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A few words from the staff

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Star Wax is a free, quarterly magazine brought to you by Compos-it, an association created in 2000, situated in Montreuil, a suburb on the east side of Paris. We've been actively supporting and promoting urban expressive culture, like Bmx, Graffiti and, of course, Djing, for 5 years now. Since the very beginning we've chosen to give artists from varied and different musical backgrounds, a platform to express themselves and spread information rich in current and historical references. With the same objectives in mind, this issue, number 20 brings you tales of The Bug and Horsepower Productions, pioneers of the London dubstep scene, and onward to the Achilifunk sound of Barcelona's Txarly Brown. And discover the electro rap blend of Berlin Underground Project, equally as entertaining as AmonTobin's spectacular live show.

We're also proud to present the arrival of our new website : www.starwaxmag.com, where you'll find a downloadable version of the magazine, available in English, as well as in the original French version. To celebrate the international English version, we're currently planning a number of events in collaboration with various local artists in London, Berlin, Amsterdam, Madrid and Barcelona. Star Wax parties are typically eclectic, bringing together converging cultures and urban expression. We hope to see you there !

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FEW INVENTIONS ARE AS USEFUL OR AS ELEGANTLY SIMPLE AS THE "CENTERING DEVICE FOR PHONOGRAPHIC RECORDS" OR PUT MORE PLAINLY, THE 45 ADAPTOR" SAYS SIMON STRUTT, FOUNDER MEMBER OF THE ENGLISH WEB SITE 45 CENTRAL. EVERY DJ PLAYING 45 WILL AGREE FOR SURE. BUT WHERE DOES THIS TOOL AS STRANGE AS ESSENTIAL COME FROM ?

When RCA built the first 45rpm drop-changer players in 1949, they boasted that customers could stack their new records on the thick 1 1/2" thick spindle, start the machine and listen to 50 minutes of uninterrupted music. The thick spindle allowed 45's to drop safely onto the turntable, and fit the huge 1 1/2" diameter hole in the 45's cent. By the early 1950's, standard record players were modified to handle all three speeds. But those phonographs had a thin spindle, and 45's still had that huge center hole. And if you ever lost the tube-shaped detachable center spindle that came with your phonograph ... you entered the wonderful world of 45 adapters.

The first such adapters were made in 1950 by the Webster Electric Company of Chicago. The "Webster" adapter was a tin circle with four teeth, two on each side. You had to nearly bend a record in half to wedge a Webster into the center hole - just follow the instructions on every Webster's ten-pack. Between 1950 and 1953, Capitol Records tried to solve the "hole" problem by releasing their 7-inch discs in the "O.C. 45" format. This meant the hole in a Capitol 45 was actually molded with a detachable triangular insert ("O.C." stood for "Optional Center"). Theoretically, you could play Capitol O.C. 45's on a conventional spindle, then push out the triangular center and play the record on an RCA 45 dropchanger. Unfortunately, once the center piece was pushed out, it stayed out. Even though Capitol discontinued their O.C. 45 line in 1953, the format found a home in Europe, where many labels produced 45's with detachable centers up until the 1990's. North American Philips (Norelco) came out with a triangular adapter, similar to the leftover pieces from a Capitol "O.C. 45." It didn't sell well in America, but can be found often in Canada.



The plastic adapter soon replaced the dying Webster brand, thanks to the work of Tom Hutchison, a New Jersey technician and inventor. Originally Hutchison pressed his adapters in four-cavity, eight-pound molds. By the 1970's, his company's molds pressed 48 adapters at a time, selling millions of inserts each month. Metal adapters reappeared in the 1970's, when the Pfanstiehl Corporation built a high-end single adapter. The steel "Push-Up" adapters would snap into a 45, keeping the hole edges pristine and safe. Pfanstiehl adapters were perfect for remixers and DJ's, who could scratch and mix 7-inchers without fear of an adapter popping out and wrecking the mix. Because of their metal construction, however, the "Push-Ups" cost more to manufacture than did the plastic adapters, and were only bought for permanent installation into 45's.

In 1983, the arrival of the compact disc crushed the demand for 45 adapters. Many of the companies in the adapter business - Recoton, Duotone, Gemini, Pfanstiehl - ceased production of inserts. Demand for the Hutchison adapter dropped from 20 million units per year to zero. Today, adapters can still be found in flea markets and collector shows, often still wedged in the records like a key in an ignition.

More info: www.45central.co.uk





DESPITE ITS INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION AS MECCA FOR CLUBS AND INDEPENDENT PRODUCTIONS, THE BERLIN MUSIC SCENE ISN'T LIMITED TO TECHNO MUSIC. IT'S ALWAYS BEEN A MEETING POINT FOR MUSICIANS FROM ALL ORIGINS & BACKGROUNDS, RICH IN VARIATION AND INFLUENCES. THE BERLIN UNDERGROUND PROJECT IS A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF GROUPS THAT MANAGE TO BRING TOGETHER RAPPERS, MUSICIANS, DJs AND BEATMAKERS FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC. THIS COLLECTIVE HAS SET OUT TO PUT HIP-HOP BACK INTO THE HEART OF BERLIN.

B.U.P. (Berlin Underground Project) is a group of six musicians from varied backgrounds, geographically and musically, brought together by the same passion for hip-hop, electronics, r'n'b and blues in a city made for artistic encounters. "We all came here in particular because of the possibilities Berlin offers to musicians. Of course we're influenced by our daily surroundings and experiences in the city, even though Berlin isn't so famous for its hip hop scene. We felt that B.U.P. could make a difference". Essentially based on the productions of Creativemaze and the turntable mastery of Mr Nylson, their music swings between electronic r'n'b and oldschool hip-hop, casts sidelong glances at grime and doesn't mind having a go at rock and roll. Winton Kelly Stevenson combines harmonica and beatboxing with effects pedals, bringing his own sound to the group. "Although many of the songs found in B.U.P.'s live set are produced by creativemaze, the structure of the show includes work from the groups various producers, live production from Wynnton and a bit of crate digging from Nils. As the work of all involved artists is extremely diverse, their collective live show is more of a compilation of their solo work, rather than your typical band experience". But the result is consistent and very efficient. Partly thanks to the three vocalists of the group : Badkat, rapper from Miami, Kiko King, also American, alternates soul and rap, and local MC, Simple One. They complement each other well, pushing themselves when it comes to their own productions, and holding back when it's time to support the other group members.

If you've been lucky enough to attend one of their rare live shows (their appearance at the Lichtblick Festival last June, for example), it's obvious that the synergy between the members and their contagious enthusiasm should logically grab the audience's attention. "We don't currently have any set dates in the near future, but we're currently in contact with a few promoters. (...). But we are actively looking for dates to perform as a group. Many of the members have solo albums coming out this year, along with a slew of other responsibilities, which makes it difficult to find time, but in some ways, it draws more attention to the group, and therefore helps us find new opportunities".

B.U.P is bound to become a solid reference in Berlin and are already active ambassadors of the current local hip-hop scene. It would confirm the saying "united we stand". "We will collaborate as much as we can for as long as we can. This collective was formed by friends who all happened to be musicians. As long as we keep a bit of both in the way we proceed, we can take this journey together. Concurrently, the individual artists keep busy with their solo work, while, little by little B.U.P is making a name for itself. In many ways, the success of the individual comes with the success of the group".

+++++ A free download of +++++
Mr Nylson & Simple One's mixtape is available
on <http://simpleone.bandcamp.com/releases>

EVEN GYPSIES SAY: « TXARLY BROWN (DJ, RECORD COLLECTOR AND REPUTED GRAPHIC ARTIST) IS THE ONE 'PAIO' (NON-GYPSY) WHO KNOWS THE MOST ABOUT RUMBA. » HE'S ALSO THE DJ BEHIND THE REVIVAL AND REMODELING OF A GENRE THAT IS ALREADY A PART OF THE MUSICAL, AND EVEN SOCIAL HISTORY OF BARCELONA, HIS HOMETOWN. IN 2007 TXARLY BROWN RELEASED « ACHILIFUNK » (ON THE LOVEMONK LABEL), A COMPILATION ALBUM ACCOMPANIED BY A BOOK, WHICH SHOWED A WHOLE NEW GENERATION OF MUSIC LOVERS THE CLOSE CONNECTION BETWEEN RUMBA AND FUNK, SOUL AND SALSA. TWO YEARS LATER, TXARLY RELEASED ANOTHER ALBUM CALLED « MÁS ACHILIFUNK », DESIGNED TO BRING TOGETHER LOCAL GROUPS OF RUMBA AND WELL KNOWN INTERNATIONAL REMIXERS. IN 2010, HE DROPPED THE FINAL VOLUME IN THE TRILOGY, « GITANO REAL », A HIGHLY AUDACIOUS PAIRING THE BANDA ACHILIFUNK WITH THE ORIGINAL JAZZ ORQUESTRA TALLER DE MÚSICS. THE END RESULT WAS YET ANOTHER CLEVER AND DARING TAKE ON THE GENRE.



**TXARLY
BROWN**

When & how did you start djing ?

At the end of the '80s in Barcelona, I started mixing at club nights organised by my skazine "FBI" (Fuentes Bien Informadas). In the beginning of the nineties I started playing in other clubs more regularly, such as the Veneno, Malecón, Monumental...

For those who aren't so familiar with rumba, how would you define it ?

Catalonian Rumba is a rhythm born out of the encounter between Caribbean music, Gypsy music and flamenco in the fascist Spain of the '60s, to which the producers of the time added all sorts of arrangements, ranging from pop to soul. It became popular thanks to artists such as Peret, Chacho and Pescadilla. It is still a fresh way of synthesizing Afro West Indian influences and continues to be played by the new generation of musicians today.

What's the connection to Barcelona ?

The birthplace of the Rumba Catalana and its derivatives was Barcelona, a result of the city's rich musical heritage from before the Civil War. Barcelona was one of Europe's most influential musical centres during the first half of the 20th century. The open-minded spirit of the people living there and the festive nature of Catalan gypsies gave rise to this phenomenon. Unfortunately, nowadays, the city's institutions have turned their backs on this genre. Despite that factor, Barcelona is still the epicentre of a great modern rumba movement with over 200 groups...

Why did you choose the name « Achilifunk » ?

When I first discovered Catalonian rumba, I did not just aim to rehabilitate it as a native for the sake of simply paying tribute its heroes, but also to renew the sound, in order to make it more accessible to current generations. And that's where the name Achilifunk came from, a way to describe a Spanish, Catalonian style of rumba that isn't afraid of making its breaks and sounds more modern, yet still based on the classic guitar and the rhythm of the "ventilador" (the way the Catalonian gypsies play the guitar).

Spain is more well-known for its electro- techno music scene, but how is the Latin and black music clubbing scene evolving in Barcelona ?

Dance music with Latin or Afro-American roots has progressively grown over the last 15 years, faced with the boring house and techno monopoly due to all the clubs copying the formula created by Sonar, the city's major (electronic-ed.) music festival. Nowadays we have the Marula and the Powder Room clubs, for example, which are becoming more and more popular with a new rebellious generation who've grown tired of the beat dictatorship.

What is your studio set up for making beats ?

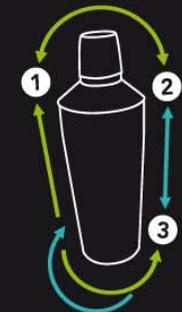
I'm extremely basic, I do everything with Apple's Garage Band, because it's just a really simple program with lots of possibilities. I've always felt that it's not the tool that counts but the idea behind it. My friends keep begging me to swap to Logic Audio or Cubase, but they're not the ones doing my work, so...

What is in store for the future ?

I've just finished producing the first album by Chacho, who hasn't recorded for 35 years (the album will include achilimixes), and a vinyl EP to commemorate the Neocalorro movement, both of which are to be released before Christmas. I'm trying to finish an Achilibook in which I present all Spanish rumba records released on vinyl. In April I was re-elected President of Forcat (Promotion of Catalonian Rumba) and we are preparing the 3rd Day of Rumba in Barcelona, to be held in December 2011, with a printed guide of the rumba scene as well as a song book of popular rumba. In September, I'm back on the decks for the 5th season of the Rumba Club in Apolo 2, plus a number of other projects...

**Txarly Brown presents
the weekly Achilifunk
Radio Show in www.gladyspalmera.com**

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PRODUCER BENEDIC LAMDIN IS ACCLAIMED FOR THE QUALITY OF HIS ARRANGEMENTS ON VARIOUS JAZZ PROJECTS. HIS FOURTH ALBUM AS NOSTALGIA 77, "THE SLEEP WALKING SOCIETY", COMES AS A SURPRISE. IT'S AN ORGANIC RESULT, WHICH COMBINES JAZZ, SOUL AND FOLK SOUNDS. THE SONGWRITING AND ARRANGEMENTS BLEND WELL WITH THE VOICE OF SINGER JOSA PEIT.



**NOS
TAL
GIA
77**

Despite being heavily involved in a number of various projects, you've managed to find the time to produce the new Nostalgia 77. It's been nearly four years since the release of the previous album, "Everything under the sun". What has changed since then?

During the period between the two albums, I had the occasion to work as producer with various artists. I used the energy generated by these experiences to feed my work. There are many more songs, so to speak, than on the previous album, which is directly connected to the female singers who collaborate on the project. Studio sessions often bring new musicians into the group, and the formation has changed lightly, as more and more people are involved people are involved. It's an organic process.

On the last Sleeping Society Project release, the acoustic guitar is more present, with a combination of blues and folk sounds. Does the guitar play an important role in the direction of the album?

Yes, sure, but it's also a matter of feeling: you've got to work with what you're feeling at that particular moment. Recently, I've worked on several acoustic projects and I focused more on the atmosphere than on using samples or electronic sounds.

I imagine that working on other projects as sound engineer or producer influences your approach to your own projects?

Of course it does. It clearly changes my way of seeing things: you try things, and if it comes out positive, you feel like continuing in that direction. Or if you need new ideas, it helps you develop ideas. It's a sort of exchange, a continuous loop.

This project feels rather marked by a certain interest in existential issues. If so, what are the reasons?

You're absolutely right. I felt the need to write songs related to simple emotions and personal experiences we all go through in our lives. The kind of emotional state you encounter in personal relationships, with children... My wife gave birth to our child while I was writing this album. Memory is another recurring theme, present in three, four songs. What do we remember? How do we remember? To what extent does it comfort or change our personality, our individuality?

You mostly make instrumental tracks, though here, there are many more actual songs. How did this transition come about?

I really wanted to change direction on this album. When you make an album, it's always tempting to innovate, do something you've never done before. It's a kind of challenge and is one of my main sources of motivation.

How did you meet the singer?

It's quite a funny story. This girl, Josa Peit, got in touch with me on the net, from nowhere. I was looking for the right singer for my songs. How come I can't find the right person? I read her mail, listened to her music. Her voice seemed a natural fit. I answered back and asked her to give it a try on some of my songs.

Did she come to London for the recording?

Yes because she lives in Berlin. She spent about a week recording a few tracks and I must say I've been very lucky because I just love her voice.

Is it fulfilling to write songs for others?

When you write songs, you must start with yourself. I've found out that I wasn't particularly keen on songs. So I prefer to let somebody else do it, somebody capable of inhabiting the words and the song, in order to that share the experience.

Do you use much analogue equipment or rely more on digital technology?

I enjoy using digital recording systems like Pro Tools together with analogue mixing desks. On this album, although we use Pro Tools to record the tracks, we do use analogue equipment for sound treatment, as well as a set of vintage microphones... The point is to find the right tools for the right situations. Not many groups can afford to rent a studio for a full month. That's one of the advantages of digital, you can avoid the cost of renting a studio.

Could you describe some of your analogue studio gear ?

For the analogue part, I have an Api Desk and a multitrack recorder. There's also a selection of tube mikes, such as the Neumann 47, and the 67. We've specifically selected the mikes we use, according to our needs, trying and testing them to get the sound we want.

What projects have you been working on lately, as sound engineer ?

I have been working on Jeb Loy Nichols' new project (an american jazz/folk songwriter). I've collaborated on quite a few jazz projects, big bands, quartets as well as trios. Some projects were more « avant garde », others more traditional. I've worked on quite a lot of more varied and personal projects.

Have you ever thought of working on a project with Bonobo or Cinematic Orchestra ?

I did a remix for Bonobo, who I know a little bit. But there's no real collaboration with them at the moment. I can see the similarities between Bonobo's and Cinematic Orchestra' work. I don't know, I think it's more their own thing.

Of course you all have interesting profiles, why not put them together ...

I think we all have a common background which binds us together. Obviously, it might be interesting to collaborate. Mmm....

Any electronic machines in Nostalgia 77's live set?

No, it's a live concert with 6 musicians, drums, bass, guitar, keyboards. We want to keep it that way, it's more efficient to stay free and offer different versions of the songs from the album.

Have you thought of using both turntables and musicians in your live concerts ?

I keep them separate. From my point of view, the two things are separate. Live concerts with the musicians and the DJ more centred on the club, the dancefloor, parties. Having said that, I know various projects where it works, but it's not the way I perceive Nostalgia 77.

As a DJ, do you play on vinyl records or use a digital system ?

I use a combination of records and Serato, specially when I'm travelling. Then I play a set of good old music, soul, funk and jazz from all over the world.

“ Not many groups can afford to rent a studio for a full month. That's one of the advantages of digital ... ”



Nostalgia 77 & Josa Peit.



NO NEED TO INTRODUCE AMON TOBIN. HIS NAME IS DIRECTLY LINKED TO THE HISTORY OF THE LONDON-BASED NINJA TUNE LABEL, AND HIS MUSIC HAS LEFT ITS MARK ON THE EVOLUTION OF UNDERGROUND ELECTRONIC MUSIC OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES. ON HIS LATEST ALBUM, ISAM, HE SHOWS, ONCE MORE, HIS SKILL IN MANIPULATING AND RE-MODELING A LARGE VARIETY OF SOUND SOURCES.

Your new record, *Isam* is, depending on the person listening to it, either your most experimental or your most accessible album. What was your main objective during the recording process? Are you aware of these diverging perceptions?

There were quite a few things I tried to do on the record. One was to try and make music from sounds that don't exist in the real world. By doing that, I'm forced to explore unfamiliar musical territory and this is something I've always found interesting. I completely understand people's impression of my music can go both ways. With every record I've made, it's been like that. So, today it just seems normal to me.

The artwork of the album is great and there's an exhibition from Tessa Farmer linked to the album. Is the visual aspect important for you?

Tessa's work illustrated very well what I was trying to do with the music but in a completely different medium. Aside from that I just find what she does to be very beautiful.

Would you like to collaborate with other contemporary artists?

I'm open to the idea if it makes sense. I am concentrating on making tunes for the most part.

How long did it take you to put together your live show?

About five to eight months altogether.

Could you tell us a little bit about the themes and technical construction of your live show?

To some extent it's about accepting electronic music for what it is, which in my opinion has nothing to do with performance. Therefore my own performance is not the focus of the show. Instead my own physical movements on stage are not seen for the most part. They are instead amplified into something that is much more visually interesting.

What's it like to work with visuals in comparison to pure musical production?

One thing has nothing to do with the other really. The album took over two years to make but now exists on its own. The visuals are part of a realtime experience I share with everyone in the room.

Who came up with the concept & form of the blocks on stage?

The initial idea was my own but it needed to be designed by an engineer. Heather Shaw from Vita Motus is responsible for how the actual shape works around my position on the stage. She was the one who took it from just an idea anyone could have and built it into something we could actually tour with.

What's your favorite aspect of performing concerts?

It's not very often you get to be there when people are hearing your music. Music is personal to me so it feels like having a large group of people share quite an intimate space. Kind of a risky business, so it's an amazing thing when it goes well and you feel like everyone is connected to something you also have a strong connection to.

Your songs often have a feel of structured chaos, starting and stopping unexpectedly... (more like a mechanical movement than something purely electronic...). Do you consciously avoid linear arrangements in your work?

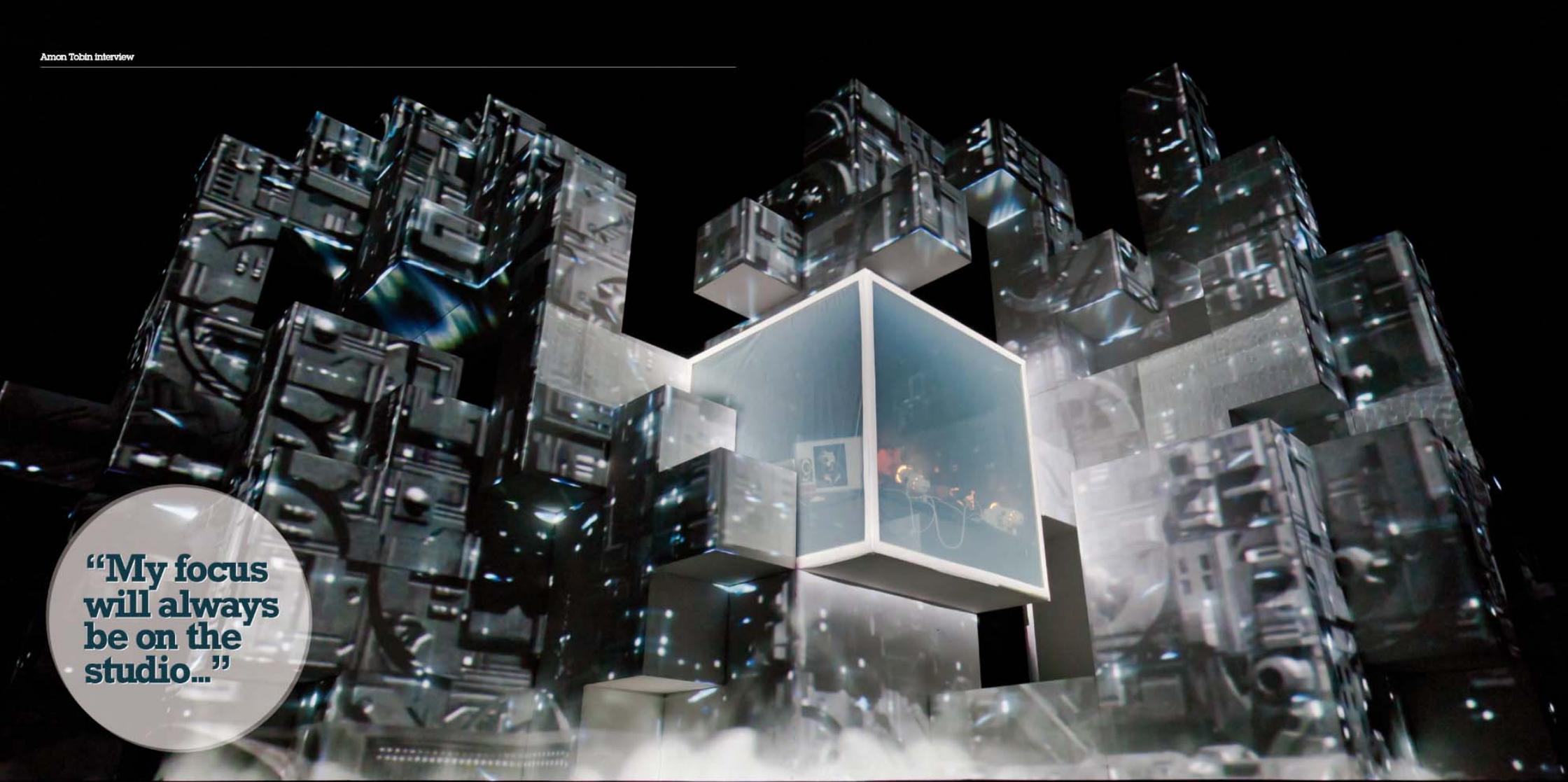
I'm not trying to make anything difficult. An arrangement does what I think it should do and sometimes it's not linear. I'm basically a chauffeur and the song is king. As king it's not governed by any rules outside it's own making.

You sampled your own voice as well as external sound sources. Do you treat every source you sample in a similar way?

I see samples and recording as two separate things. A sample for me is something that has existed in another context before. A recording is something without a previous life elsewhere. In any case I treat all sounds as a starting point.

I did interview you in Paris 5 or 6 years ago and you told me that, contrary to Matmos, Mathew Herbert or other concrete music artists, the origin of the sound was not as important as the sound itself. Do you still feel the same?

I feel the same. The origin of a sound is not as important to me as it's destination. This is because I'm not an archivist or collector of records, samples, stamps, train sets or anything else. I see all sound sources as building blocks. A brick with which to build your house. And you can build a beautiful house from ordinary stone or an ugly one from some rare precious element.



“My focus will always be on the studio...”

For a lot of people, sampling will never be something as serious as playing instruments. How do you feel about that?

Sampling doesn't really have anything to do with playing instruments. ..And you can be serious about music or not serious about it regardless of what you use to make it. People are confused about a lot of things and also far too desperate to be taken seriously by other confused people.

Do you still think sampling and djing are linked? In what way?

Sampling re-contextualises sound and music. If you are a creative dj then you are basically doing the same thing to some extent.

Are you still djing? Do you use digital devices, turntables, computers?

Yes I still love djing. Sometimes I use digital devices and sometimes just decks. It depends on what I want to do.

What types of music or art have inspired you lately (or over the last few years)?

I'm always inspired by other music. Lately I've been getting into vocal harmonies from quite cheesy country songs.

Do you feel a connection with any particular currents in the electronic scene, such as Bass and Dubstep?

I have a soft spot for bass driven music. I see most bass heavy sub genres as part of the same thing in what they are trying to accomplish technically. I've never been closely connected to any scene but I appreciate the elements of them that make sense to what I'm doing and these things influence me greatly.

Could you recommend any current artists worth discovering - any albums you've been listening to recently?

I'd highly recommend Lorn and Eskmo to name a couple..

You've made music for a long time now and you've never launched your own label. Would you like to release projects from other people and musicians?

I'm not a business man and any label I made would likely be a disaster. Also I barely have enough time to explore all the musical possibilities that are out there. My focus will always be on the studio, I think.

It was great to hear some of the Two Fingers tracks in the live set. Are you currently working on new material for that project?

Two fingers is my guilty pleasure. I'm in love with sound and its possibilities, but also with heavy beats that do nothing more than make you want to move. I'm working right now on a Two Fingers album that does exactly that.

A NEW VISION OF MASTERING

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AS DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND MASTERING/MIXING SOFTWARE EVOLVE TOWARDS ABSOLUTE PRECISION AND INFINITE POSSIBILITIES... DAVID HACHOUR AND FLORENT SABATON ARE PROFESSIONAL SOUND ENGINEERS WITH MANY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN MASTERING AND MIXING WORK FROM A GREAT NUMBER OF IMPORTANT PRODUCERS IN THE ELECTRONIC AND DANCE MUSIC SCENE. AS HEAD OF ONE OF PARIS' FOREMOST MASTERING STUDIOS, THEY STRIVE TO MAKE THE BEST POSSIBLE USE OF THE LATEST TECHNIQUES AND TECHNOLOGY. HERE, THEY DISCUSS THE MASTERING PROCESS, AND, IN PARTICULAR, THE USE OF "STEMS", A CONCEPT THAT HAS BECOME ESSENTIAL IN FINALIZING CURRENT STUDIO WORK. THEY SHED LIGHT ON MASTERING AND STEMS.

When did you start working in mastering & mixing?

Florent: Mastering? It dates back to Top Master, where I started 8 years ago. We are self-taught. We learned by doing, and, especially, by listening to a lot of different music for years. You don't learn anything about that at school!

David: Florent is a musician, he was already playing bass back in 1984, when I started buying vinyl records... then in 1987 I started djing.

What are some of the major changes you've seen since opening Color Sound Studio, 3 years ago?

F: We have a new recording booth with more acoustic precision, and have acquired more analog equipment. We've also evolved in the way we work, such as mastering using stems, which allows us to be more exact and to mix groups of instruments as individual tracks. Originally we mainly mastered stereo files, but with the growing demand for "more sound", the use of stems has become essential.

Speaking of acoustics, a major factor in mixing and mastering, who did you work with to get the sound you were looking for?

D: We tried working with several acousticians. After the 5th or 6th, things got a little better! In the end, we're the ones who finally found our own way to adjust the acoustics in the booth to our liking. I think there are very good acoustic technicians out there, but for mastering, it's a little more complicated. This is somewhat of a touchy subject for us.

F: In any case, it's done, the acoustics are under control. It has cost us dearly.

D: What bothers me, is that they are too focused on a technical approach. They don't listen to enough music, as far as I'm concerned, and always use the same CD from 1985 (laughs). We received several estimates, and the technicians didn't even come to the studio for a listen! (laughs)

F: The first was to test out all the same Mp3 well compressed, and I was, like "oh my, we are in deep shit" (laughs).

D: We have the means to optimize the maximum even if we did not seek out the biggest budgets.

You are more known for mastering mostly electronic and dance music, but you also work with hip-hop and other types of music ...

All music, spoken word, jazz, pop, rock ... but mostly urban styles, anything relatively underground: punk, metal... You become specialized in certain styles, and there is some segregation as a result. It's horrible but true. What we regret is not working as much with pop or folk artists, you know, guitar/vocals.

Concerning Color Sound's equipment, are there any machines that can't yet be equalled using software?

F: Everything we have as analog hardware can't really be imitated accurately with plug-ins. If you use a plug-in as instrument or for sound treatment, you're always a bit more limited. Even some hardware that is supposed to emulate other hardware don't perform as well as the original.

Could you fill us in a bit more about 'stems', an American term which emerged about 10 years ago?

D: It's like the future of mastering, because it allows us to work track by track, adjusting each instrument if necessary, which allows us to do a more complete job when mastering. Sometimes, it comes close to the mixing process, but the purpose isn't to change the mix, but to widen the possibilities of mastering. We've only recently started offering to mix tracks, but for electronic music only.

F: For example, sometimes we realize that in the mastering, the bass is too loud. But, if we have the stems separately, we can control the final result much more. We can also, with the consent of the artist, replace some sounds in the drum kit, to make them more consistent with the bass, which remains primary element in electronic dance music.

What is the difference between pre-mastering & mastering?

F: Our work is more precisely called pre-mastering. True mastering is the final technical step before the manufacturing process: The production of a lacquer master.

What do you prefer to mix and master: CD or vinyl format? And do you work with digital formats?

F: We currently offer a package where, for 99 euros, we adapt to the sound to the format it's aiming for. There's a particular type of mastering for the web, for radio and yet another, more specifically for the club. Everyone thinks that a good track will sound good just about anywhere, but that's not really true. Of course, what we prefer is the vinyl format!

D: The vinyl format is more fun. Beyond the typically warmer sound, you can't make the level of a vinyl as loud as the CD, due to natural technical limitations. That's why the sound dynamic, with less level, is almost always better on vinyl, when it's mastered properly. Often, when you listen to a CD from the late '80s or early '90s, regardless of the style of music, the level is impressive, but the actual dynamic and sound quality is inferior. Some people tell me they don't even notice the difference. I have a rather simple image to explain the dynamics: imagine if you punch something without much power, you'll hurt yourself less than if you'd have used all of your strength! Nowadays, there's no more 'real' power in music, because artists always want to raise the volume level as much as possible. It's always better to have a little less level in the song and to simply raise the volume of the amp you're using, instead of the opposite.

You used to also manage your own label Denote Records. Is that project on standby?

D: It's still alive, though it has been somewhat dormant for a while. In the next few months, we plan to release a digital compilation of Neo-disco, with, among others, Lord Funk... There's also Alabama 65, The Galactiks, Digital Finger and other releases coming soon... The label's quite dear to me, on a personal level, but it's hard to give an equal amount of attention to all activities at the same time! First and foremost, we do what we do because we enjoy it!



HORSE POWER PROD. & THE BUG

GREENSLEEVES RECORDS, FOUNDED IN 1975 BY CHRIS CRACKNELL AND CHRIS SEDWICK, IS A MAJOR REFERENCE IN REGGAE AND DANCEHALL MUSIC IN ENGLAND, THANKS TO THEIR CLASSIC RELEASES BY ARTISTS LIKE DENNIS BROWN, YELLOWMAN, GREGORY ISAACS OR SHABBA RANKS, TO NAME JUST A FEW. SOME OF THE MOST SOUGHT-AFTER BASS MUSIC PRODUCERS (GOTH TRAD, COKI, MALA, TERROR DANJAH...) REVISIT SOME LEGENDARY CLASSICS OF THE LABEL. FEEDBACK ON THIS EXPERIENCE WITH TWO OF THE CONCERNED ARTISTS: HORSEPOWER PRODUCTIONS AND THE BUG.



How did the people from Greensleeves contact you and what convinced you to take part in this project ?

Horsepower Productions: I was originally contacted by Greensleeves through Kris from the Deep Medi record label, this was quite some time ago, I hasten to add, because this project was in the planning stages for a very long time! Of course, it didn't take much to convince me, being a big fan of reggae music and also the top-class nature of the material they wanted remixes of.

The Bug: Kris from deep Medi invited me to participate in the project just over a year ago.

Were you familiar with Greensleeves label releases before this project ?

HP: Yes! I've followed them since the eighties and we've already had a successful release of our own on that esteemed imprint, a remix of Elephant Man's #1 dancehall hit "Log-On" now regarded by some as a definitive dubstep classic..

TB: Yes definitely, i've been devoted to Greensleeves catalogue for many years. Starting from the amazing Scientist dub albums in the eighties through the amazing selection of Bashment rhythm albums, via Yellowman, Hugh Mundell, Sizzla and Vybz Kartel albums...

Did you have the choice of which track to remix? If so, why that particular tune ?

HP: Well I was originally sent quite a big list of tracks, including old and new Greensleeves material, most of it being quite classic in nature. I then made a small shortlist of some of my favourites and eventually, when they had discovered which of the material they actually had the tapes for, I ended up one of my choices, Yellowman's seminal dancehall classic "zunguzunguguzunguzeng" Naturally, it being a personal favourite from the past anyway, it seemed like a great choice

TB: I chose "Badman Forward" fundamentally ,because the original was always a guaranteed firestarter in any dance. And I felt the original backing track was fairly standard, and could be more easily remixed than the absolute stone cold classics i had also been offered to mutate... And idealistically I felt it could maybe be improved, in the best possible competitive sense and tradition of reggae clashing... (Laughs)

What devices did you use for your remix (computer, machines, keyboards...)?

HP: The remix was done on production software, with some keyboards and FX. It was partly mixed in analogue at our studio, Maskeliya Sound, and the stems were mixed on an API console across the pond in downtown NYC.

TB: I have a predominantly hardware based studio. So I used a Moog Voyager for the bass, a Prophet for the leads, 808 for the snares and field recordings of Police sirens in Bethnal Green. All running through a Soundcraft Ghost for extra analog warmth, and sonic dirt.

Have you listened to any of the other tracks on this project ? How does it hold up ?

HP: Yes, I have been kept up to date with all the other remixes as and when they were finished, and I have to say, there is some great stuff on there. Basically, all the people involved had their pick of a lot of classic material to remix, and have done it justice in each case, in an interesting way and in a wide variety of styles... this ain't a "point and shoot" formulaic remix project album and it demonstrates quite an experimental slant, which is positive.

TB: All artists have been brave taking on such extraordinary originals, and i get the feelin the remixes have been approached with love and care in mind, in deep respect of the original songs. I think Kris has introduced a really valuable culture clash.

Do you listen to a lot of dub and reggae ? Current or older stuff ? Which artists ?

HP: I don't like reggae.. I love it! (Laughs). I listen to new and old stuff, a lot of dub material, dancehall and rootsy type of stuff. I like many many artists from jamaica and the UK and I also like to check out some of our own home-grown sound systems when I can, such as Channel One, Iration Steppas and Mungo's HiFi in bonnie Scotland.

TB: Reggae is the only music i could listen to every day and night without stop, as it has so much variation within it's sub divisions and styles, and so much soul within it's grooves. Jacob Miller, King Tubbys, Augustus Pablo, White Mice, Cutty Ranks, Capleton, 15/16/17, Roots Radics (whenever squeezed by Scientist), Cornell Campbell, Chezidek, King Kong, Vybz, Ward 21...etc etc...the list is bloody endless (Laughs).

Is there a dancehall or reggae track you'd love to remix but haven't had the opportunity as of yet ?

HP: Yeah, there were definitely other good ones on the original list, but unfortunately, the tapes haven't yet made it across the ocean for the particular track I had in mind. But watch this space, err.. I guess

TB: I would love to turnover a Damien Marley remix as I reckon his voice/lyrics are consistently incredible. Otherwise prime Cutty Ranks, Nitty Gritty, Gregory Isaacs (R.I.P) or maybe Little Kirk or Billy Boyo gems...Again, the list is probably endless too... It's like havin the keys to a sweet shop if you got access to Greensleeves back catalogue.



Jamaican music has also always been a meeting point between different musical cultures, between "black" and "white" underground culture, from punk and post punk to electronic music. Do you think your music belongs to that tradition ?

HP: With culture we don't really like to think in terms of colour... This is our music, a London music, which reflects the cosmopolitan nature of the city in many ways and it belongs to the tradition of that place, and the music within it.

TB:: 100%. I was turned on to reggae by listening to Public Image Ltd, Killing Joke and listening to the John Peel show. I personally felt the fire in my belly generated by Jamaican music echoed the intensity, experimentation and philosophical protests which became the sound which fuelled many post-punk groups and, subsequently, some of hip hop's finest as well. It sounds like a cliché, but reggae was pure rebel music, and I have always been drawn to music which has torn up the rules of music and put a torch to the system. And yes, i definitely feel for my music as The Bug, that it will always remain non-conformist and i continue to tread a path to originality, albeit with a massive debt to my Jamaican musical education. I personally crave the friction where cultures clash, and where the population is cosmopolitan. And i also crave the day when "Babylon shall fall" ! (Laughs).

Your music is often classified as dubstep but you've been into bass music for a long time now. What do you think of the growing influence of this sound on current music ?

HP: The influence of underground dance music in the mainstream has existed in one form or another since the 50's so I guess that's bound to continue.. it is progression in a form, and although the music is often bastardized, "watered down", etc., it remains a great entry point for new ears to access more underground material if they choose to do so.

TB: Im as shocked as everyone else at the speed and intensity by which Dubstep has infected the mainstream. It's just a pity that that it's mostly average material that's been picked up, a basic blueprint, as opposed to the amazing sounds of people like Shackleton, Burial, Mala or Kode 9... But it's been good to see someone like James Blake flourish. So the future of Dubstep needn't necessarily be shackled to wobble, bro or pop-step...

It seems like a lot of dubstep artists of the new generation are more influenced by hip-hop, electronic or even pop music than jamaican one these days. For you, is this collaboration with Green sleeves kind of a return to the roots of bass music?

HP: Well, whilst dub reggae is often cited as the major influence in early dubstep, this ain't entirely accurate.. as it relates much more closely to the "dub" sides of garage and house records which in turn partly took reference from that genre in some cases. Of course as I mentioned earlier, I am a fan of reggae so I would always be keen to implement that with what I am doing at any one time

TB: I feel Greensleeves were crucial in introducing reggae to me and Britain generally. Without reggae, so many 'revolutions' in dance music/hip hop etc would never have ignited. For me, to move forward (compulsory), you must be aware of what inspired you in the beginning...Too much dubstep is self cannibalising and self reverential at the moment and is in danger of inbreeding, as happened to Jungle years earlier. The importance of Jamaican club music is inescapable, and I personally feel everything I have ever recorded has been inspired by Jamaican bass culture.

And what do you think of the hardcore continuum theory of Simon Reynolds (The Wire), i.e. the existence of an english urban music tradition from rave and jungle to grime and dubstep ? Do you feel like being part of this particular musical evolution ? Do you feel like your music is typically british ?

HP: Well if that's so, then the "continuum" is probably doomed, because those scenes came from a time before the internet, and had time to develop and grow in a different way, which is not possible any more. Typically british? Not typically, we hope, but definitely British

TB: I feel my music is typically, and indelibly linked to London. I don't particularly like British nor more particularly English culture. I feel sympathy for Simon's idea, but to be honest i have singularly followed my own nose and been magnetized by any originators from whatever headspace, genre or zone. The one common denominator for me is The Bug always has reggae at it's heart...

What's your favourite reggae record ever ?

HP: Sattamassagana by the Abyssinians.

TB: 'Baby I Love You So' by Jacob Miller (including the dub).

Are you still djing ? With digital stuff ? Vinyl ? Dubplates ?

HP: Yes, of course. A mixture of Vinyl, digital AND Dubplates these days ! although i must admit, I prefer Vinyl best.

TB: I Dj with digital and with vinyls.

What are your next projects ? Live tour, djing, producing ?

HP: We are currently releasing a retrospective "lost tapes" E.P. special limited edition vinyl on Tempa as well as producing a new Horsepower Productions LP for 2012 the first taster of this will appear on a new 12" available later this year. Also, after a 9 year hiatus, the long awaited return of Dub War (see previous Tempa release) we have a new 12" out soon!

TB: Im working a lot with Daddy Freddy and Flowdan on my new Ninja Tune album. And i'm finishing up the King Midas re-version album for Hyperdub. All my energies are focused on these albums at present.



"Im as shocked as everyone else at the speed and intensity by which Dubstep has infected the mainstream."

The Bug



"I GUESS PEOPLE MAINLY KNOW ME FROM MY ELECTRONIC MUSIC SIDE, DJ SETS INCLUDED... BUT GOD KNOWS THAT I LOOOOVE THROWING DOWN SOME TIMELESS OLD-SCHOOL FLAVOUR IN THE MIX (YEAH - I STILL LOVE MY VINYL)... AS A TEENAGER, I USE TO SKIP SCHOOL JUST TO LISTEN TO SOME MILES DAVIS & COLTRANE ALBUMS, 'CUZ IT MEANT SO MUCH TO ME... AND THAT'S HOW MUSIC BECAME MY LIFE... HENCE THIS SLIM SELECTION FROM MY COLLECTION OF 7-INCH SINGLES (ONLY 5? COME ON GUYS !!! 5 ISN'T NEARLY ENOUGH !)"

The Beginning Of The End Monkey Tamarind (Alston 1971)

Originally, I wanted to put a Bill Withers 45 on this list (couldn't find it), or a Curtis Mayfield song (two of my true soul heroes) but came across this one in one of my boxes... Soul music is where it's at. Truly. If you're open, it can travel through time & space... And perhaps, that's what I try to do when I make music. Even though most of my own work is electronic, it still feels like soul to me... Whether a song, a dancefloor banger or a remix... For me there's as much soul in an Eddie Harris tune as in a Carl Craig or Underground Resistance production. Know what I mean? This is a fantastic song that came out before their 'Funky Nassau' hit (nearly the same hooks & arrangement) but not many peeps seem to know this one very well... A real good-time soul/funk gem right here!

RARE WAX 7-INCH SPECIAL BY DJ SIMBAD

Eddie Henderson Soy You Will / The Funk Surgeon (Capitol Rec. 1977)

At the end of the day, it's all about the groove. When you got that groove locked in, you can dance, move, mess around or just get lost in it, and nothing else matters... Aaaaah those Herbie & the Headhunters albums (1970's best jazz-funk period) that I've listened to again and again just to feel the groove. As a horn player (alto sax), my main funk player was Bernie Maupin... What a sound... a true master. Trumpet player Eddie Henderson kills it on this one, proper disco-funk and sounding very far on 45, I think Patrice Rushen plays the keys on the B-side & Herbie Hancock on the A-side... Nuff said!

Dillinger Ragmampaiza (1977)

Funny enough, the first time I heard a Bob Marley album was when I was 16... I was deep into some rock sh*t like Led Zeppelin, Nirvana or Body Count (with Ice-T) and my school friends turn me on to reggae music... It was a whole new world for me... I really embraced it, years later, when I started to play more Dub & Dancehall... I still have a lot of catching up to do, haha... It never really stops growing... Anyone who knows and loves reggae know Dillinger... Such a pure voice !!! Among the few 7" I have of his, this one is produced by Jojo Hookim (not sure of the year, between 1975-1979 tho), and what a stand-out tune it is! When Dub meets Ragga, "gyal dem dance"!

Jack Beavers Mr Bump Man / Seventy (Seven Rec. 1974)

It's amazing to me to hear a 4/4 beat recorded in 1974 like that... So far ahead of its time !! I could have put a number of other boogie or disco tunes on this list (cuz thats my shhh too), but this one is special to me... A fabulous early N.Y disco tune (a promotional 7" pressing) that just kills the dancefloor, every time. I just love it!

Adonis Do It Properly / No Way Back (Trax Rec. 1986)

Well, obviously, it's a classic and absolutely timeless tune... As a musician I didn't really get house music at first... It's only when I moved to London (in the summer of 1996) that it started hitting me... First with UK Garage (I was playing keyboard sessions for various producers, including Bugz In The Attic) and discovering artists like Daft Punk, Pepe Bradock or Jimpster really opened my eyes... But working in record shops and vinyl distribution companies was the real school for me... Chicago style, Detroit style, N.Y style, San Francisco style, German, Swedish, French you name it, I was into it & studying every release... Quite mad if I think about it now... So yeah, this one is early house music as its best, I got the original 12" but the "No Way Back" version on the 45 is edited, absolutely baaaaangin chicago shizznizz !!!! It became a big tune in late-nite warehouse parties about 10 years ago in East London. Essential.

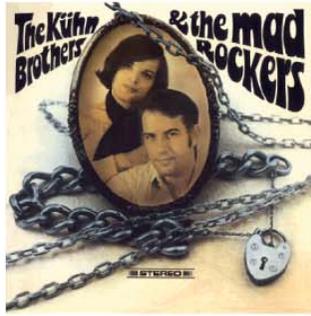


The Sureshot Symphony Solution / Mir Fortune & Fame. 7inch

The Mighty Pope is a Jamaican singer who arrived in Canada in 1965. He made his first stage appearance with Byron Lee and shortly thereafter replaced Studio One singer Jackie Opel, in the band The Sheiks. In 1970, he recorded a cover version of Eddie Bo and the Meters "The Hitch Hikers featuring The Mighty Pope". He finally met with commercial success on RCA after releasing an album featuring arrangements by Eric Robertson (of The Majestics fame) as well as legendary of Motown producers like David De Pitte (responsible for Marvin Gaye's hit "What's Going on"). Produced by Sureshot, this psyche-funk 7inch provides a prime opportunity to rediscover the voice of the first Afro-Canadian artist to release an album on a major label. Private Press 500 copies. (A.L.)

The Kühn Brothers & the Mad Rockers / The Kühn Brothers & the Mad Rockers. Lp

Joachim and Rolf Kühn (respectively pianist and clarinet player) are two characters/figures situated deep in the history of the German Jazz scene. In this LP, originally released in 1969, (and has never been re-released since), the two brothers collaborated with Volker Kriegel, Gunter Lenz and Stu Martin, guitar, bass, drums, basically a rock trio. The German translation of Psychedelic Rock is Krautrock. On this LP, if the sounds are similar to other artists on the scene at the time (Tangerine Dream, Faust...), in particular, through the use of Hammond and other electric organs, their music was meant to free itself from the domineering anglo-saxon influence and especially from blues sounds, to make way for other references from contemporary European music. Nevertheless, the Kühn Brothers are jazz-trained and their music is heavily influenced by Afro-American culture, in particular on a rhythmic level. Amongst their peers, on that matter in particular, they are closer to groups like Gong. As with the latter, the use of distortion and other various effects makes the music of the Kühn brothers sound totally raw and perhaps punk before its time. They still manage to keep the groove intact, particularly on the first side of this LP (such as on "Night Time Girl"), though Side B is more classically jazz (relatively speaking). The result is surprising and this superb re-release, thanks to Wah Wah Records in Barcelona, will delight all fans of psychedelic rock as well as free jazz. (J.V.)



Evidence / Cats & Dogs. Lp

Received just 4 days before the magazine deadline, this album immediately proved loyal to my rather high expectations. Evidence, essential producer and rapper from the U.S. west coast has a history of solid albums, and this one definitely holds its weight. All connoisseurs will certainly agree, it's so close to perfection, the 17 titles are, ...almost irritating. For those less familiar with his career, here's a quick crash-course : after two solo albums, four with the collective Dilated People (earning a gold record for one of them) then a Grammy award for his collaboration with Kanye West, with "Cats & Dogs". Evidence is true to an uncompromising tradition of rap, conscious and powerful. This album features heavy-handed rap flows, strongly influenced by soul, with guest stars such as Rakwon, Raskass, Aloe Blacc, Dj Primo... All of them equally efficient. A record to be bought with no hesitation. Out on the label Rhyme Sayers. (I.J.)

Spank Rock / Everything Is Boring and Everyone Is a Fucking Liar. Lp

It's been five years since Spank Rock's first album, with its audacious mix of Hip-Hop, Electro and Baltimore Breaks. Today, Naeem Juwan (aka Mc Spank Rock) is alone at the wheel of this vessel, even though his brother-in-arms XXXchange still appears on a few titles. "Everything Is Boring and Everyone Is a Fucking Liar", was mainly produced by Mark Ronson and Boys Noize (who will release it in Europe on his own label), with participation from Pharrell Williams, Sam Spiegel (N.A.S.A.), Chris Rockswell, Santigold and Big Freedia. The high expectations of such an all-star lineup mix with our fear of facing yet another failed club/rap/pop cross-over attempt...but our curiosity prevails, and, anyhow, we're itching to hear the follow-up to the excellent "Yoyoyoyoyo" LP. Naturally, it's a bit less surprising at first listen, but the overall result covers just as wide a range of styles, more electronic, but also more constructed and melodic than before. The pop/rock influences take Spank Rock farther from the classic schematics of the Baltimore sound. Some will certainly lament the absence of Amanda Blank and the lack of more hip-hop based productions, but those nostalgic fans will be more than satisfied with club heaters like "Nasty", "Race Riot" or "Cool Shit". It seems that his secret is in knowing how to evolve, without compromising anything. (J.V.)



Lack Of Afro/A Time For. 7inch

Multi-instrumentalist and producer Adam Gibbons, better known as Lack of Afro, is known for the numerous remixes he's done, many of which have found their way to funk dancefloors and b-boy battles. After working on a collaborative project with Eddie Roberts (of The New Mastersounds), earlier this year, he announces the release of his new album "This Time" on Freestyle Records. To whet our appetite while we wait for the LP to drop, they've released a 45 featuring two tracks from the album. On Side A, the tune "A Time For" puts Wayne Giddens' soulful voice in the spotlight, absolutely memorable on earlier songs like "Whatever I Choose I Lose". The Arrangements are right on the money, with the majestic use of backing vocalists carrying the chorus nicely. A future neo-soul classic. Side B gives way to a more old-school production style on "Numero Seenko", purely refined for the club, kicking in with a heavy funk break that echos Rufus Thomas' "Itch and Scratch". (A.L.)

V.A. / Kompakt Total 12. 2 Lps

Every year, towards the end of the summer holiday, Kompakt releases a new volume in the Total series, and it's always a good opportunity to hear what's up with our German friends. As suggested in the title of the compilation, the spirit of the label is well represented here, a refined minimal techno sound, with a certain taste for experimentation. For years, Kompakt has released the series on double CD / triple vinyl, but for this volume, number 12, it seems that they've decided to tone down their ambitions a notch, with just a single CD / double vinyl. After a first listen, no complaints : it's more compact, lively, and definitely more consistent than Total 10 or 11. This twelfth edition is a good harvest, and the selection is rather essential, with the possible exception of Michael Mayer's techno-pop remix of WhoMadeWho, a bit too sweet for our ears. If the compilation starts gently with Kolombo's slow house, the beat dominates quickly through trancey bombs (Gui Boratto with "The Drill"; Coma with "Playground Altona"), followed by pure gems ("White lightning" by Superpitcher; "Remodernist" by The Modernist). Then it cools down with the hypnotic "Tiefental" by Mohn, beautifully wrapping up this latest chapter. Worth mentioning : the song/skit about nicotine, "I don't smoke" by Matias Aguayo, a future anthem for smokers ! Just enough to keep us waiting for the upcoming release of Gui Boratto's next album, announced for the end of the year. (Leiss)



Marrtin & Deheb / Tell Him - Ooh Baby. 7inch

After the success of 7inch release "Funky Bijou Anthem" (which sold over 700 copies), Deheb & Marrtin release a new remix 45 on the Stereophonk label, mixing samples and live instruments... For this second release, they focused on two tracks from the American soul repertoire: "Tell Him" and "Ooh baby". On side A, featuring Patti Drew, the drums are tastefully re-worked, giving this 1963 classic a second life. On the B-side, there is a version of Miracles by Smokey Robinson, whose mellow introduction will leave you enchanted. (A.L.)

Vin's Da Cuero / Put It On Wax. Ep

Quite naturally, Vin's Da Cuero named his first vinyl release "Put It On Wax", and the ingredients are a choice blend of flute, piano, trumpet and percussions. After two digital releases, in 2011, the young Parisian beatmaker is assisted here by Blanka, who handles the mastering on eight titles. Influenced by the Golden Years of hip-hop (Pete Rock, Dilla, Common...), he mainly digs for samples in the archives of soul or funk, and sometimes adds tropical ingredients, as on "Where My Grogs At?". The discreet presence of rapper RacecaR, from Chicago, on the front cover is justified, when you hear the result. The vocal-instrumental harmony on "the Drift" is practically reason enough to pick up this wax. "Blue feet" is perhaps the most solid instrumental, with its cleverly looped piano chords. Also an enthusiast of music videos, Vin's Da Cuero had the idea of borrowing images from a Francis Ford Coppola film with Gene Hackman, in which the latter scans through songs from the Ep. Though the length of some tracks slows things down a bit, this new jazzy hip-hop project remains convincing and is a pure pleasure to discover. (I.J.)



Thundercat / The Golden Age of Apocalypse

The man behind the pseudo "Thundercat" is Stephen Bruner, the son of Ronald Bruner Sr, drummer of the Temptations. As well as playing bass for Suicidal Tendencies, he's also played on both Flying Lotus albums (who produced this first solo album) as well as for Snoop Dogg, Sa-Ra, Erykah Badu, among others... Well, of course, when one thinks of a jazz/funk bassist on an electro label, it's difficult to avoid comparison to Tom Jenkinson, a.k.a. Squarepusher. Though both cite the influence of Jaco Pastorius, Bruner, in contrast to Jenkinson, favors a much more musical approach. His technical dexterity fuels the music, and not the opposite. Beyond the obvious influence of Pastorius, Deodato, jazz fusion records from the 70s (from the CTI label in particular) or even 80s funk, Thundercat's music is full of pop references, syrupy synth warbles, soft rock melodies, or voices from deep space. "The Golden Age of Apocalypse" delivers shades of boogie funk tainted with Ariel Pink, and an irrefutable science for the slow groove, pulsating in the same interstellar orbit as Dam-Funk. This first outing, amplified by Steve Ellison's impeccable production work, justifies its claims of retro-futurism while remaining truly eclectic and contemporary. A real achievement. (J.V.)

Brandt Brauer Frick Ensemble / Mr. Machine

Though we've become somewhat accustomed to seeing more and more electronic music producers have a go at jazz or contemporary music, it's still quite rare to see musicians and instrumentalists successfully shifting to electronic machines and computers. The Brandt Brauer Frick Ensemble belong to the second category... Comprised of musicians with jazz or classical conservatory training, they master their respective instruments perfectly (drums for Daniel Brandt, piano for Jan Brauer et strings for Paul Frick). The trio evokes variations of Steve Reich as well as the sound of Detroit's early techno pioneers. When so many producers try to humanize and soften the metronomical rhythms of old school techno, the trio opt for an intentionally repetitive mechanical structure, using strictly acoustic sounds. The precision of the resulting recordings is truly amazing, and their full potential becomes even more apparent when they're on stage. Check them out a.s.a.p! (J.V.)

Little Dragon / Ritual Union

Little Dragon, from Göteborg, Sweden, are about to release their third album, Ritual Union, on the Peacefrog Label. Following up a successful concert tour with Gorillaz, we're certain that this release will change their underground notoriety into popular success with a much larger audience. The quartet, led by singer Yukimi Nagano, has polished up their usual recipe, a combination of rock, soul and funk. Their singular fusion of influences is magnified by an adventurous approach to the production, often more daring and innovative than many of the so-called experimental projects in the electronic scene nowadays. That's quite a challenge for a catchy pop record with serious dancefloor appeal. The English magazine Clash describes them as "Hot Chip partying with Madonna". Though such comparison makes sense with the many pop songs on the record ("Ritual Union", "Shuffle A Dream" "Crystalfilm), the last titles ("When I Go Out", "Seconds"), are far darker and more exciting than an umpteenth mash-up between mainstream and indie, confirming our already high opinion of this band. When you add that to their numerous collaborations with artists as different as Dave Sitek, Big Boi or Raphael Saadiq, Little Dragon have truly proven themselves. (J.V.)

Beta Hector / Sunbeam Insulin

Released on Tru Thoughts, "Sunbeam Insulin" is the first solo album of Simon Hill, producer, DJ and multi-instrumentalist, a member of the deep funk band, Baby Charles. His obsession with black music is transmitted through samplers and machines, giving the thirteen tracks a retro-futuristic touch. Instrumental or with voices ("Sleepwalking" with Sarah Gardner, "Payback" with Dionne Charles, "Jupiter Mission" with his sister, Jo, "Oracles and Bones" with Shane Hunter), Beta Hector's music succeeds in keeping the tradition of soul, funk and jazz music alive, while making the most of modern production technology. It certainly has a lot to do with the fact that he himself is a musician and has the experience from playing in a real funk band, but from "Hexagon" to "Super Bionic" or "Morning Train", Simon Hill also proves that he can carry his weight in the studio as well. This first album is proof that he has real production and arrangement skills as well. One to watch! (J.V.)

Dixon / Live at Robert-Johnson vol.8

We were somewhat surprised to receive an eighth volume of the prestigious mix series "Live at Robert-Johnson", since the previous volume, released in April 2011, was said to be the last. Even more surprising was that the press release states that this mix will be the last ever recorded by Dixon, from German label Innervisions, who is, in our opinion, simply one of the best House DJs around. Apparently, releasing a DJ-mix has now become too time-consuming, and he has made a decision to move on to other things. In itself, this unexpected live at Robert Johnson is therefore both good and bad news... But it's re-assuring to discover that, with this mix, Dixon has delivered one of the best compilations we've heard this year. He begins with a sublime series of ambient tunes, featuring the guitar/voice of Dominique, "He said" and he smoothly slides to the dancefloor, through the dreamy pop treatment of "Live at Robert-Johnson". He takes his time, building up the arrangements progressively, riding his own particular vein of house music with a noticeable amount of attention paid to the mix & sounds. Dixon notches up the tension with the languorous "Render2" by Cologne Tape before blasting off into space with the last four tracks. The end of the mix will bring tears to your eyes with Mark E's track, and Roman Flügel's "Dishes & Wishes" is definitely worthy of the U.R. label. (Leiss).

Cubenx / On Your Own Again

Discovered by Agoria and Alexandre Cazzac, Cubenx, Dj and producer from Mexico, arrived on the French label InFiné in 2007. Following up two EP's of trance-tinged techno a la James Holden, the release of his recent EP "Wait & See" suggested a change of direction. Back in Mexico, after a few unhappy love stories, Cubenx put his talent as dancefloor-killer on hold to reveal a surprisingly sensitive pop side. "On Your Own Again", his first actual full-length album, confirms this new perspective. Certain titles will certainly work well on the dancefloor, but this record is definitely more about the songwriting. Cubenx highlights voices and instruments, widening his colour range and exploring new tangents: "Locked" drones along like a shoegaze b-side, "Noir" is brilliantly ambient, and "Those Days" is sure to become a pop hit. Assisted by Franciscos Rosas and Alfredo Nogueira (a close friend of the band Telefon Tel Aviv), InFiné's protégé takes the opportunity to venture into psychedelics. One easily imagines "Mist Over The Lake" or "Suena Con Venados" accompanying sacred rites far out in the Mexican desert. This album is the perfect way to discover, or re-discover, Cubenx. (Leiss).

General Elektriks / Parker Street

Hervé Salter, a.k.a. General Elektriks, a.k.a. the French Money Mark, is no newcomer to the scene. After an excellent first album, "Good City for Dreamers", as well as his production on Pigeon John's album "Dragon Slayer", we can only expect greatness. From his time spent in California with the Bay Area hip-hop scene, he has definitely maintained a certain attraction to old school beats.

On this album, he uses his songwriting expertise in a way that's quite different from the tinkering tests of his first records, turning more and more towards pop and rock. More than just eclectic, this album conjures up a number of images at the same time, flashes of Plantlife or Phoenix, or a mellower Outkast, all with a classy flare, but quite few surprises. The production is often a bit clean for our taste, and, at times, the pop leanings give the songs a somewhat formatted feel. Nevertheless, it won't stop the potential hits such as "The Spark", "Summer is Here", or the surprising and insistent "Pack Up Your Bags & Go" from being enjoyed fully by a large number of listeners. "Parker Street" is due in October. (J.V.)

AlgoRythmik / Morphism

"Morphism" is the first album from AlgoRythmik on Chaphi Records, which follows up the digital single, "Show Breaks", released in the beginning of 2010... The trio delivers thirteen solid tracks of electro/hip-hop infused with a blend of influences: jazz and funk samples, heavy bass and electro, dubstep or hip-hop breakbeats; all layered with continuous scratches... And it works well together. On their first LP, they managed to showcase the turntables while avoiding the pitfalls of certain DJ records, which tend to aim more towards purists or connoisseurs. On the two titles featuring guest artists, « Something Fishy" with Ben Sharpa and "Circus World" with Ben Sharpa & Wapi Wap, AlgoRythmik keep the tracks more minimal, adding a well-dosed patchwork of samples, cuts and scratches. From the neo-swing groove on "Jump for Swing" or the more electronic "A Guide to Happiness" to the big beats of "Physical Sisters", "Morphism" remains true to its initial direction and manages to stay ahead of the game. (J.V.)

Modeselektor / Monkeytown

Gernot Bronsert and Sebastian Szary are back, four years after the previous album, "Happy Birthday!". During that time, they've set up their own label, Monkeytown, on which this eponymous album is released. Fully coherent with the eclectic tone of the two previous albums, you find nearly every style of electronic music in there: quite obviously, club bangers with synth rave and saturated bass ("Evil Twin" with Otto Von Schirach, "German Clap"), collaborations with underground MCs (Busdriver on "Pretentious Friends", Antipod Consortium on "Humanized"), duos with Thom Yorke (excellent "Shipwreck" or "This"), electro tracks reminiscent of their collaborative project with Appar ("Grillwalker"), a superb collaboration with PVT ("Green Light Go"), and even an R'n'B title, dedicated to their home town ("Berlin" with Miss Platinum). Nevertheless, much like its predecessors, "Monkey Town" manages to bring the mix together naturally, transcending the usual challenges of making an electronic music full-length album function as a whole. This third strike is a home run. (J.V.)



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DESPITE THE CURRENT CRISIS, THE FRENCH CAPITAL HAS SEEN AN UPSWING IN THE NUMBER OF INDEPENDENT RECORD STORES AS OF LATE. WE'RE STILL SHOCKED AND SADDENED BY THE GRADUAL DISAPPEARANCE OF MANY HIP-HOP, DRUMNBASS AND REGGAE RECORD DEALERS, THOUGH ROCK, TECHNO AND RARE GROOVE HAVE TAKEN OVER AND MANAGED TO ADAPT TO THE MARKET BY PRESENTING A WIDE, THOUGH SPECIALIZED SELECTION TO SATISFY A DEMANDING CLIENTELE. HERE'S A LIST OF ABOUT THIRTY SHOPS WHICH CATER TO PASSIONATE DIGGERS VISITING PARIS.

DIGGIN' IN PARIS

PATATE RECORDS

Founded in 1992, this music shop is well known and respected for representing and distributing reggae music in France. You'll find an entire wall of 7-inch singles, as well as a large selection of riddims on 12-inch and albums, ranging from roots reggae to UK stepper and to dancehall. A friendly place where you can still meet with collectors and DJs or just chat with the owner.

BIMBO TOWER

Underground culture from other lands since 1996. Records, CD, DVD, K7, fanzines, silkscreen book, manga, circuit bending... Japanese Noise, Ethiopian Groove, Persian funk, Experimental China, Italian Early Electronics, Hardcore Ljubljana, British Improv, Turkish Psychodelia, Cambodian Rocks, Belgian Wave, Punk from Saudi Arabia, Spanish Sound-art, Finnish Comix, Lathe-cut from New Zealand, Chilean Pop, Portuguese No Wave, Scottish Freefolk, Australian Post-punk, Swedish Text-sound, French Skweee, African Pearls, Romanian Spectral Music, Grindcore from South America, Algerian Proto-raï, Hungarian freaks, Canadian Free-noise, Brazilian Tropicalia and many more.



BETINO'S

Betino's is a reputable spot for connoisseurs, where you can easily bump into local and foreign DJs, with a relevant and cutting edge selection of vintage and re-released soul, jazz, funk, caribbean and hip-hop records, at an affordable price. A friendly team will welcome you and fill you in on the latest arrivals of disco twelves, soulful house mixes and Detroit sounds. They also stock a wide range of CDs.

SUPERFLY RECORDS

One of the newer shops in the area, which has quickly become an uncontested reference for the diggers visiting the town. The same crew who created the label with the same name offer an excellent selection of original pressings, re-releasing of jazz, soul, funk, Brazil and other African and Caribbean gems. Worth noting also are the numerous listening stations available, making it easy to give new discoveries a quick test run.

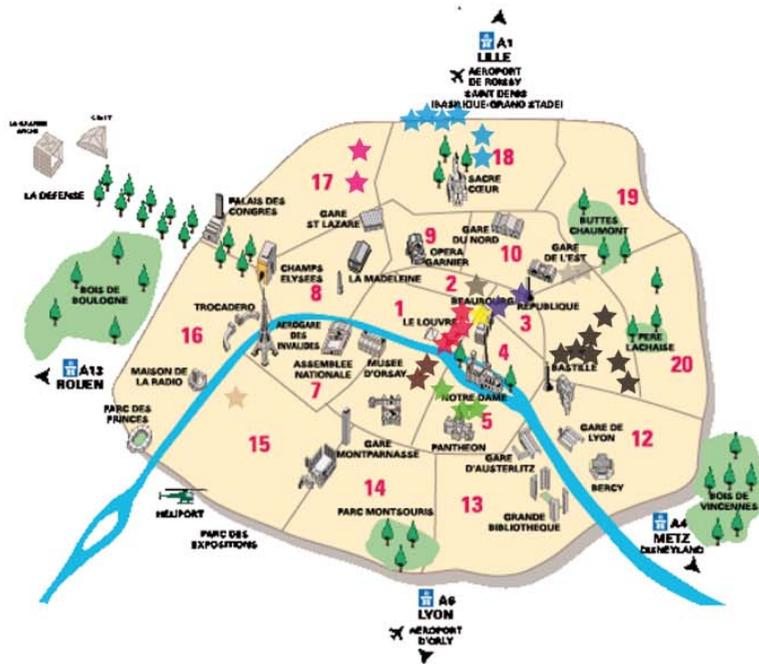
TOOLBOX

One of the few shops specializing in Tribe, Drum n' Bass, Ragga Jungle, Electro, Turntablism, Industrial music, Grime and Dubstep... This music shop has produced, sold and distributed records steadily since its opening in 1998. Also available in the shop: a series of collector vinyls for fans.

BORN BAD

With sizeable bins full of rock, punk, garage, new wave, surf, as well as their own label releases, these two stores near Bastille are at the heart of independent rock culture and still vehemently defend the vinyl as an artistic medium. Their also well stocked in books, accessories, and a handpicked selection of DVDs.





- ★ 75001
Urban Music : 22, rue Pierre Lescot
Monster Melodies : 9, rue Déchargeurs
Cyber Production : 4, rue Taillandiers
Parallèles : 47, rue Saint Honoré
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- ★ 75002
Goodies Records : 3, rue Palestro
- ★ 75003
Samad Records : 165, rue Saint martin
Superfly Records : 53, rue Notre Dame de Nazareth
- ★ 75004
Electro Kitchen : 60, rue Quincampoix
Lucky Records : 66, rue Verrerie.
- ★ 75005
Crocodisc : 42, rue des Écoles
Paris Jazz Corner : 7, rue de Navarre
- ★ 75006
Démocratie (Ex. Silly Melody) : 14, bd Saint Michel
Boulinier : 20, boulevard Saint Michel
Gibert Joseph : 34, boulevard Saint Michel
- ★ 75010
Record Station : 13, rue des Récollets
Ground Zero : 23, rue Sainte Marthe

- ★ 75011
Bimbo Tower : 5, Passage Saint Antoine
Tekno shop distribution : 4, rue Taillandiers
Techno import : 16, rue des Taillandiers
Thé Troc : 52, rue Jean-Pierre Timbaud
Music Avenue : 10, rue Paul Bert
Silence de la Rue : 39, rue Faidherbe
Patate Records : 57, rue de Charonne
Betino's : 32, rue Saint Sébastien
Vinyl Office : 9, rue Trousseau
ToolBox : 30, rue St Ambroise
Born Bad : 17, rue Keller
- ★ 75015
Rock Paradise : 42, rue Duranton
- ★ 75017
Groove Store : 29, rue Des Dames
All Access : 3, rue Brochant
- ★ 75018
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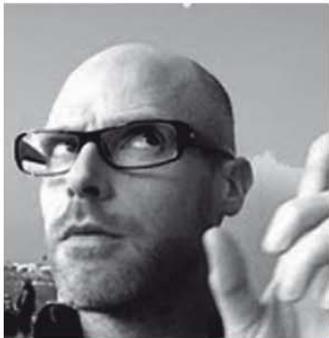
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Dj Seep

Top 5 new stuff

- Pixford "Cycloferon"
- Para One & Tacted "Rome"
- Med "Get That" feat. POK
- SBTRKT "Something Goes Right"
- Clicks & Whistles "Cranberry Goose" (Distal Rmx)

Top 5 oldies

- Galt MacDermot "Cathedral"
- Lou Rawls "Down Here On The Ground"
- George Benson "Shape Of Things To Come"
- Dexter Wansel "Theme From The Planets"
- Isaac Hayes "Hyperbolicitylabisequedalymsic"
- Funkadelic "Super Stupid"

Top 3 beatmaker

Mono/Poly, Shlohmo, Madlib

Favorite web site

boomkat.com

Red Wine or soda

Mmm... Depends on what time it is.

Favorite festival

Villette Sonique or my homeboy Tikar's 'Festen Pa Gardet' Festival in Stockholm.

Paris or L.A.

L.A. has a good vibe and I love just chilling near the ocean, and Paris has more levels of funky grit stashed here and there... but, to be honest, I wouldn't really compare...

Best Club

Any place with friendly folks and BASS !

If you weren't a DJ, what job would you like to do ?

A world-famous puppeteer or a plumber, definitely.



Baby G (Dance Disorder)

Top 5 new stuff

- Dance Disorder "Metallic Italic"
- Hrdvsn "I Can't Exist"
- Lucky Paul "Thought We Were Alone (Cadi Mizahi & Eli Gold Money Vs Gold Remix)"
- Noir & Haze "Around" (Solomun Remix)
- Modern Amusement "Cool As Ice" (Louie Fresco Remix)

Top 5 oldies

- A Number Of Names "Shari Vari"
- Loose Joints "It Is all Over My Face"
- Steve Silk Hurley "The Word Is Love"
- Turntable Orchestra "You're Gonna Miss Me"
- UB40 "Don't Break My Heart"

Favorite mixer

E&S DMR 400

Favorite decks

Technics SL-1210MK5E & Pioneer CDJ 2000

Best club

Salon Zur Wilden Renate (Berlin) & Jaeger (Oslo)

Favorite festival

Garden Festival

Berlin ou Barcelone

Berlin

Paper magazine or web zine

Webzine (save the trees, save the planet)

Without music, life would be ?

Boooring !!

Favorite website

www.themixtapeclub.org

If you weren't a DJ, what job would you like to do ?

Dancer



KMT

Top 5 new stuff

- T-Roy "Bush Meat" Album
- Wanluv "Green Card" Album
- FOKN Bois "Coz Ov Moni"
- Sona Joberteh "Fasiyah"
- African Revolution "Roots Renaissance" (Promo Ep)

Top 5 oldies

- Garnet Silk "The definitive collection"
- KrsOne, tout les albums !
- Fela Kuti "The Best of Fela Kuti Black President"
- Baba Ake Wallace "In the Beginning/Healer Man" Lp
- Xzibit "40 Days and Night"

Favorite mixer

Empath (Rane)

Vinyle or digital

Vinyl

Favorite festival

Tribe of Doris (The last 1 was this year)

Favorite vinyl shop

Charity shops and 2nd hand shops, DJ's Collections

Red wine or soda

Water has no enemy.

Paper magazine or web zine

Paper magazine, nothing better than feeling, reading and storing

Favorite website

My new site when it's re-done
www.nu-kmt.com

Best club

Shunt !

Top 3 beatmaker

Navigator (Uk), DJ Premier, Osulande

If you weren't a DJ, what job would you like to do ?

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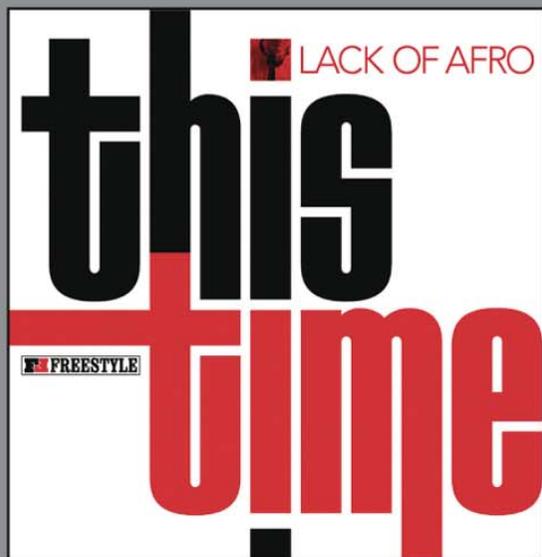


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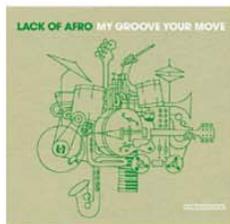


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