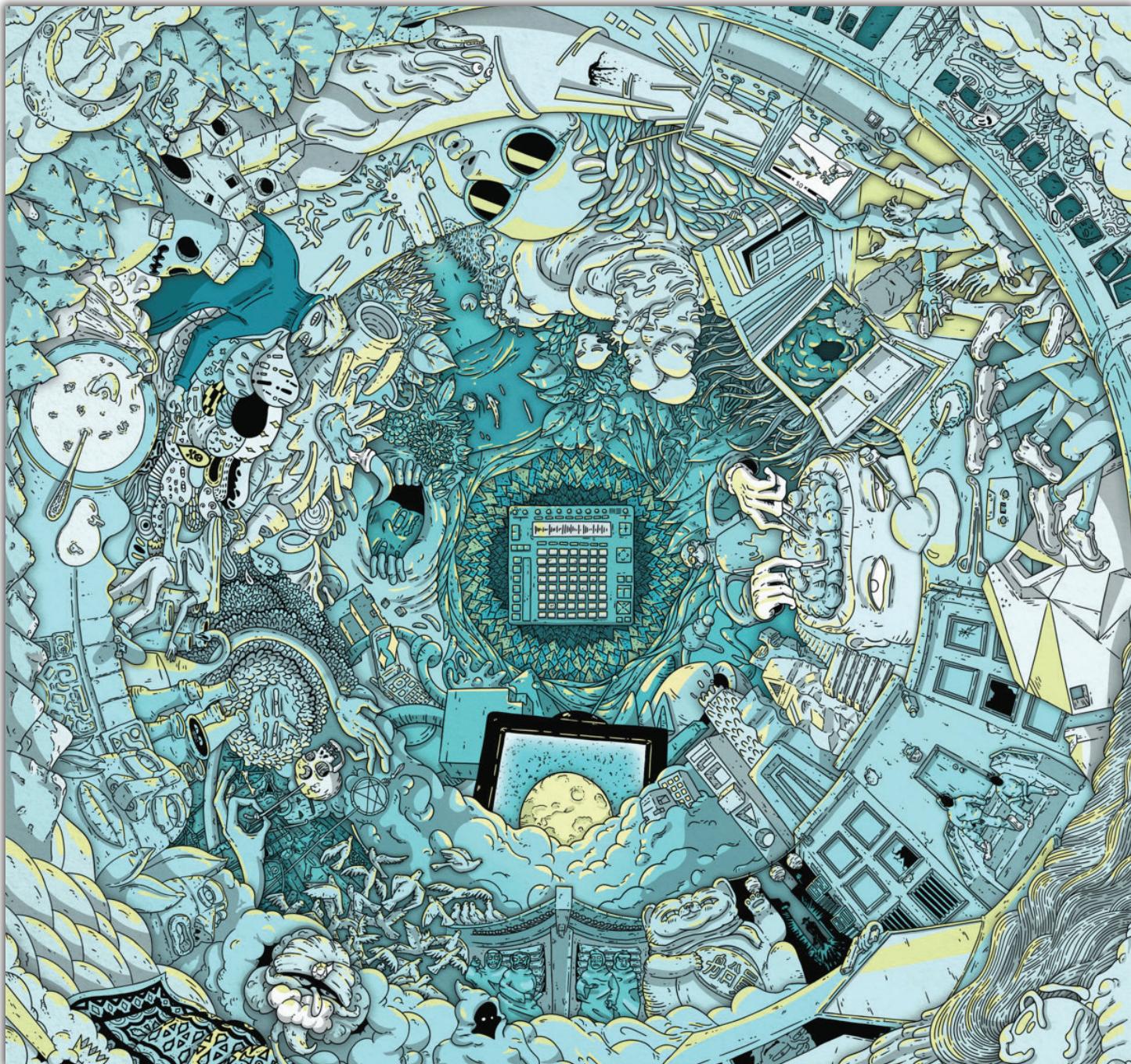


Fall/Winter 2019

LFHH

Lofi Hip Hop — The Underground Beat Scene



slr: Circuit

See story on page 2

Cover art by artist free real estate
Digital drawing in adobe illustrator
Circuit, 3000 x 3000 px

LO-FI SUNDAYS 010 - SLR

Standing the test of time

Like the water off the shores of this producer's home state, beats from New-Jersey based slr (sailor) are thick, choppy and refreshing. The producer has hit on various lo-fi sub-styles over the years, but with recent offerings dives into a layered, aqueous sound. We're not the only ones impressed, either, as slr cuts have been featured on tapes from lofi.hiphop, the imprint curated by eminent lo-fi producer "bsd.u".

The producer collaborates frequently with other notable beatmakers like brother mynor, bsd.u and sensi, with whom he produced an entire tape titled "The Maintenance" that is excellent and laid-back. Unlike his jazzy work, the collab with bsd.u is disorienting, and, as one Soundcloud user writes, "FREEZING". We'll keep an ear on the horizon for future collabs, and to hear slr sailing through some forthcoming beat tapes.

Within the beat scene, slr has music that will surely **stand the test of time** for fans. With the calming swing and the snap of a warm snare it never fails to lure in a curious listener.

- Rusty Music "A Short Review 2017"

Sailor Beats AKA "slr": New Releases

Featured Album "Circuit"



Most of the favorites have a jazzy, improvisational demeanor, whether a piano, horn, or xylophone is the sampled instrument of choice. The thick, layered texture - hear it on "Fleet" - comes in part from spreading wide the dusty hi-hats and practicing some adept side-chain compression. This technique compresses the drums in such a way, usually the kick drum, so that it subtly dampens all the other elements in the song each time it thuds. This pops the kick out a bit more and gives more dimension to the rest of the mix. Strong basslines add more viscosity, some seriously strong like the boom on "Turbine". Then of course there's the vinyl

cracks and rushing white noise that subtly sets off a tune like "Summit".

From what's available on Soundcloud and Bandcamp, one can hear that some of slr's older beats don't have this thick dimension, tending more towards the soft, spindly side of lo-fi. The production is very diverse if you go back years, hitting other vibes like on "Natalie Portman Goes on a Safari". Here's a disjointed, sort of fumbling rhythm with a lead melody played on some delightful equatorial percussion instrument.

The true banger of this album is clearly "embark" which contains a wild sample from god knows where. Most of his samples are secret...

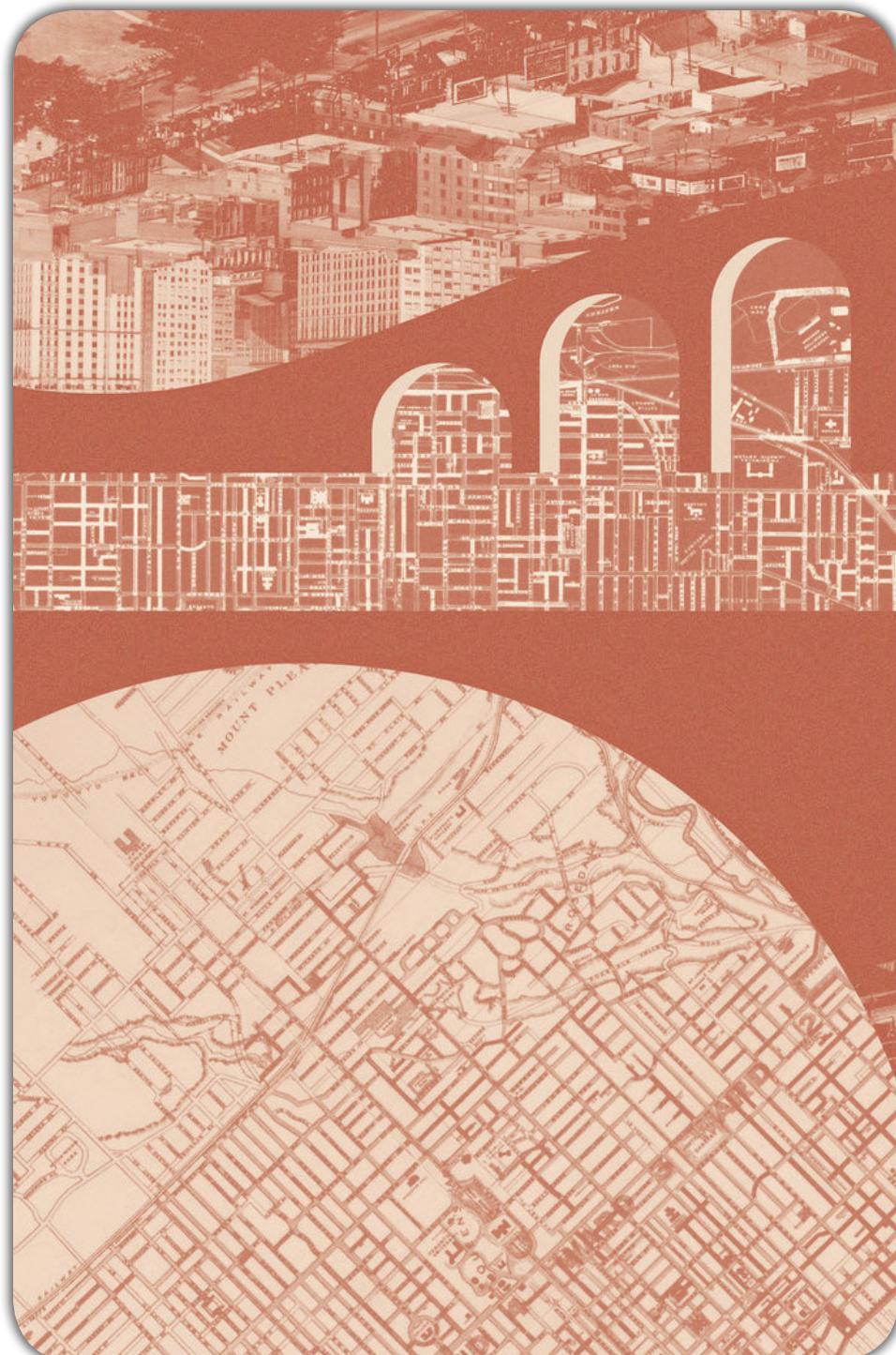
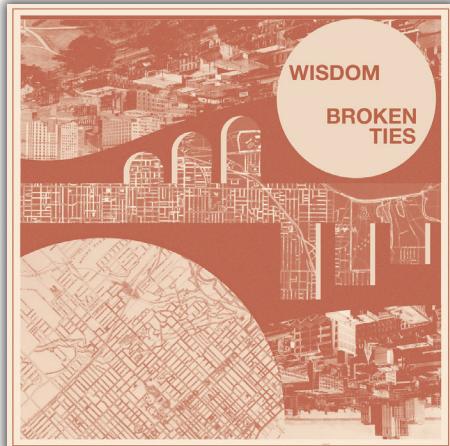
WISDOM: WHO BROKE HIS TIES?

Featured Album “Broken Ties”

Coming in at exactly 30 minutes long, “Broken Ties” from Texas-based beats producer WISDOM is a meditative journey. WISDOM uses thumping rhythms and spaced out, distant melodies to activate strong psychological currents within his listeners.

Speaking in superlatives can be dangerous, but WISDOM aka Alec may have some of the cleanest and most impactful percussion in the beats game right now. All the percussive elements are sampled from different sources but coated in the same lacquer so that each beat becomes a cohesive collage. One could spend the entire 30 minutes of the album, and some surely will, trying to pick apart that collage.

This beat tape has gotten several 10 out of 10 ratings by many fans and music blogs across the web.



“An Anthology of 16th Century Azerbaijani Classical Works by Fuzûlî” — A Master Work by “Bastrd”

Can it Get Any Better Than This?

Nine of ten top-shelf hip-hop tracks start with undeniably dope drums, and ten of ten tracks from the prodigious producer bastrd have just that. Bastrd lays biblical levels of compression onto his drums. Each kick sounds like it might pop open your earphone, and the hats sting like bees. Unpredictable, the drums stop, start and stutter and exemplify that slightly-off sound that has always been foundational in beat music and lo-fi hip-hop. Permeated by an improvisational jazz ethos as well, bastrd beats are inventive, unorthodox and simply enchanting.

The movement of many of the tracks is manic and difficult to pin down. In some cases the drum pattern is more jazz than hip-hop. In others, “90% off” for example, the drum pattern hardly resembles anything familiar. The cymbal sampling here is particularly busy and well done, filling the mix with rich resonating rides and crashes. This freeform approach to drums distinguishes bastrd from so many producers who - not to their discredit - are content to rock with the more traditional boom-bap.

Songs shift direction and spin in circles like “wawa”

or the mystical jazz-infused cut “why remember”. It’s not your average head nod music. Nonetheless, in a given moment it can twist your neck, as on the mini-mix “sick” from New Year’s Day, or the cut “Milo”.

This one comes from bastrd’s stunning release from October, 2017; An

Anthology of 16th Century Azerbaijani Classical Works by Fuzûlî. Only three of the 20 tracks on this absolutely mesmerizing effort are included in today’s playlist, so visit bastrd’s bandcamp (linked below) for the full monty.

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“Tundra Noir” A project by “Wowflower”

Send Yourself To the Arctic Bliss



Based out of Boston, Massachusetts, wowflower is a young beatmaker with an exceptional talent for melody and atmosphere. He creates vibratory fields full of colorful static backed by fuzzy, textured percussion. Wowflower works with multiple tempos, and his boom bap cuts, though rare, are spectacular. Usually, though, he's rocking with a slow, hypnotic nod that pairs well with spacious and ambient melodic stylings.

His output is almost obscene. At 22 years old he's released 14 albums and a pair of mixes. It's likely that most of that is hardly touched upon in our curated playlist, which features compositions from the past 18 months or so. According to an interview he gave with Japanese blog Vinyl Mafia ("for the beatmakers"),

Kyle James Torr-Brown (wowflower) first began "tinkering" on Garageband at the age of nine. His latest "EP", Tundra Noir, with a killer title and a 30-minute run time, is masterful. The release is cleverly named because it is indeed veiled in shadow, not full darkness, but in shadow in the vein of noir aesthetics. The textures and yearning notes conjure images of a sun-stained, cold white plain. For a great example of his boom bap beats, pay attention at the 19:15 mark.

As we touched upon with last week's feature on dwyer, there is a growing emphasis on texture in beatmaking. Wowflower

displays an exceptional ability for applying texture and contour to his compositions. One can hear this right from the jump in this week's playlist with "Sunlight Wake" off Musings Vol. 1 a boutique compilation and the first from Dead Gorgeous Records. Just listen to those drums. Wowflower told Vinyl Mafia he'd like to become a pianist or a film maker. It appears to us that he's already splitting the difference between these two occupations by creating these absolutely moving cinematic beats.

“Astounding work from one of the best cinematic beat makers in the scene” — Stones Throw Records

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Total Sales From the Genre of Lofi Hiphop

Vinyl/Digital Sales

Label	Vinyl	Digital	Total
Stones Throw	\$33,892	\$56,234	\$90,126
Dusterá	\$22,987	\$44,987	\$67,974
LFHH	\$56,023	\$22,125	\$78,145
Phonolith	\$12,345	\$101,234	\$113,579

- **What we know from current Label sales**
 - Stones Throw has returned exceptional results with the new release of Kiefers “Kickin’it Alone”.
 - Dusterá continues to release great label compilations but fails to retain a good listener base. That might be due to social media marketing skills.
 - LFHH (our label) has done really well on vinyl sales. We continue to cater to our vinyl fans. However, digital sales is a beginning for us and we will continue to try and grow our digital presence on several music platforms.
 - Phonolith, a social media marketing giant has broke the community record for sales. Probably due to the popular release from “slr” released about a month ago. Congrats to a flourishing underground label!

LFHH

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