



The Fishure-Price turntable, modified from a children's toy, is Daniel Barassi's latest creation.; Credit: Courtesy Daniel Barassi

MEET THE GUY WHO RUNS DEPECHE MODE'S WEBSITE AND TURNS TOY TURNTABLES INTO DJ TOOLS



ANDY HERMANN ([HTTPS://WWW.LAWEEKLY.COM/GUEST-AUTHOR/ANDY-HERMANN/](https://www.laweekly.com/guest-author/andy-hermann/)) x OCTOBER 10, 2017 ()

When people meet Daniel Barassi, the first thing they want to talk to him about is usually Depeche Mode. Which is understandable. Having served as the influential U.K. band's webmaster for nearly 20 years, Barassi is a minor celebrity among Depeche fans, who often know him by his nickname, the Brat.

"People are like, 'Oh my God, you must hang out with them all the time!'" Barassi says. But unless the band — Dave Gahan, Martin Gore and Andy Fletcher — are in town for a rehearsal or a show, most of his interactions with them are confined to emails and the occasional text or phone call. "I enjoy my time with them," he says, speaking by phone from his Burbank apartment. "It's nice to be recognized and watch Martin walk across the room to shake my hand — that does not suck. But it's not like, 'Hey Martin, it's Tuesday, wanna go to Amoeba?'"

Although Barassi loves working for one of his favorite bands, he'd rather talk about his various other projects, past and present — of which he has many. Barassi is one of those characters unique to L.A. who, through a combination of ingenuity and sheer relentlessness (on his website (<https://www.bratproductions.com/index.html>), he admits to having "a very strong personality"), has carved out a unique niche for himself in the music industry — often without having to venture far from Burbank, where he grew up and still resides.

"I lived, at the time, nine blocks away from KROQ," he says, explaining how he first became connected with the station for which he would go on to produce mashups (long before they were called mashups), single edits, jingles and station IDs. He first ingratiated himself with the station by cold-calling U.K. radio promoters and convincing them to send him U.K.-only advance promos of Depeche's latest singles, which he would then hand-deliver to KROQ DJ Richard Blade. "If you ever heard Depeche Mode mentioned on the air between 1990 and 1994, you usually heard, 'Thanks to KROQ listener Daniel for giving us this exclusive.'"

He taught himself to create mashups by making "pause tapes," using a dual cassette deck to create extended beat loops and then dubbing parts of other songs on top of them. From there, he graduated to tape splicing and then, in the '90s, to ProTools. By then, he also was doing mixes for Groove Radio, working with DJs like Swedish Egil to create unique mashups for their shows. "I was having too much fun," he says. "Let me throw 'Tainted Love' over Underworld and see how people [react]. I did that kind of crap all the time."

Later, he also worked on Gary Calamar's KCRW show, *The Open Road*, doing mashups and "bed music," the instrumentals that play in the background while the DJ is talking. More recently, he's done imaging, IDs, jingles and soundtrack work for KLOS' popular *Breakfast With The Beatles* program. "Nobody really knows who the hell I am, but you've probably heard my crap," Barassi jokes.

LA WEEKLY

Daniel Barassi; Credit: Courtesy Daniel Barassi

Another gig Barassi landed along the way was doing radio edits for Warner Bros. Records ("about a mile from my house," he notes). At the time, Warner imprint Reprise was Depeche Mode's U.S. label and handled the band's then-primitive website. When Barassi learned this, he tracked down the person in charge. "Hi, new media guy," he remembers saying. "Depeche Mode's site sucks. I can do a better job and I don't even do websites." Laughing at his brazenness, he adds, "You know, that's obviously how you connect with people and build a lasting relationship."

To his surprise, instead of just telling him to fuck off, the label challenged him to build a better website. So he did. "I built a site in a week," he says. When Depeche's management saw it, they fired the old webmaster and gave Barassi the job.

These days, in addition to continuing to run Depeche Mode's website (<https://www.depechemode.com/>), Barassi also does sites for other artists (including The Bird and the Bee (<https://www.thebirdandthebee.com/news/>)), digital archiving (for the likes of photographer Henry Diltz and DJ Gia DeSantis) and various other projects through his company, Brat Productions, which lists his skills as "audio mastering, cd/dvd authoring, video editing, video archiving, music consulting, dvd project consultation, remixing, web design & html/css/php/javascript coding, sql database management, AppleScript creating, DJ'ing (clubs and radio), radio jingle/imaging creation, music video/commercial directing."

"I lost all my hobbies. Every hobby I had became a job," he laments. "That's why I made the damn turntable. It was just fun."

The "damn turntable" is the thing that Barassi currently is the most excited to talk about. It's a modified Fisher-Price children's turntable to which he has added various bells and whistles, renaming it the "Fishure-Price." It's awesome. Take a look:

Welcome To The Fishure-Price Turntable



The story of the Fishure-Price began when Barassi acquired a massive windfall of 45s from Atomic Records — "just two blocks away," he notes. They were cleaning out old inventory and giving them away, "so I filled up my PT [Cruiser] twice. It was almost 3,000 45s."

Barassi didn't want to haul boxes of dusty 45s into his tiny apartment, so he needed a portable turntable on which to listen to them all in his garage and decide which ones to keep. The most intriguing solution was a Fisher-Price toy turntable he found on eBay ("If it can stand up to a kid, it can stand up to me") — but when he first tried to use it, he realized it wasn't right for the job. "Damn, that needle's horrible!" he remembers thinking when he played the first record. "It's like a nail on a tone arm. The whole point was to play records to see if they were any good. I didn't want to ruin them and make new grooves in the records as I was testing them."

Replacing the clunky needle with a high-end Shure M44-7 needle cartridge, designed for hip-hop scratching DJs, became the first in a series of modifications, as Barassi grew obsessed with turning his little plastic turntable into something resembling a piece of pro audio equipment. He rewired it for stereo and installed RCA jacks. He turned the volume control into a pitch control slider. He even made the little thing Serato-compatible, so he could queue tracks from a laptop. Then he built a second one and began doing DJ mixes on them (<https://fishureprice.com/wheelsofplastic.html>).

"Yeah, it's my little toy," he says proudly. He says he's gotten requests to make more but so far he's turned them all down. "You can't afford me," he tells people, only half-joking. "I'm not doing this for money. It's for me."

The turntable also inspired another pet project: a video series called "Fishure-Price #45Friday" (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCShg3rk8uChchpvDLW2watQ>), in which Barassi asks his various music industry friends and colleagues to talk about their favorite 45 record. Calamar, Sirius XM DJ Doug "Sluggo" Roberts and The Bird and the Bee's Inara George have appeared on the series so far; among his more recent big "gets" was legendary producer Shel Talmy, who talked about one of the most famous records he produced, The Who's "My Generation."

Shel Talmy - Fishure-Price #45Friday (September 29th, 2017)



Barassi is looking forward to seeing his friends and employers in Depeche Mode at the Hollywood Bowl this week but insists that he doesn't take advantage of position, and that it's not as glamorous as some fans might think. "It's a cool gig. I get perks. But it's not like I'm hanging with the band 24/7."

He sounds far more excited about chasing down some more participants for "Fishure-Prince #45Friday." "I've got a lot of people who say they wanna do it," he says. "I'm not putting a lot of promotion into it. I'm just doing it for fun."

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTERS

* indicates required

First Name *

Last Name *

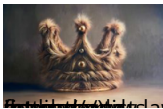
Email Address *

LA Weekly Email Lists

- ☐ What's Happening This Week
- ☐ Food + Drink
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Arts
- ☐ Entertainment
- ☐ Events
- ☐ Cannabis

Subscribe

LATEST ARTICLES



ART NEWS: THE LA ART SHOW RETURNS AND FINDING ARTISTS IN SPACE
([HTTPS://WWW.LAWEEKLY.COM/ART-NEWS-THE-LA-ART-SHOW-RETURNS-AND-FINDING-ARTISTS-IN-SPACE/](https://www.laweekly.com/art-news-the-la-art-show-returns-and-finding-artists-in-space/))

DECEMBER 9, 2025



WAR, TOWER OF POWER AND PONCHO SANCHEZ UNITE FOR AN EPIC CONCERT AT THE YOUTUBE THEATER ([HTTPS://WWW.LAWEEKLY.COM/WAR-TOWER-OF-POWER-AND-PANCHO-SANCHEZ-UNITE-FOR-AN-EPIC-CONCERT-AT-THE-YOUTUBE-THEATER/](https://www.laweekly.com/war-tower-of-power-and-pancho-sanchez-unite-for-an-epic-concert-at-the-youtube-theater/))

DECEMBER 5, 2025



PHOTOS: LOUD VILLAGE'S COMEDY NIGHT AT BEST FISH TACO CELEBRATES 14 YEARS WITH MONSTER LINEUP — BILL BURR, ALI MACOFSKY, REGGIE WATTS AND MORE
([HTTPS://WWW.LAWEEKLY.COM/PHOTOS-LOUD-VILLAGES-COMEDY-NIGHT-AT-BEST-FISH-TACO-CELEBRATES-14-YEARS-WITH-MONSTER-LINEUP-BILL-BURR-ALI-MACOFSKY-REGGIE-WATTS-AND-MORE/](https://www.laweekly.com/photos-loud-villages-comedy-night-at-best-fish-taco-celebrates-14-years-with-monster-lineup-bill-burr-ali-macofsky-reggie-watts-and-more/))

DECEMBER 4, 2025



BILLIONS LOST: HOW OUT-OF-STATE CANNABIS VENDORS ARE IMPACTING CALIFORNIA DISPENSARIES — ARE ONLINE VENDORS REALLY SAFER THAN CALIFORNIA DISPENSARIES? ([HTTPS://WWW.LAWEEKLY.COM/BILLIONS-LOST-HOW-OUT-OF-STATE-CANNABIS-VENDORS-ARE-IMPACTING-CALIFORNIA-DISPENSARIES-ARE-ONLINE-VENDORS-REALLY-SAFER-THAN-CALIFORNIA-DISPENSARIES/](https://www.laweekly.com/billions-lost-how-out-of-state-cannabis-vendors-are-impacting-california-dispensaries-are-online-vendors-really-safer-than-california-dispensaries/))

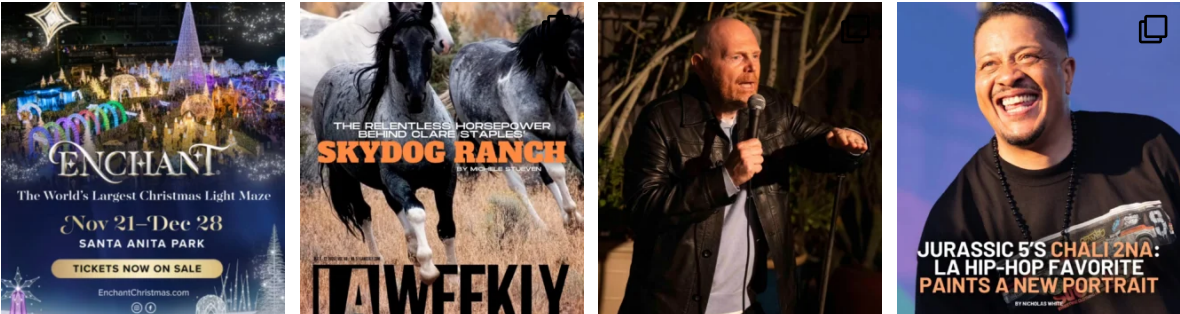
DECEMBER 4, 2025

SEARCH LA WEEKLY



laweekly
LAWeekly Instagram: Featuring the culture of LA since 1978 🙌

(<https://www.instagram.com/laweekly/>)



Load More...

Follow on Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/laweekly/>)

(<https://www.instagram.com/laweekly>) (<https://www.facebook.com/laweekly>) (<https://twitter.com/laweekly>)



PICK US UP ([HTTPS://WWW.LAWEEKLY.COM/PICK-US-UP/](https://www.laweekly.com/pick-us-up/))

CONTACT ([HTTPS://WWW.LAWEEKLY.COM/CONTACT-PAGE/](https://www.laweekly.com/contact-page/))

POLICIES ([HTTPS://WWW.LAWEEKLY.COM/POLICIES/](https://www.laweekly.com/policies/))

COPYRIGHT LA WEEKLY



Do Not Sell or Share My Personal Information