let me say I like all kinds of music. I like slow songs, ballads, mid-tempo, country, classical. I love every type of music there is. I'm not a huge rock 'n' roll fan, but I like rock 'n' roll music. Certain things I latch onto that I like...it's the whole range of the spectrum of music. I remember when I was getting ready to put my album together, I was thinking about the times I would love a great up-tempo song, then get the album and find that 90 percent of it was slow tunes. So I just wanted to create something that was non-stop up-tempo songs from side A to side B. Then (laughs) when I decided to record "Please Don't Go," which was the opposite of all that thinking, it was more

about showing people that I wasn't stuck in this one thing, that there was more depth to me than "Shake Your Booty."

HULICK: Makes sense. It's amazing when you look back to the decade of the 80s, when they said it was the "death of disco," and now seeing how popular it is today. It is just incredible. The fact that you had a hand in creating something that will go on forever must be a wild feeling.

KC: Yes, it is an incredible feeling.

HULICK: What's your favorite song to do live?

KC: I enjoy the whole show. I enjoy everything I do. I don't think I have a favorite. They're all fun to do for me. It's hard to say. I guess if I had to choose one I'd say "Get Down Tonight" because it was my first big hit here in the U.S. But they're all special.

HULICK: We've talked about your concerts, which I hear are insanely fun. How does it feel to look out at the audience and see people getting down to your music three decades later?

KC: Well, again it validates what I did and what I set out to do. There's no better feeling than to see people being happy with something you do, whether it's sending someone flowers during the day or singing them a song that makes them happy. So when I'm on the stage...I feel like I'm contributing to making someone's day a little brighter than it might have been before they got there (laughs). There is no greater reward than to see that happen.

Melanie Hulick of Springville has interviewed more than 70 stars since her first, Enrique Iglesias, in February 2004. The stars often seek Hulick out when they come to the area for performances. Her interviews are now exclusively featured in The Orchard Park Press.



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www.TheSenecaCasinos.com

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