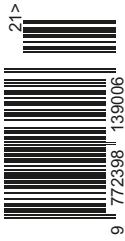


ELECTRONIC SOUND



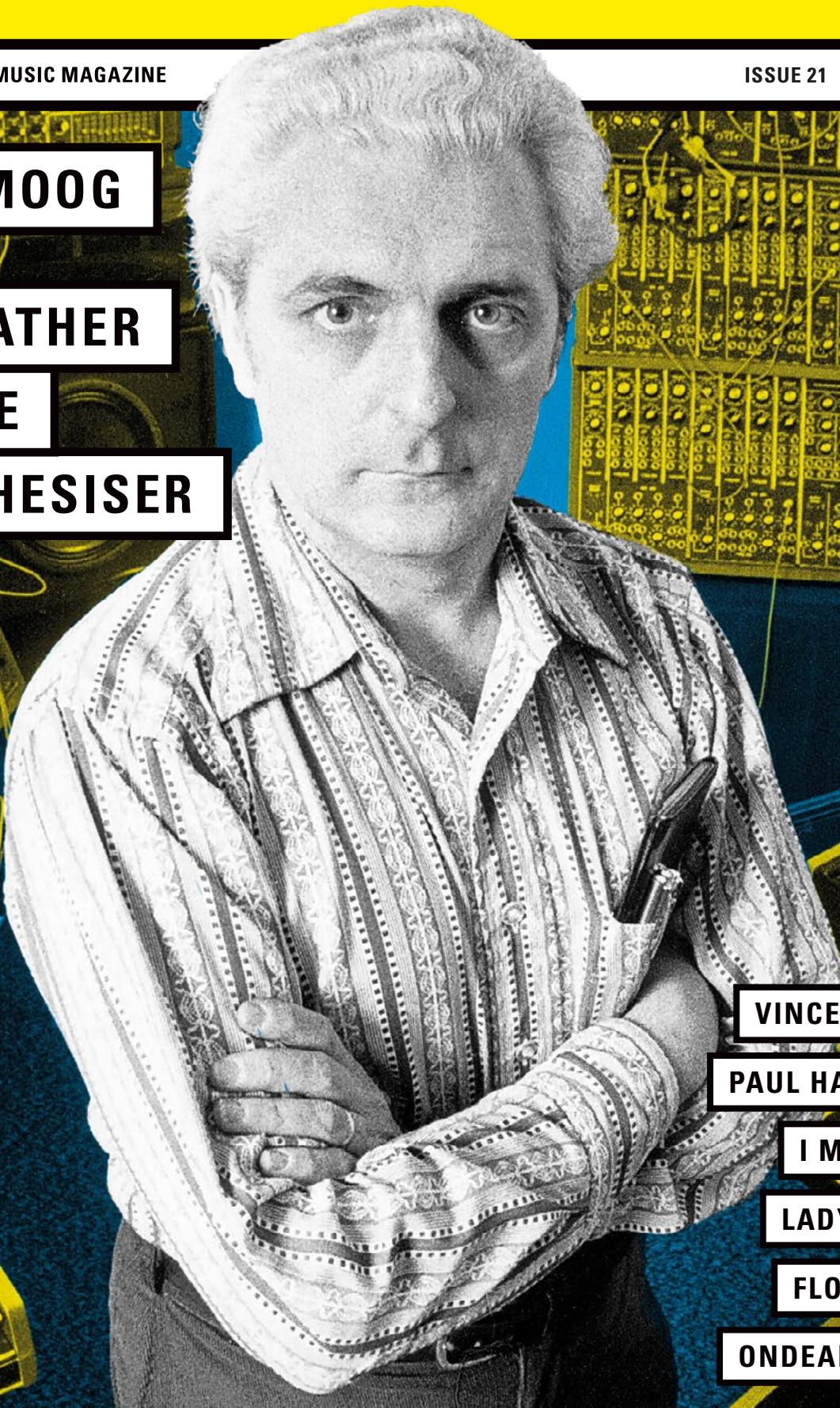
THE ELECTRONIC MUSIC MAGAZINE

ISSUE 21

£5.99

BOB MOOG

**GODFATHER
OF THE
SYNTHESISER**



VINCE CLARKE

PAUL HARTNOLL

I MONSTER

LADYHAWKE

FLOORPLAN

ONDEADWAVES

PRINT LAUNCH EDITION

MUSIC WILL NEVER BE THE SAME

MOTHER-32 | SEMI-MODULAR ANALOGUE SYNTHESIZER



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WITH THANKS TO OUR PATRONS:
MARK FORDYCE, GINO OLIVIERI,
DARREN NORTON, MAT KNOX

The analogue Electronic Sound has landed.

Whether you're new to Electronic Sound or you've been with us throughout the last three years, when we've been published as a digital-only magazine, hello and welcome.

If this is your first time with us, let's catch you up. Electronic Sound is mostly about music made with machines, but we feature any artists we find interesting – electronic or otherwise. It's a state of mind more than anything. We're into time travel too, journeying back to the earliest days of electronic music experiments and stopping off at significant points along the way, as well as occasionally dabbling in the wider world of technology and ideas. Oh, and we like robots (one thing tends to lead to another, we find). Electronic music has always been associated with forward-thinking types and Electronic Sound reflects that curiosity, capturing the best of what's going on right now and what's about to happen.

This time round, we've got a fascinating insight into the life of Dr Robert Moog, the man who gave us the synthesiser, through a lengthy and highly personal interview with his daughter, Michelle Moog-Koussa. Michelle runs the Bob Moog Foundation and is currently working on a film about her father. Staying in the formative days of synth history, we also have a piece about the 'Bright Sparks' album and documentary, which details the stories of the likes of Alan Pearlman of ARP, Don Buchla, EMS man Peter Zinovieff, and Les Bradley of Mellotron fame.

Elsewhere, we visit Vince Clarke in his Brooklyn studio to talk about the record he's made with Paul Hartnoll from Orbital, catch up with James Chapman of Maps and Polly Scattergood for a chat about their haunting 'onDeadWaves' album, pausing only for breath before meeting Floorplan, aka Detroit techno legend Robert Hood and his daughter Lyric, and then go on to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the groundbreaking neo-classical label 130701. We've got New Zealand electropop queen Ladyhawke too and Robin Scott of M talkin' 'bout 'Pop Muzik', plus our regular contributors Synthesiser Dave, Jack Dangers and Fat Roland, who between them will meet all your technical, archival and, erm, deranged reading requirements.

From now on, you'll be able to find Electronic Sound in high street newsagents across the UK (and one or two other places around the world). If you would like to save yourself quite a lot of money and quite a lot of time, you can have the magazine delivered directly to you door by taking out a subscription. And if you're in the UK, we have an introductory subscription offer, with which you can bag the next three issues for a total of just £4.99 (postage included).

Pop over to electronicsound.co.uk/subscribe for more information.

We won't keep you any longer. This magazine isn't going to read itself.

Electronically yours
Push & Mark

CELLF

Masonic Hall, Perth, Australia
4 October 2015

Words: FINLAY MILLIGAN

In a laboratory in Western Australia, the line between science fiction and reality has been made slightly more blurry with the world's first neural synthesiser.

Autonomously controlled by organic matter, CellF (pronounced "Self") has a brain made from biological neural networks grown in a Petri dish, while its body is composed of various analogue synths. It works by feeding sound into the machine's brain as electrical impulses, which CellF then interprets through the synths.

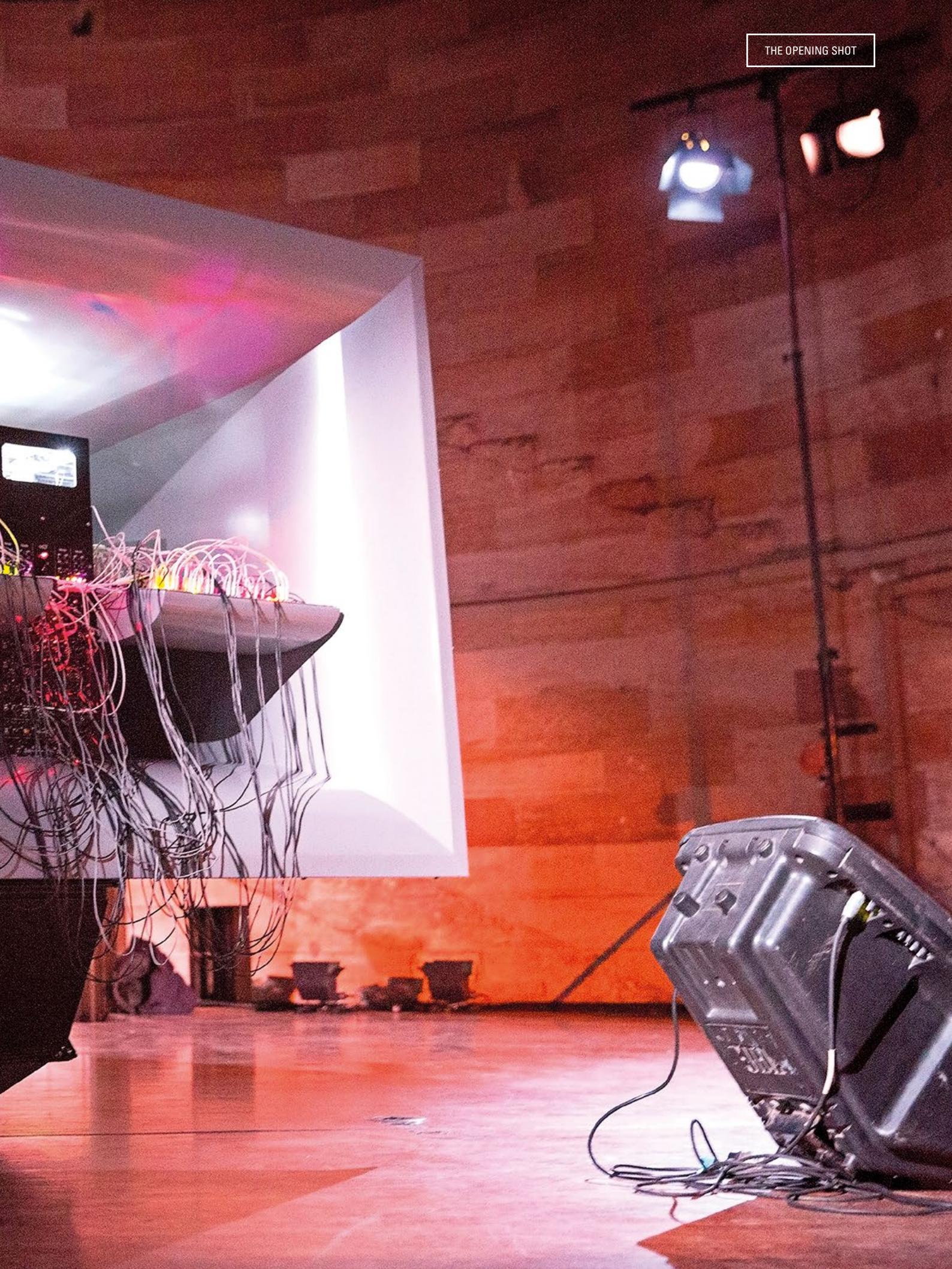
"CellF represents a radical new way to think about what a musical instrument can be and how music could be made," says Los Angeles-born, Perth-based artist and researcher Guy Ben-Ary, who heads up the group of creatives and scientists behind the project and who donated his own cells to make the instrument's brain.

While we shouldn't be expecting a debut album anytime soon, what does Ben-Ary think the future holds for CellF? A new wave of living cybernetic musicians perhaps?

"Those neural networks are responsive, but I don't think we could talk about learning yet," he says. "I hope that CellF will learn one day, but I think we are still far from that."

guybenary.com





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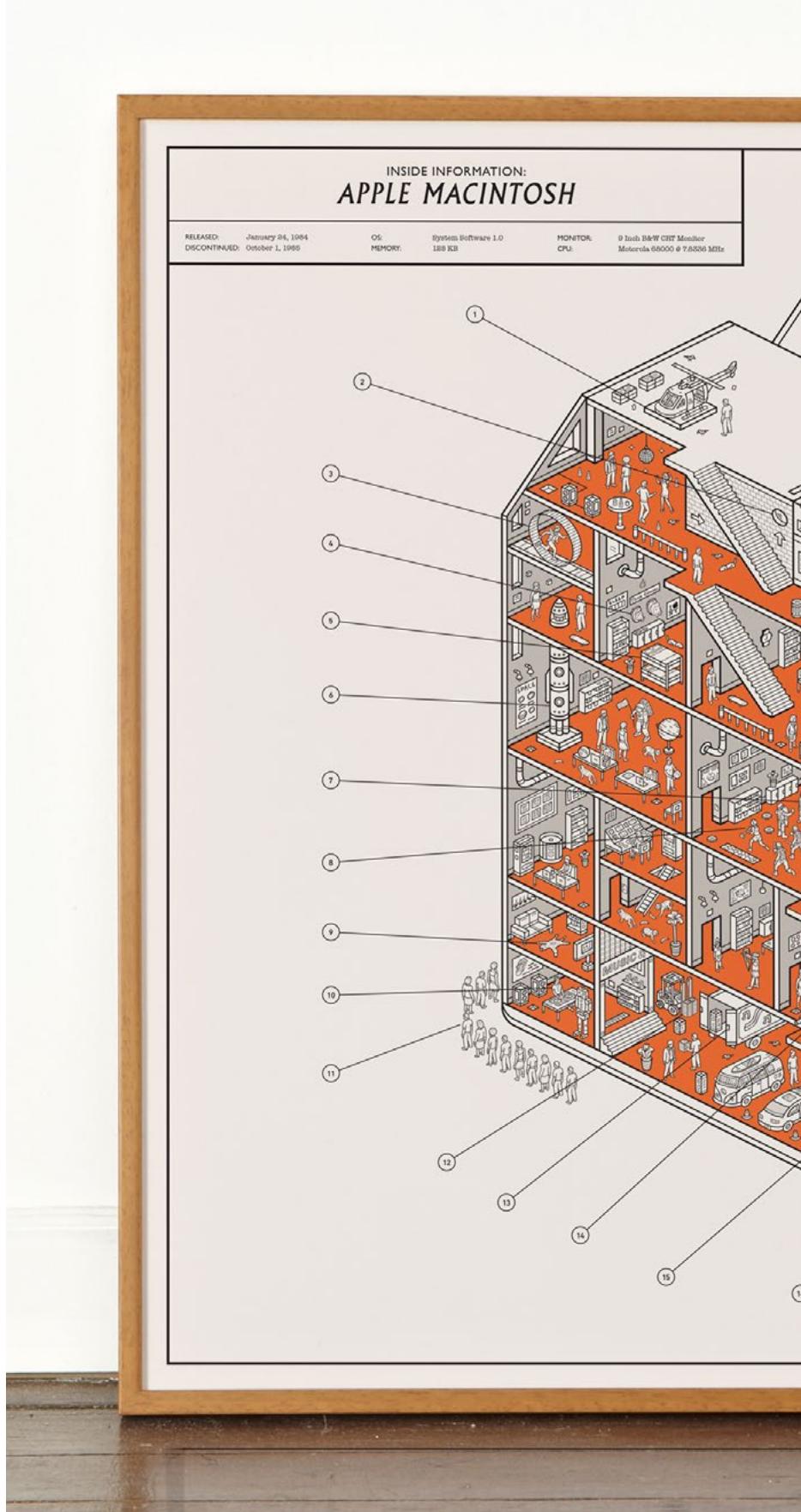
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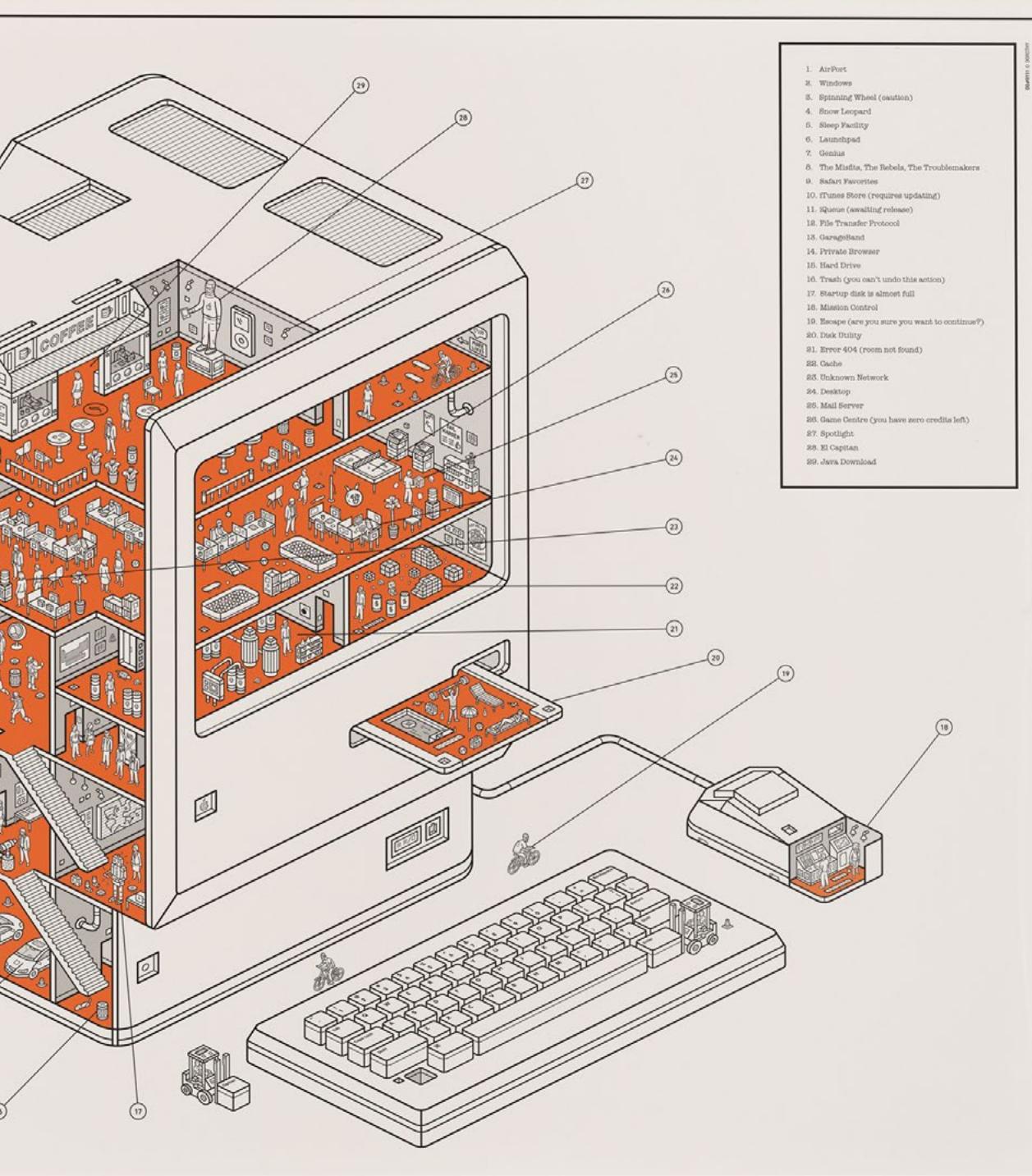
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THE ELECTRONIC SOUND COVERS COLLECTION VOLUME.01

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THE PLAYLIST WE'VE PUT TOGETHER FOR THIS ISSUE OF ELECTRONIC SOUND. THE THEME IS ROOTED IN THE IDEA OF REMOTE COLLABORATION AND CROSS-GENRE INSPIRATION, AKA THE COVER VERSION



PAUL HARTNOLL

'NUMBERS' (KRAFTWERK)

"Computer World" was the first Kraftwerk album I bought," says Paul Hartnoll. "When I first played it, I thought it was a bit cold and disappointing compared to my big brother's 'The Man Machine'. Then 'Numbers' came on and that stark, compelling rhythm made the whole of my world freeze over. That was it. I was in. Forever.

"I covered it because I had this idea of using numbers from around my world to replace the numbers of the original track – the creepy numbers stations from the Cold War, the intros of punk records I have, the automated cashier counters in shops, the man with the lovely voice who sometimes reads the shipping news on Radio 4... I just went out there with my field recorder and got stuck in at the Post Office and Boots! I also thought about covering 'Neon Lights', but I was never going to start singing."



HEAVEN 17

'PARTY FEARS TWO' (THE ASSOCIATES)

"The first time I heard 'Party Fears Two' was watching 'Top Of The Pops'," says Glenn Gregory. "I totally loved it from that moment. When Martyn Ware and I were asked to appear at Billy Mackenzie's memorial concert at the Shepherd's Bush Empire in London in 2007, I said I'd perform 'Party Fears Two'. It was only later that day when I listened to it closely that I realised why nobody else had chosen to sing this brilliant song. It was impossible for anyone else to do it.

"As I stumbled around, trying to work out the chords, I began to see the inner beauty and sadness of the track. And as I started to sing along at this slow tempo, I accidentally discovered a way to cover it. There was complete silence as we performed our new version of 'Party Fears Two' and there were more than a few tears, both on stage and in the audience. I still love performing the song live, but it is always a very emotional experience and the tears are still there."



I SPEAK MACHINE

'MY SEX' (ULTRAVOX!)

"'My Sex' is a work of sheer beauty... poetic, dark, self-deprecating and deep," notes I Speak Machinist Tara Busch. "I would sell my soul to be able to write lyrics like that. It has a very 'Hunky Dory'-era Bowie-esque feel to me, but much more reserved and deadpan.

"It was a pleasure to reinterpret. I tried not to overthink it. I wanted to keep the same self-deprecating feel, but to add more false bravado. I liked the idea of it being heavy, nasty and filthy, like someone very fed up with themselves, someone at a loss with their own behaviour. A wee bit of so-called beauty was added by re-singing the piano line in an operatic soprano – fun and ridiculous! Musically, I used the dirtiest synth I had at the time, which was a SCI Pro One, and I used a Moogerfooger FreqBox for fuzz. I suppose I was after a nice juxtaposition of lots of filth, some tongue-in-cheek darkness, and a pinprick of beauty."

The cover version is a harsh test of any artist's mettle. Tackling a classic track takes some brass neck to begin with, but then there's also the not insignificant issue of coming up with something that doesn't immediately enrage everyone who ever liked the song in the first place.

'The Electronic Sound Covers Collection' is, we think, a bit special. For one thing, four of the tracks have never been commercially released before: Paul Hartnoll's brilliant version of Kraftwerk's 'Numbers', which Paul recorded especially for us; Jane Horrocks' interpretation of Joy Division's 'Isolation', which gets its first official outing here; South Korean electronic duo Love X Stereo's take on the Pixies 'Wave Of Mutilation'; and Tokyo chiptune producer Kiryu Ogawa's reworking of Devo's 'Jocko Homo', mangled with the help of the Yamaha Corporation's slightly frightening Vocaloid virtual singer. And if that's not thrilling enough for you, we've also got Heaven 17, Blancmange, KMFDM, I Speak Machine, Gazelle Twin, Plumblime, Metamatics and A1 People, the latter covering Pete Shelley's 'Homosapien', with Shelley himself supplying the vocals. Phew.

So how did each artist go about their cover version? And what did the original track mean to them?

LISTEN TO THE TRACKS
ON OUR SPOTIFY PLAYLIST
[HTTP://GOO.GL/FO087B](http://goo.gl/FO087B)



A1 PEOPLE & PETE SHELLEY

'HOMOSAPIEN' (PETE SHELLEY)

"We grew up listening to Pete Shelley's records," says Simeon Bowring from A1 People. "I particularly like this song because it has a very powerful message. It's challenging and confrontational. It throws down the gauntlet and says, 'This is who I am'. I think that's a great thing, whoever you are. I heard the BBC banned it back in 1982. It was great to work with Pete on this and be able to bring it to a new generation. He had a quick cup of tea and then, bam, straight into the track and did a perfect take!"

"Martin Rushent produced the original and we were big fans of his work," adds Tom Crook. "I remember Simeon and I spending whole days trying to figure out what machines were making what noises. 'Homosapien' was recorded at Rushent's Genetic Studios and it was interesting to pull the production apart and then try to sympathetically rebuild it with the equipment we had to hand, updating that analogue sound from a digital perspective."

PLUMBLINE

'ONCE IN A LIFETIME' (TALKING HEADS)

"I remember 'Once In A Lifetime' from high school," says Will Thomas, aka Plumblime. "A friend and I were visiting his older brother at university. He had the 'Remain In Light' vinyl sitting on the table in his dorm room and there was a three-foot bong perched on top. Ahh, college!

"Cover versions can be tricky. You can opt for a faithful version, to get as close as possible to the original, which I'm not really a fan of, or you can also go to the other extreme and make it barely recognisable, which, er, I'm not really a fan of. I kept the same tempo and basic beat structure, but with more electronic drum sounds. I went with Cat Martino for a female vocal, in order to get far as far as possible from David Byrne's voice, and brought in Julia Kent to use cello to replicate the guitar chords. The high, twinkling synth texture that goes throughout is a Roland MKS-80. The bassline and blips are an SH-101."

KMFDM

'BEING BOILED' (THE HUMAN LEAGUE)

"I first heard 'Being Boiled' in a club, probably in 1980 or 1981-ish, and I completely loved it immediately," remembers KMFDM frontman Sascha Konietzko. "To me, it sparks lots of memories and flashbacks to that time in my life, when I was around 19 or 20.

"At some point about 10 years ago, I had an idea to record covers of my three favourite tracks from the late 70s and early 80s. As well as 'Being Boiled', I also recorded 'Der Mussolini' by DAF [which appeared on KMFDM's 'Ruck Zuck' album] and 'Los Niños Del Parque' by Liaisons Dangereuses [which is on the band's 'Tohuvabohu' album]. With 'Being Boiled', I worked on it painstakingly, even down to each of those notes that sound like horns. I didn't think any other approach would have done it justice."

THE ELECTRONIC SOUND COVERS COLLECTION VOLUME.01



GAZELLE TWIN

'HEARTBEAT' (WIRE)

"I'm a big fan of very stark but intense production and Wire are masters of it," declares Elizabeth Bernholz, aka Gazelle Twin. "When I first heard this song, which was recommended to me by my husband, I was instantly hooked by the intensity of the lyrics and the sense of burgeoning anxiety. Right up my street.

"When I did this, I was specifically looking for a song to cover for an EP. I think the best covers are when they are a big contrast with the sort of stuff an artist usually does, and at the time this was pretty different to the music I was making. I don't like to mess about too much with covers, but I do like to create something that gives the track a new angle. I tried to be gentle with this and retain the space. I also felt that it needed a very slight voice, almost like a whisper."



BLANCMANGE

'I WANT MORE' (CAN)

"'I Want More' was my introduction to Can," says Neil Arthur. "I initially heard of it via 'The Old Grey Wotsit' back up north in Lancashire. It stood out as being very different to what was around at that time. Stephen Luscombe was also a fan of their music and I remember when it came to thinking of a producer for the second Blancmange album, 'Mange Tout', both Irmin Schmidt and Holger Czukay were mentioned. That might have been interesting.

"A few years later, we were invited to collaborate on some songs with Malcolm Ross, David McClymont and Dennis Bovell, and one of the tracks they did was 'I Want More'. Several decades on, when I started recording 'Semi Detached', I thought about a few covers that might complement the other tracks on the album. This was one. Chic's 'I Want Your Love' was another. I love Can and this song so much that I took the opportunity to finally get a version released."



LOVE X STEREO

'WAVE OF MUTILATION' (PIXIES)

"'Wave Of Mutilation' is a great song," says Toby Hwang from Love X Stereo. "I was about 19 when I first heard it on some compilation CD. It was the first thing I had ever heard by the Pixies. It was a hot summer and the song was about diving into the sea, and I literally felt like I was drowning in the water when I heard it. It's been almost 20 years since then and I really wanted to give a proper tribute to the track."

"We wanted to make it sound more breezy and dreamy," adds Toby's partner Annie Ko. "We had this very specific imagery of a sink hole in our minds. We really don't know what's inside a sink hole, though, so we just kind of imagined ourselves getting swirled into one and tried to portray what that might feel like."



METAMATICS

'PERSONAL JESUS' (DEPECHE MODE)

"I saw a promo of 'Personal Jesus' at a record fair at Manchester Corn Exchange a few weeks before the record came out," recalls Metamatics man Lee Norris. "I was a big fan of Depeche Mode and collected everything from test pressings to imports. The 'Pump Mix' is still my favourite and the one I heard first, as it was on the promo I bought. I think that mix nails the song. Pure bliss!"

"I covered this for sentimental reasons, I guess. I knew a guy who could play the riff on his guitar, so I thought I'd do an acid guitar version of it, something totally different to the music I usually make. I recreated the track by making a MIDI template and then swapped sounds around. I just used Ableton Live and no hardware, apart from recording the guy on the guitar and recording Heidi, who did the vocals. If I could go back and do it again, I would do it totally differently!"

JANE HORROCKS

'ISOLATION' (JOY DIVISION)

"I used to listen to a lot of Joy Division when I was a teenager and I particularly identified with 'Isolation,'" says Jane Horrocks. "Being an angst-ridden 17-year-old, I found the lyrics both haunting and comforting."

"I have revisited the song at various stages in my life, but then there came a point when I decided I wanted to record my own version. So I contacted a music producer friend of mine called Kipper [whose credits include Gary Numan and Sting], and asked him if he'd consider doing a new arrangement. We then asked Rat Scabies from The Damned to drum on it and Scott Firth from PiL to play bass. Between us, we came up with something very different from the original, but still identifiable. And the lyrics are just as resonant for me as they were all those years ago."

KIRYU OGAWA

'JOCKO HOMO' (DEVO)

"The Japanese synthpop band Denki Groove used to host a radio show in Tokyo and I first heard 'Jocko Homo' on this show," notes Kiryu Ogawa. "This was when I was in high school, around 20 years ago. It had such an impact on me because it was at the height of band boom [a Japanese musical movement based around a TV competition]."

"I wanted to try something different with Hatsune Miku [a Vocaloid vocal "persona" software], especially something with an irregular time signature. The idea occurred to me when I saw a comedian called Sekai no Nabeatsu on TV and he was dancing just like in the 'Jocko Homo' video. For the recording, I copied the track by ear and it was only after I started working on it that I realised it was not all in 7/8. I added the hi-hat as a cue so I could tell the 7/8 and 4/4 parts apart, but in the end I left it in the final version."



INTRODUCING...

SIR WAS

CONNECTED SWEDISH SAXMAN
GIVES HIMSELF AN ELECTRONIC
MUSIC KNIGHTHOOD

WHO HE?

Sir Was is long-haired Swede Joel Wästberg. He wasn't a member of Was (Not Was) but he has been around for a while, just not as an electronic musician. He started out playing sax, garnering a decent rep on the global jazz circuit before getting switched on to African rhythms. He left his horn in Johannesburg and hasn't bothered to go back to retrieve it. Wästberg went on to work with Sean Lennon and fellow Swede José González on a version of John Lennon's '#9 Dream' for the soundtrack to 'The Secret Life Of Walter Mitty'.

WHY SIR WAS?

Sir Was' debut EP for City Slang, 'Says Hi', is properly all over the place. This is about throwing as many things at the mixing desk as possible and miraculously creating songs you'd never believe would work if you saw the idea written down on paper. We're talking wonky, half-rapped vocals pitched somewhere between emotional and impenetrably vague, deconstructed hip hop beats mixed with African polyrhythms, found sounds, and layer upon layer of intriguing synth loops and broken melodies. It all sounds very calculated and precise, but that's what happens when you've spent nigh on 15 years fiddling with this stuff.

TELL US MORE

Scandi gear is achingly hip right now and Sir Was is doing nothing to dissuade us that hot things come out of cold places. Now where did we stash that bottle of Absolut?

MAT SMITH

'Says Hi' is out now on City Slang

LISTEN

SPIRIT RADIO

LOST SEVEN-INCH HOLDS SPOOKY SECRETS OF THE DEAD

Lessons learned growing up in the 1970s: Stanley Kubrick's 'The Shining' should not be watched when you are 12 years old and have to bike home in the dark. Nor, at the same age, should you have bought *The Unexplained* magazine, which featured a flexi-disc of voices from the dead, plucked from the ether by means of radio waves. The blood runs cold thinking about it.

Imagine then, when a seven-inch arrived from the most excellent Buried Treasure label, claiming to be an early example of "electronic voice phenomena". And while it turns out that this isn't *The Unexplained* flexi-disc, it is an original copy of 'Breakthrough', a 1971 single by Konstantin Raudive, leading proponent of having-a-chat-with-dead-folk. It was first released to accompany the publication of his seminal book, 'Breakthrough – An Amazing Experiment In Electronic Communication With The Dead'. The disc acts as a general introduction, with examples of microphone, radio frequency, diode, goniometer and psychophone voices.

'Breakthrough' comes with a new protective artwork sleeve by Rob Halhead-Baker and some fascinating sleeve notes explaining the origins of the recording. Buried Treasure are making a mere 200 copies available because that is all the book publishers have left, which makes it super rare and highly collectible, despite how much just thinking about this stuff shits us up. buriedtreasure.bandcamp.com



LISTEN

FOREVER LINEAR

POST-PUNK SYNTHERS THE LINES HAVE FINALLY RELEASED THE ALBUM THEY STARTED RECORDING IN 1982 – BUT IT'S WELL WORTH THE WAIT

Words: MAT SMITH

"I spent pretty much the whole of the 1980s in the studio," says Rico Conning. "I saw hardly any daylight for a decade!"

The potential impact on his well-being aside, Rico Conning's engineering work alongside William Orbit and Daniel Miller established him as a familiar name on the sleeves of some incredible records from that period. We're talking Depeche Mode, Wire, Renegade Soundwave, Swans, Baby Ford and scores more. Which is all the more impressive since Conning only started taking paid employment as an engineer because The Lines, the post-punk group he formed with Joe Forty in 1978, weren't paying the bills.

Across their first two albums, The Lines followed a fast-paced evolution that took them beyond the punk sound that had first inspired Conning and Forty. By the time of the sessions for their third record, 'Hull Down', Conning and Forty were firmly operating in an electronic style. Some of this was down to Conning's friends William Orbit and Laurie Mayer (with whom he later played in Torch Song) and their new eight-track studio, Guerrilla, where the majority of 'Hull Down' was developed. But despite the fresh direction, progress on the album was to be thwarted.

"It was an unfortunate process," Conning reflects with a heavy sigh. "We were finally in control of our sound, but things had completely fallen apart financially. We weren't getting gigs any more. It had been a struggle to get our second album together and it took a long time to get it released. Our record company was having a hard time and so were we."

"So I started working as an engineer at Guerrilla, partly to make some money and partly to get some downtime to do 'Hull Down'. I could see an end to it, I could see where it was going, I could see it could be really good, but it just never got finished. We'd had the wind knocked out of our sails."

In 1987, at the suggestion of IRS Records boss Miles Copeland, Conning made a concerted effort to mould the 'Hull Down' multi-tracks into a coherent body of work. He says he was inspired by the instrumental material Orbit was fashioning around the same time for the first of his 'Strange Cargo' series.

"There were one or two songs that came out OK, but Miles didn't like the rough mixes," Conning recalls. "It kind of moved things forward, but it still didn't get finished."

The tapes were cast aside again and left to languish in a garage in north London. It was only when Conning was preparing the first two Lines album for reissue by archive specialists Acute Records in the late 2000s that he gave any further thought to trying to complete what the band had started back in 1982. Which is how come the fabled 'Hull Down' has now finally seen the light of day.

"I had this box of cassettes, rough mixes from the original sessions, so I thought I'd throw those into ProTools to see how they sounded," he explains. "I realised, 'Shit, we had something that could have been really good if we'd stuck at it'. So I used these tracks to try to figure out what we were doing at the time and I think the version of 'Hull Down' that's now been put out by Acute is a good representation of how it would have been if it had been released in 1982 or 1983, whereas the 1987 version would have been a bit more filmic."



The results show The Lines circa 1982 were moving in the direction of some of the vibrant early dance music that Rico Conning would later find himself working on at labels like Rhythm King, albeit while still betraying a certain angular punk quality. This isn't Conning retrofitting 'Hull Down' into its rightful place in electronic music history with the benefit of hindsight, though. Nor does the release of the album after all these years necessarily bring the story of The Lines to a conclusion.

"We never broke up," reveals Conning. "For the last 10 years, we've been jamming again and I've got quite a lot of recordings from that period. The sound quality isn't great, but it's certainly better than in the old days. People are starting to ask if we're interested in playing live, which we are. If we got together properly in that kind of way, I'd hope that we'd also record something new at the same time."

'Hull Down' is out now on Acute

WANT

BETTER LISTENING THROUGH CHEMISTRY

NURA HEADPHONES ADJUST TO YOUR UNIQUE HEARING PROFILE

It seems we've been doing headphones all wrong. What we need are 'phones especially designed to match your individual hearing profile – like these fine looking cans from Nura.

A little science to help mend the error of your ways? As sound waves enter your ear, they trigger a chain reaction that sends electrical impulses to your brain, which then supply feedback in the form of more sound waves encoded with your unique hearing signatures. It's these sound waves that are analysed by Nura to create your own unique hearing profile.

The design combines over-the-ear cups and in-ear buds to not only help sound quality but enhance noise cancellation. They're so smart, they even know who's using them, so no worries if your mates want to borrow them. Having already smashed their Kickstarter target eight times over, Nura are aiming to ship these little wonders by April 2017.



INTRODUCING...

Hologram Teen

STEREOLAB SYNTHESIST TREADS THE LINE BETWEEN THE FUNK AND THE FEAR

WHO SHE?

Morgane Lhote is no stranger to flitting between musical projects. She's Stereolab alumni, playing with the band as lead synthesist between 1995 and 2001. She then had a brief spell with indie popsters The Projects and an even briefer spell in the folktronicky Garden with James Ford from Simian Mobile Disco. Now she's striking out on her tod as Hologram Teen.

WHY HOLOGRAM TEEN?

Morgane describes her music as "Fabio Frizzi meets Grandmaster Flash". It's certainly electronic, but with some proggy undertones and a John Carpenter-at-a-disco feeling, like a danceable horror film soundtrack. She released her debut single as Hologram Teen last year, the cleverly titled 'Post-Apocalypfteacakes' on Deep Distance, which found her a clutch of new fans, including Jarvis Cocker.

TELL US MORE

Her latest offering, a seven-inch twin-tracker combining 'Marsangst' and 'Hex These Rules' for Happy Robots Records, builds on the horror disco idea while giving it a shove in another direction. "With 'Marsangst,' I wanted to write a minimal techno track that still retained groovy, more dance-like elements, with a splash of krautrock and a futuristic vibe," she says. 'Hex These Rules' meanwhile grooves along with bouncy synths and dead funky drums, offset against howling vocals. Quite literally howling vocals, that is. Add in some zany cover art to go with the genre bending music and, as Morgane Lhote proudly declares, "There's never a dull day in the Hologram Teen galaxy".

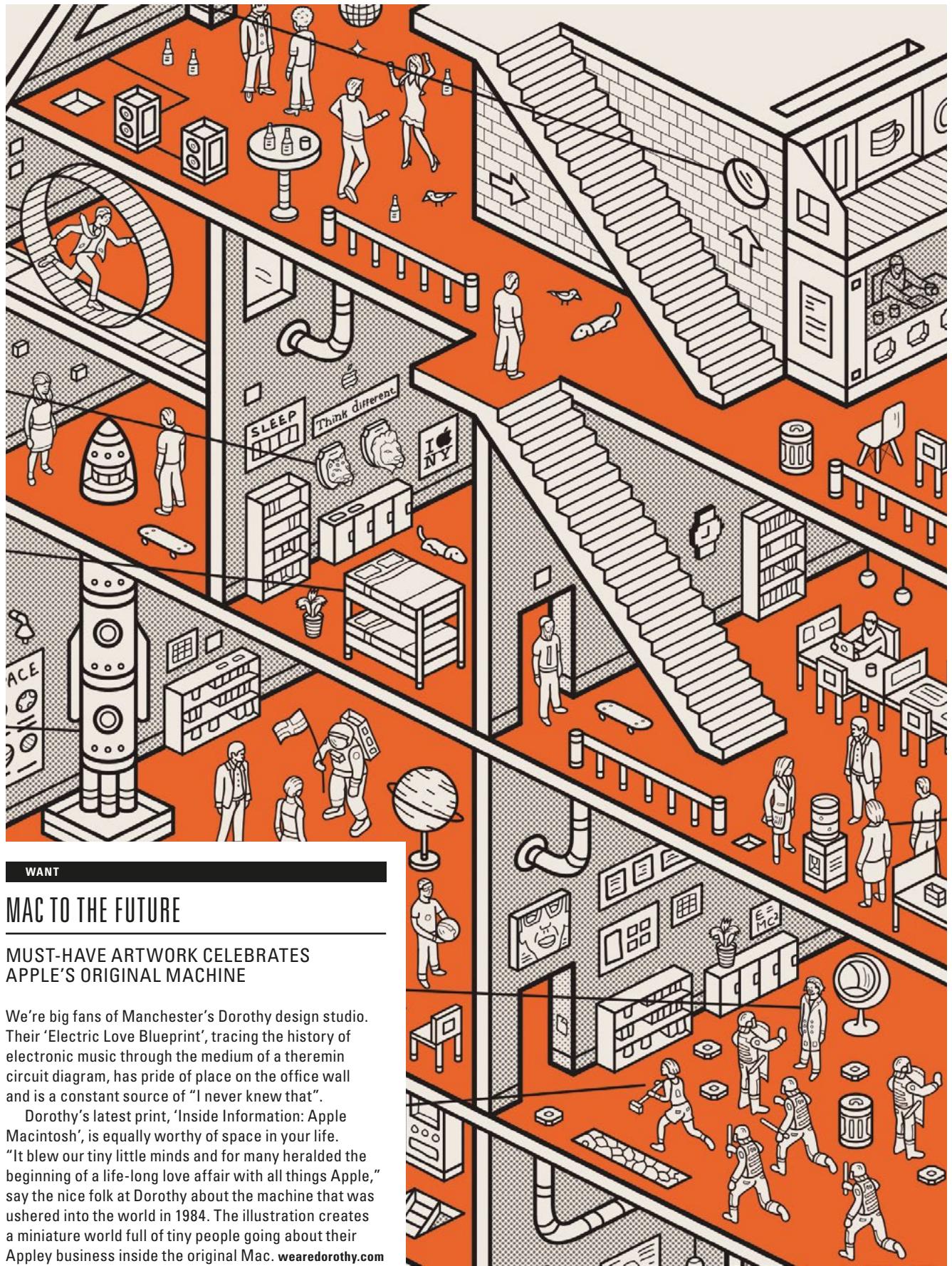
FINLAY MILLIGAN

'Marsangst' / 'Hex These Rules' is out now on Happy Robots

a revolutionary
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perfect coffee
every time



www.aeropress.co.uk



WANT

MAC TO THE FUTURE

MUST-HAVE ARTWORK CELEBRATES
APPLE'S ORIGINAL MACHINE

We're big fans of Manchester's Dorothy design studio. Their 'Electric Love Blueprint', tracing the history of electronic music through the medium of a theremin circuit diagram, has pride of place on the office wall and is a constant source of "I never knew that".

Dorothy's latest print, 'Inside Information: Apple Macintosh', is equally worthy of space in your life. "It blew our tiny little minds and for many heralded the beginning of a life-long love affair with all things Apple," say the nice folk at Dorothy about the machine that was ushered into the world in 1984. The illustration creates a miniature world full of tiny people going about their Appley business inside the original Mac. wearedorothy.com

WANT

SPEAKING IN TONGUES**EARPIECE TRANSLATOR IS REAL-LIFE BABEL FISH**

To a generation of wide-eyed youngsters, the early 80s TV adaptation of 'The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy' had a lasting effect – not least because roving reporter Ford Prefect had the coolest job in the universe, working for the electronic travel guide of the show's title.

Fast forward to the 21st century and when we clutched an iPad for the first time, we couldn't help think Douglas Adams Knew Things. In 'HHGTTG', the Babel Fish was a fish (literally a fish) you dropped into your ear and it would translate any language. So the news that Waverly Labs are developing The Pilot, which they claim is the world's first smart earpiece language translator, is very exciting. Just pop the little device into your lughole and *sacré bleu!*

The Pilot earpiece is set to be available early next year. Whatever next? Talking dolphins? waverlylabs.com



LISTEN

OH SO QUIET**MOBY GIVES AWAY HOURS OF AMBIENT TUNEAGE**

Following on from 'Porcelain', his recently published biography, Moby is serving up four hours of new music. Yes, four whole hours. Not only that, but he's making it available completely free of charge.

"Over the last couple of years, I've been making really quiet music to listen to when I do yoga or sleep or meditate or panic," he says. "I ended up with four hours of music and have decided to give it away."

The collection is entitled 'Long Ambients' and features "no drums, no vocals, just very slow, calm pretty chords". It can be downloaded or streamed from Moby's website. He is, as the saying goes, the gift that keeps on giving. moby.com



INTRODUCING...

BEAUTIFY JUNKYARDS**PASTORAL ELECTRONIC PSYCH WITH SOME LANGUID LATIN HEAT****WHO THEY?**

Once Portugal's best kept secret, the word on Beautify Junkyards has spread well beyond their homeland since last year's 'The Beast Shouted Love' album. The Lisbon six-piece was formed by vocalist and keyboard whizz João Branco Kyron when their aptly named previous incarnation, Hipnótica, who mixed electronics with fusion jazz and folk, expanded both in terms of numbers and sonic ambition.

WHY BEAUTIFY JUNKYARDS?

Track down a copy of 'The Beast Shouted Love' and be captivated by a cosmic, sun-bleached, electronically-layered take on bucolic psychedelia. Heavily influenced by 70s acid-folk pioneers Heron (they share a fondness for recording in the field – hear the cows and birds!), Beautify Junkyards' transcendental male/female vocal harmonics (part-English, part-Portuguese) and delicate acoustics blend beautifully with darker-hued emotional ambiguity. Think The Incredible String Band, Os Mutantes and José Alfonso shot through with Ash Ra Tempel, Moondog and Broadcast. It's certainly a beguiling sound palette.

TELL US MORE

The band's many fans include Jim Jupp and Julian House from Ghost Box Records, which happens to be one of João Branco Kyron's favourite labels. "They release great records and I also like the stimulating and inspiring universe that's been created around the label," he says. This mutual appreciation has now resulted in a Beautify Junkyards seven-inch of the mesmerising 'Constant Flux' via Ghost Box's acclaimed Other Voices series. And there'll be a long-player to follow next year. You heard that here first, friends.

CARL GRIFFIN

'Constant Flux' is out now on Ghost Box

WANT

TOTALLY WIRED

BOSEBUILD SERVES UP KIT FORM QUALITY SPEAKER

So the idea is that this is for kids. A build-it-yourself Bluetooth speaker with flashing lights and everything. It comes as a kit, with all the bits and bobs, and the parts are rugged and resilient, the instructions are uncomplicated and straightforward, the cables and connectors are big, bright, and easy to handle. Even the circuit board is clearly labelled. "Every time your child listens to it, they can enjoy the Bose-quality sound," says the accompanying bumpf.

Now. "Enjoy the Bose-quality sound"? Wasted on young ears, that is. And at \$149, it's waaaay out of pocket money range. Us grown-ups on the other hand... build.bose.com



READ

SHE DID IT HER WAY

RADIOPHONIC WORKSHOP PIONEER'S BOOK SET FOR REISSUE

The Daphne Oram Trust is set to republish 'An Individual Note: Of Music, Sound And Electronics', Daphne Oram's much sought-after 1972 book on her singular approach to electronic music. Oram became the first director of the BBC's Radiophonic Workshop in 1958, before leaving to set up her own studio and conduct research into her "Oramics" system, which used painted waveforms on glass and celluloid to create sounds and music.

"When Daphne Oram first published 'An Individual Note', electronic music was still in its infancy," say the Daphne Oram Trust. "The book's depth and its exploration was unprecedented, and her ideas and theories radical. Now that electronic music is an established and popular field, it is important that the book is redistributed to allow more people to learn and benefit from reading it."

daphneoram.org



READ

REWIND SELECTOR

ESSENTIAL NEW TOME TRACES HISTORY OF ELECTRONIC BRITS

We sometimes stumble across stuff that's so far up our street, it has practically moved into the spare room. Take Ian Helliwell's 'Tape Leaders – A Compendium Of Early British Electronic Music Composers' book. A must-have guide to electronic sound and its origins in the UK, this 220-page labour of love took just the six years to compile. It features individual entries for each composer and is, quite literally, an A to Z of experimental electronic types – from Gong's Daevid Allen through to EMS bigwig Peter Zinovieff.

But the big win comes because the book doesn't just stop at the star turns, it also digs down into the ultra-obscure. Prizes for those of you who know about Roy Cooper, Donald Henshilwood and Edgar Vetter. So while there are sections on the likes of the BBC Radiophonic Workshop, there are lots of nods to amateurs as well as to groups who experimented with electronics, including The Beatles and Hawkwind.

'Tape Leaders' is accompanied by a specially compiled 15-track CD of mainly unreleased early British tape and synthesiser works, which only adds to the reason why this is an utterly essential volume for anyone with even a passing interest in the formative years of electronic music. taleleaders.co.uk



CitiTrax

MARIE DAVIDSON "ADIEUX AU DANCEFLOOR" LP COMING SOON ON CITITRAX

www.minimalwave.com



GOSSIP**BANKSY ROBBER?****COULD MASSIVE ATTACK'S 3D BE SECRETIVE GRAFFITI ARTIST IN DISGUISE?**

Who doesn't enjoy a decent conspiracy theory? We're very much liking the thinking behind the one that goes Massive Attack's Robert Del Naja and Banksy are one and the same person. The tale originated earlier this year via Il Cartello, an online Italian cultural magazine, and the story was moved on by music writer Craig Williams, who matched a number of Massive Attack tour dates around the world with the first sightings of new Banksy works.

Williams discovered that, as far back as 2006, Massive Attack and Banksy have been in the same place at the same time, give or take. In 2013, for example, the artist's New York residency began on 1 October with the appearance of 'The Street Is In Play' mural, and Massive Attack played four nights in the city between 28 September and 4 October. In 2010, when six new Banksy pieces were reported in the San Francisco press around 1 May, it coincided with Massive Attack having performed a two-night stint in San Fran a few days earlier. The list goes on...

We should not forget, of course, that Del Naja is a renowned graffiti artist in his own right. His book, '3D And The Art Of Massive Attack', came out last year, with an introduction by... Banksy. So has Banksy been hiding in plain sight since his first work appeared on a Bristol wall back in 1997? There are spanners in the works with this notion, though. In late January 2016, it's thought he was responsible for the Les Misérables mural opposite the French embassy in London, but Massive Attack were in Glasgow at the time. Then again, stencil artists don't actually need to be present to execute their work, right?

"Even if this rumour proves little more than that, it's clear from the dates that there is certainly more than just a coincidental link between the artist and the band," says Craig Williams. glasgowtransmission.wordpress.com

**LISTEN****INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE****SERBIAN SYNTHESIST ABUL MOGARD MAKES MUSIC THAT IS TRULY FROM THE FACTORY FLOOR**

Words: DAVID STUBBS

Abul Mogard is one of the most enigmatic figures to have emerged onto the electronic scene in recent years. According to the press information that accompanied his early cassette releases, along with a photo of a somewhat senior looking chap, he is a one-time Belgrade factory worker who took up making music just a few years ago, as a means of recalling the ambience of his former industrial surroundings. He conducts interviews by email only and is reluctant to be probed on his back story.

"I am afraid it is not really a topic that I want to cover again at the moment," says the Serbian synthesist. "I feel that knowing any more details of my personal life will not add anything to my work. I am sincerely hoping my music is more relevant than my history."

Mogard's latest album, the excellent 'Works' compilation, certainly bears out that hope amply. But it would seem there was no epiphany that drew this apparent non-practitioner to suddenly make the transition from retired factory worker to analogue soundscape artist.

"My practice developed very slowly over the years that I have been experimenting with different kinds of electronic equipment," he explains. "It just happened that some of the recordings I was making became more like musical pieces and I have continued to work in that direction."

The material featured on 'Works' invites comparisons with William Basinski, Tim Hecker and James Leyland Kirby, particularly in the sense of sublime nostalgia, of memories reconsidered and manipulated. Does Mogard know these artists?

"I am flattered to be compared to people like this as I respect their work. I particularly like Basinski and Kirby and they seem to me to be very different to each other. I enjoy the gentle repetition of Basinski's pieces and Kirby's abstract way of composing. I have heard of Tim Hecker, but I've not listened to his music yet. I look forward to listening to it soon. In a similar genre, I have also been enjoying the music of Alessandro Cortini."

Another inspiration Mogard cites is 'Invisible Cities', a 1972 novel by Italo Calvino in which the traveller Marco Polo describes 55 imaginary cities to the Mongol emperor Kublai Khan in poetic, often surreal detail.



"The places he describes have been a source of inspiration for some of my work, as some of his imaginary scenarios recall circumstances I have experienced in the early days of my life. The titles of my pieces, occasionally inspired by Calvino, are just suggestions and should not depict that specific story, but hopefully give each listener a vision of their own personal situation."

This sense of the emotional and subjective vividly realised is a hallmark of Marja De Sanctis, the Brazilian visual artist whose imagery accompanies Mogard's releases.

"I love Marja's images and I agree that they sit very well with the music," says Mogard. "I think she has a great vision of how to put music into a visual piece of art."

Mogard shares with many of his contemporaries a love of vintage equipment, as if in flight from the present-day hegemony of the digital. Farfisa organs, a Moog and a home-built modular synthesiser sit in his workspace alongside a smattering of more modern technology. He also has a fondness for the cassette – supposedly obsolete but enjoying a revival now, possibly precisely because it has been cast aside – as a medium for his releases.

"I have been told that cassettes are quite inexpensive to manufacture, so I believe this could be the reason for the large number of tape releases," he notes. "People seem to enjoy owning an object too and perhaps it's difficult to feel affection for digital audio files only. I have personally enjoyed listening to my music on cassette."

There is a sense in Abul Mogard's music that he is trying to recreate something that has been lost; lost futures, as well the semi-dissolved matter of the recent past. It is more profoundly nostalgic, perhaps, than futuristic.

"To me, electronic music is a broad area and there is room for diverse interpretations," says Mogard. "One piece of music could embed ideas of both the future and nostalgia. It could be a futuristic medium that carries a nostalgic message, for instance. In my case, my music is the result of an emotional state informed by experiences, perceptions and memories, but also deeply influenced by present circumstances."

'Works' is out now on Ecstatic



INTRODUCING...

STEPHEN SOLO

PHONE APP WARRIOR SERVES UP OFF-KILTER ELECTRO LOVELINESS

WHO HE?

Glasgow born and bred, Stephen Solo's musical adventure began at school, before he could play an instrument, when he would create alternate Beatles records in his head. In and out of bands for years, he recently began thinking about his own creative processes and, in a bid to free himself from the age-old piano/guitar songwriting shackles, started mucking about with music making apps on his phone.

WHY STEPHEN SOLO?

Solo first became interested in the results of his phone meanderings when he was crafting incidental sounds for an animation. He found himself recording little stream of consciousness stories, sitting in his car in the rain shouting random lyrics. "Two of the songs on the album have the same rainstorm in the background," he says. "Little details like that make me happy."

TELL US MORE

Album? Did he say album? Yes, an entire album, 'Pii', made completely on the fly. It's hard to believe tracks such as the warm ambient loveliness of 'New Titan' and the electro skitishness of 'Freak' poured forth from a phone. "Using a device you always have with you changes everything," explains Solo. "It's weirdly intimate yet alien, slick yet clunky. It feels like trying to wash your clothes with a toaster at some points." The album comes as a limited edition USB release by the hugely innovative not-for-profit Last Night From Glasgow imprint, which is itself well worth investigating as it's as inventive as the tracks it puts out.

NEIL MASON

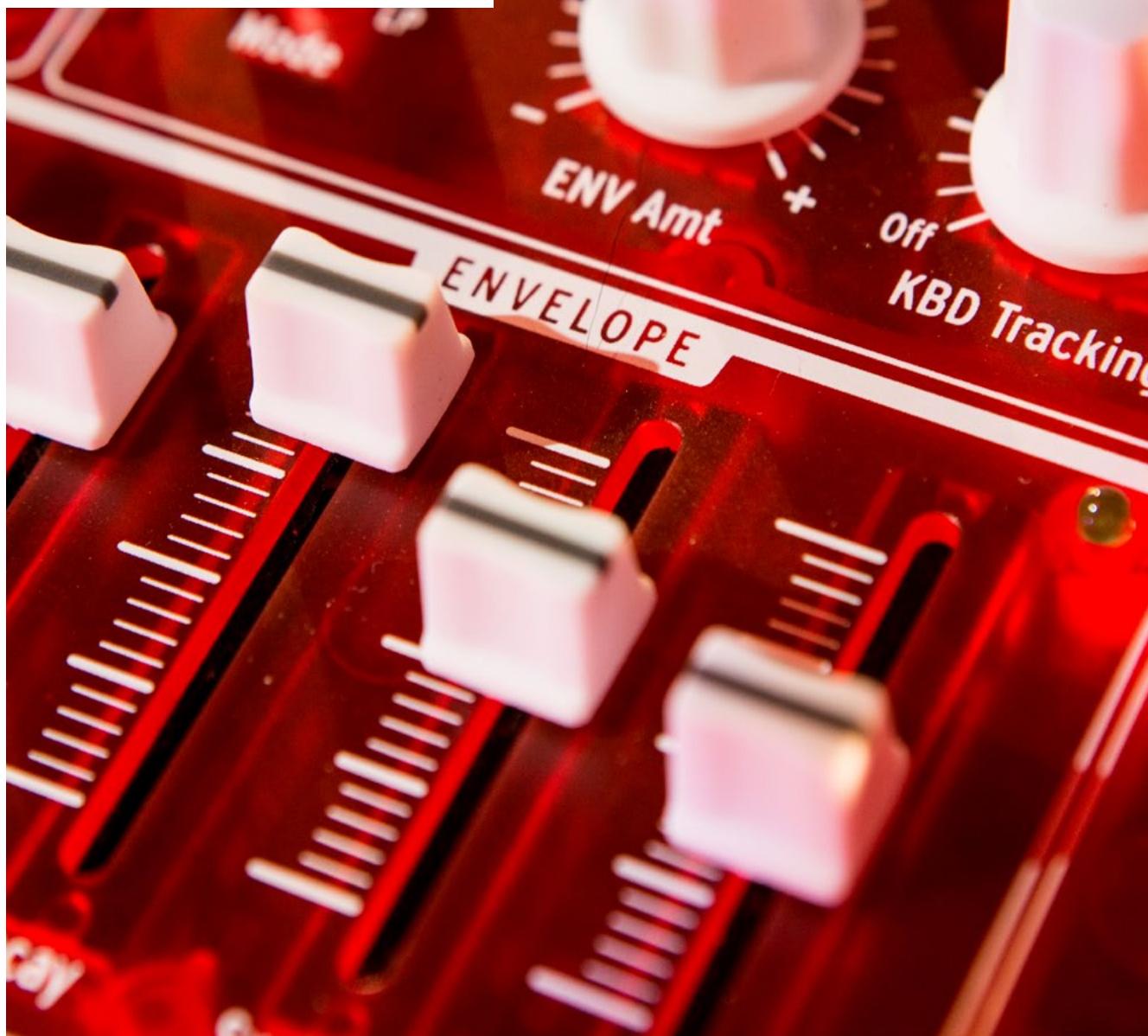
'Pii' is out now on Last Night From Glasgow

PLAY

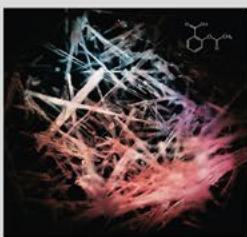
RED, RED AND MINE

LIMITED EDITION SEE-THROUGH CASE FOR MICROBRUTE

What's better than an Arturia MicroBrute? A limited edition MicroBrute with a transparent red case, of course. Arturia's two-octave analogue mini-beast has gone through a makeover that's somewhat Apple Computer circa those 'She's A Rainbow' adverts. It's got mixable waveforms, a sub-oscillator, the Steiner-Parker filter, a syncable LFO, a step sequencer, and a very natty little patchable mod matrix. And it's only €299. But never mind all that, because IT'S SEE-THROUGH RED, which means you can see the synth's innards! There's also the bigger MiniBrute available in red, but that's not transparent so we're not as excited about it. arturia.com



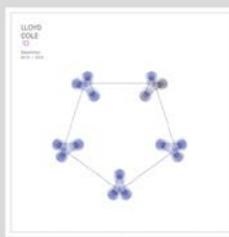
New Releases



ASS
(Jochen Arbeit, Günter Schickert, Schneider TM)



ESB ESB
(Lionel Laquerriere / Thomas Poli / Yann Tiersen)



Lloyd Cole
1D Electronics 2012–2014



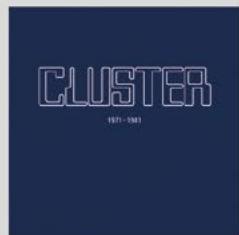
Peter Baumann
Machines Of Desire



Cluster
Echtzeit



Sôlyst
The Steam Age

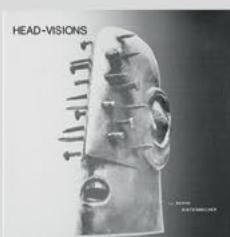


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New Reissues



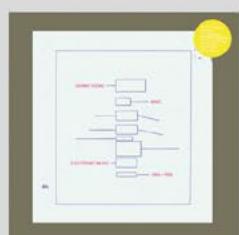
Baumann/Koek
Baumann/Koek



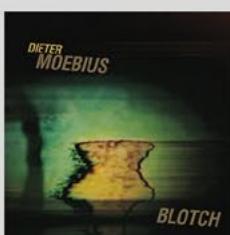
Bernd Kistenmacher
Head-Visions



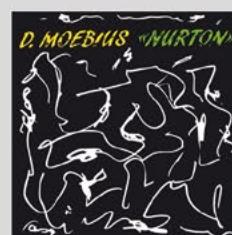
Bernd Kistenmacher
Wake Up In The Sun



Dennis Young
Wave (Electronic Music 1984–1988)



Dieter Moebius
Blotch



Dieter Moebius
Norton

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www.bureau-b.com



WANT

THE WORLD'S BEST WIRELESS SPEAKER?

FRENCH FIRM'S FEARSOME SONIC UPGRADE

If you thought French audio manufacturer Devialet had already nailed the high-end wireless speaker market with their gobsmacking Phantom and Silver Phantom speakers, prepare to dribble down your front at what they've done now.

The brand-new Gold Phantom is, like its siblings, a complete plug and play experience. Hook it up to whatever (via wi-fi, Bluetooth, etc) and you control it directly from your smartphone. So far, so good. What sets this little beauty apart is not only its good looks – yes, it is pink gold-plated and it has a pure titanium tweeter – but the sheer power.

Using a revolutionary patented process created by Devialet's own engineers, the sound these guys pump out is bigger and bolder than you could ever imagine. You can actually see the thing in action, with its two bass drivers banging away on either side like it's a living beast. And while the Silver Phantom fizzes with 3,000 watts of power and kicks out 105 dB (think motorbike), the Gold Phantom ups the ante somewhat with 4,500 watts, tipping the scales at 108 dB, which is the sort of noise you'd expect stood in a room with a live rock band.

If one of these isn't enough for you, you can sync up to 24, which would probably blow your wallet as well as your mind. The Gold Phantom will set you back a very tidy €2,590.

devialet.com





PLAY

WE ARE THE MODS**SWEDES OFFER AN AFFORDABLE MODULAR STARTER KIT**

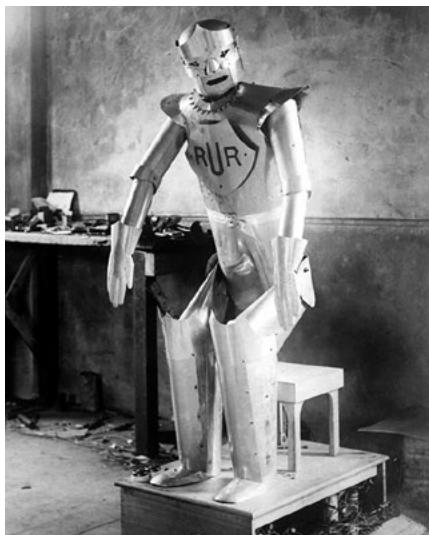
Face it, if you don't already have one, you probably want a modular set-up. However, there are two immediate problems for us modular know-nothings. First, how the hell do they work? And second, how much?!

Thankfully, Swedish software clever clogs Softube have come to our rescue. For a very reasonable €75, you can snag their Modular suite (containing six Doepfer modules: A-110-1 VCO, A-108 VCF, A-132-3 Dual VCA, A-140 ADSR, A-118 Noise/Random, A-147 VCLFO), which will give you "true dynamic circuit emulation – looks, functions and sounds like its hardware counterparts", plus a further 20 "utility" modules (the ones that don't make any noise; delays, clock dividers, sample and hold switches and the like). They work in your DAW and they will integrate with hardware Eurorack gear too. A word of warning, though. This may be a gateway drug. softube.com

WANT

**HANDHELD DELIGHT****TURN YOUR PHONE INTO GAME BOY**

Missing your beloved Game Boy in all its lovely 8-bit glory? Fret not, because what started as an April Fools' joke – a Game Boy smartphone emulator – is going to become a reality. Your phone (Android only, sorry iPhoners) slides into the Hyperkin Smartboy, which gives you that original tiny display on a modern high-res screen. A cartridge slot then takes old Game Boy and Game Boy Color cartridges, which you've obviously been hoarding for the last 20 years (like us). It uses the same D-pad and four-button set-up as the 1990s console and a development version could be knocking around in time for Christmas... or you could look on eBay for a bona fide white wonder. Just a thought. hyperkin.com



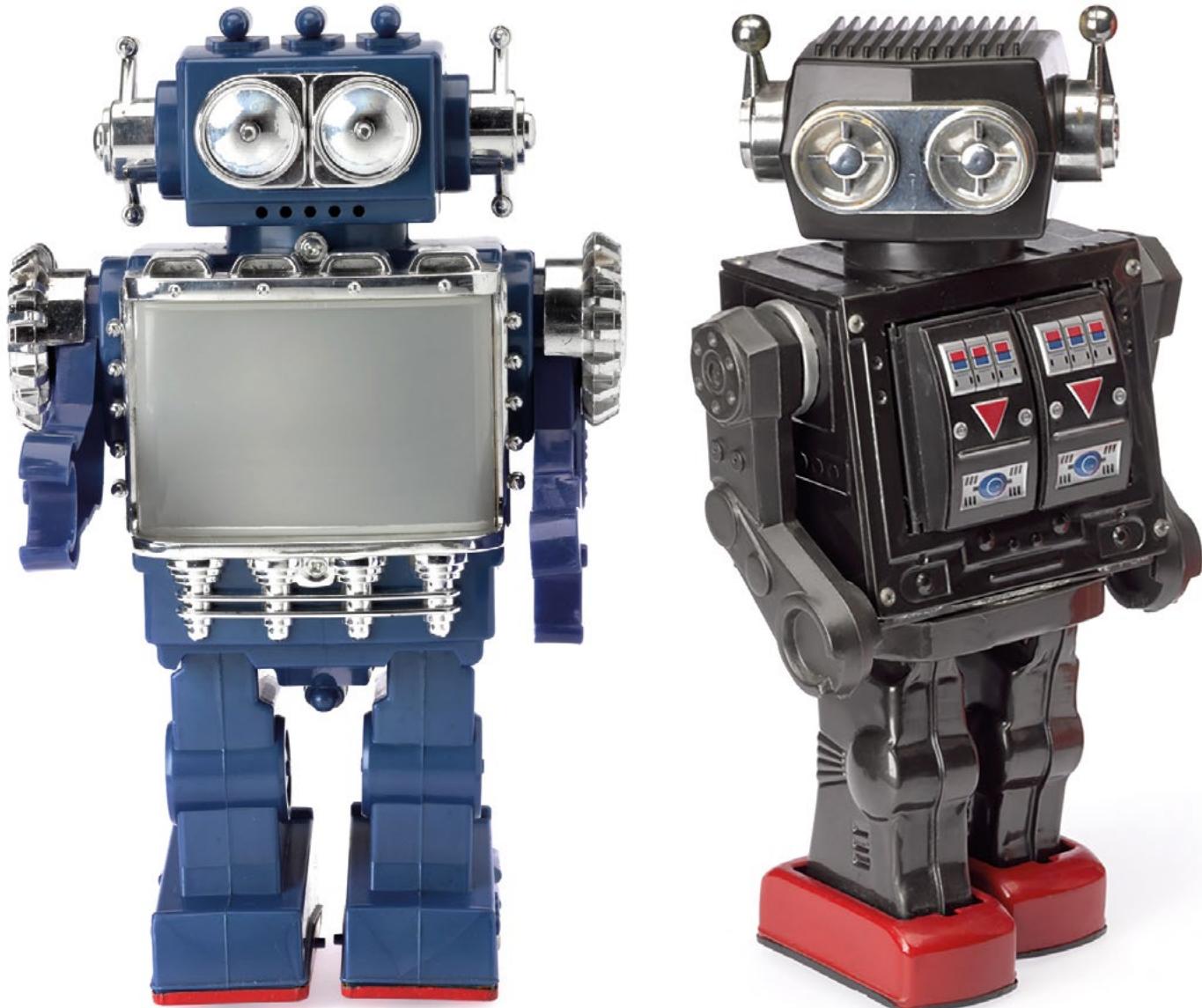
VISIT

SPANNER TIME

SCIENCE MUSEUM REBOOTS ERIC, THE UK'S FIRST ROBOT

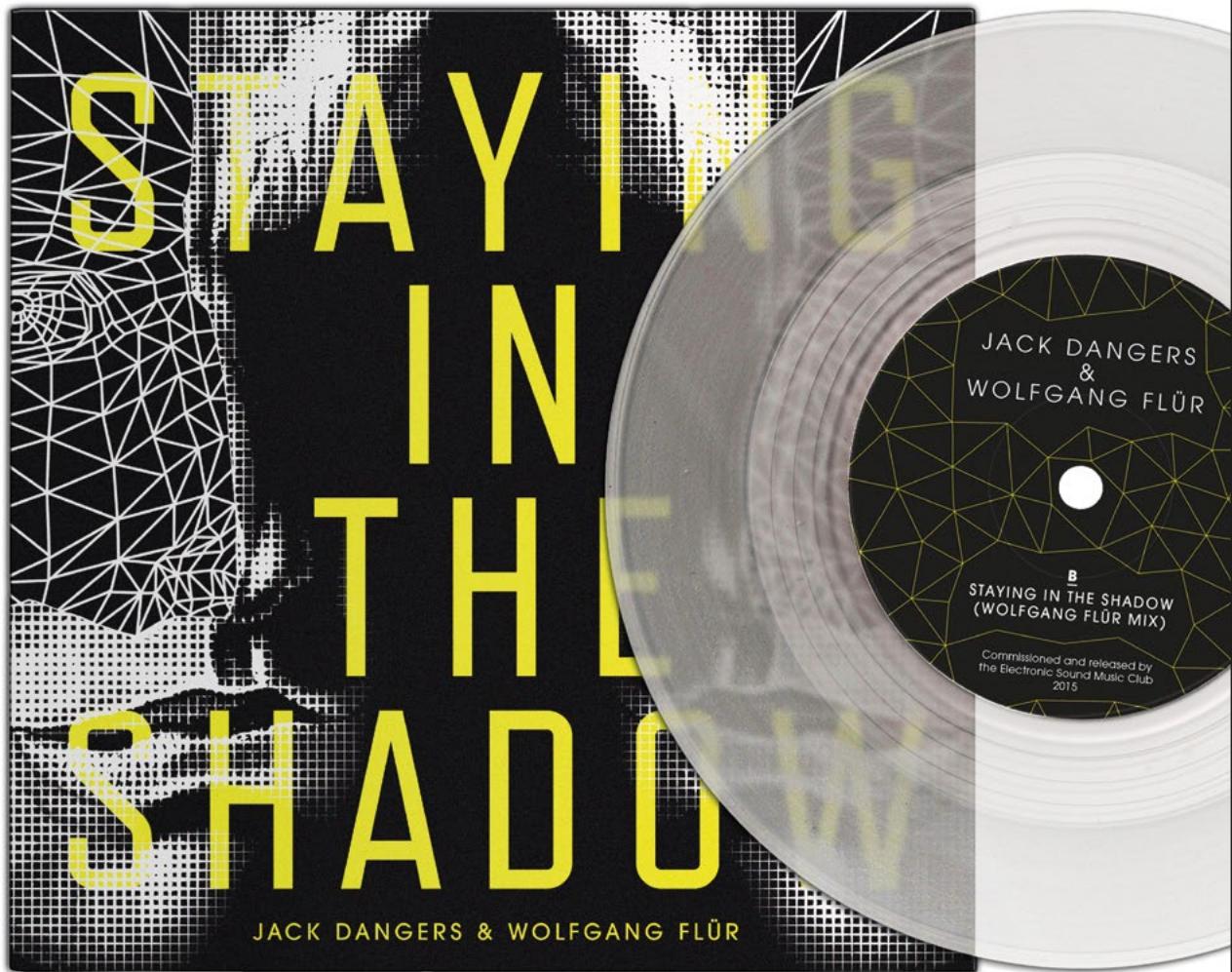
A talking and moving mechanical person, Eric was originally built in 1928 by Captain William Richards and Alan Reffell and was one of the world's first robots. Made of aluminium, he had light bulbs for eyes and used 35,000 volts of electricity to make blue sparks fly from his teeth. At his debut public appearance, opening The Society of Model Engineers' annual exhibition in London in September 1928, the press said he made "a really sparkling speech".

Eric travelled the globe with his makers before he vanished, seemingly forever. No one knows exactly what happened to him, but now London's Science Museum is embarking on a project to recreate him for an upcoming exhibition. Opening in February 2017, 'Robots' explores the long history of man machines and features a unique collection of over 100 robots, from a 16th century mechanical monk to 'bots from science fiction and research labs. The aim is that visitors will "discover the cultural, historical and technological context of humanoid robots", as well as being able to interact with 12 working examples. Form an orderly queue and we'll see you there. sciencemuseum.org.uk



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SYNTHESISER DAVE'S WORKSHOP

SYNTH NOT MAKING NOISES LIKE IT SHOULD? UNDER THE WEATHER ELECTRONICS BUZZING WHEN THEY SHOULD BE FIZZING? PRESSING BUTTONS AND NOTHING HAPPENING? **SYNTHESISER DAVE** IS THE NAME, RESIDENT FIXER OF ALL THINGS BROKEN IS THE GAME



IN FOR REPAIR: KORG POLYSIX

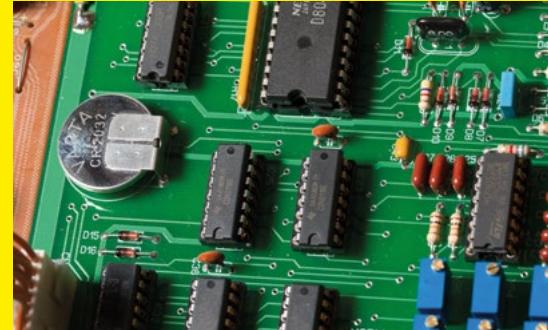
A SYNTH TO MAKE YOU GO 'OOH' (AND THEN VARIOUS TINKLY NOISES, FOR 'AMBIENT' IS ITS MIDDLE NAME)

Produced in 1981, to my mind the Korg Polysix is the last decent synth Korg produced in their early phase, the next proper good 'un being the M1, which launched phase two.

It's six-note polyphonic, one analogue oscillator per note, separate analogue envelope and filter per note, with a 32-patch memory, so what's not to like? Well, resetting that lot if someone's fiddled with the knobs inside, for starters. It can only be done with patience, an oscilloscope and an analyst on speed-dial. This particular machine had a big problem with the NiCad battery it used for patch back-up, which at the end of its useful life turned to jelly and rapidly ate the tracks off one of the circuit boards. Replacement boards are available though, so all was not lost.

Now that job has been done, this Polysix just needs a clean and a service. It does have the other three most common problems: slightly erratic arpeggiator speed, occasional keyboard re-triggering, and missing return springs on the pitchbend. The speed problem is caused by a grubby/worn pot. I could have probably cleaned it, but I had a really high quality replacement lying around, so a bit of an upgrade there. The issue with the keyboard is dirty contacts that needed some attention. The return springs usually fall off so quickly that a lot of people don't realise they're even meant to be there. A couple nicked out of a dead E-Mu Classic Keys fit perfectly.

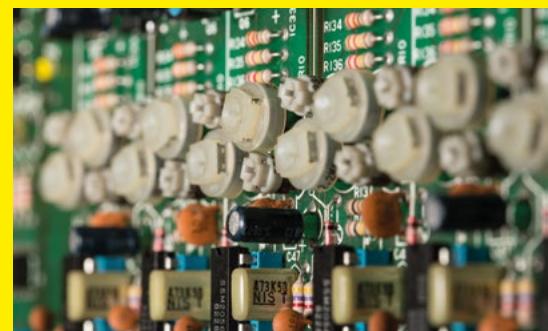
One last thing. If you slightly lower the output of the cassette interface and raise the input level by a similar amount, you can save your patch banks safely as .wav files on your computer. Result!



REPLACEMENT PROCESSOR BOARD. THE BEST ARE FROM OLDROWS.NET, WHO OFFER A GOOD SWAP-OUT DEAL IF YOU'RE NOT GOOD AT SOLDERING



JELLIIFIED BATTERY FALLOUT ON BACKPLATE. PROVING, MY DEAR WATSON, THAT IT WAS STORED ON ITS BACK AT THE TIME



DO NOT FIDDLE WITH...



WHAT A CLEAN SYNTH. NOT A COBWEB IN SIGHT. JUST THE WAY WE LIKE IT

SYNTHESISER DAVE'S WORKSHOP

When it comes to size, shape and colour, the capacitor is the most varied component there is. If there's a component you don't recognise in a circuit, it's probably a capacitor. The smallest examples these days are the size of a pinhead and the biggest one I've got is a 19cm cube (out of an industrial laser). So how does a capacitor work? Its job is to temporarily store electricity. The standard schoolbook explanation is to think of it as a water tank. You can pour stuff quickly into one end and let it out slower at the other. I prefer to think of it as a sort of battery. Neither is quite right, but either will do for now (there's a lot of that in electronics – despite all the stuff we do with it, we still don't know which way electricity flows, or if it does at all).



SYNTHESISER MEMORIES

THE EDP WASP



SPARES & REPAIRS

EVER WONDERED WHAT ALL THE BITS AND BOBS IN A SYNTH DO? THIS ISSUE, DAVE IS TALKING **CAPACITORS**



Capacitors come in two basic flavours, electrolytic and all the rest. Electrolytics have to be used the right way round, the others don't. What are they used for? Well, in the space available here, it's probably best summed up as "everything". What they can't do is handle too much voltage. Some of them explode in a fairly spectacular way if you do this, bringing a whole new meaning to the phrase "popping a cap".

The Wasp was the first synth I owned all to myself and I loved it SO much. It even came with a Freak Brothers-style comic to tell you how to use it. And only £199!

OK, the cases were stupidly fragile and the funny touch-keyboard tended to wear out, but there were so many cool mods that could be done by anyone who knew not to hold the soldering iron at the hot end. There was a 10-turn pot on the LFO speed control; individual glide speed for each oscillator; the switch on the filter that most people just labelled "plain weird"; and the amazing "Tri-state interface" sockets. No one knew how they worked, but there were loads of circuits in the electronics magazines

that would plug in and make it do odd things. The Wasp was battery operated too, and I used to take mine everywhere. A bunch of us used to have regular weekly Wasp sessions on the top of Primrose Hill in London.

I really wish someone would reissue this. Not some updated, all-singing and all-dancing version, but just as it was, even the little oval speaker, which was rubbish (but in a good way). Sadly, they fetch absolutely crazy money these days. Even the good ones rarely work properly and a lot of the spare parts can only come from donor Wasps. Mine got squashed in a house move in 1983 and I'm still grieving.



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TIME MACHINE

BACK WHEN THINGS WEREN'T HOW THEY ARE NOW

WE'RE SETTING THE DIALS ALL THE WAY BACK TO 1927, TO THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL IN LONDON, WHERE A PACKED AUDIENCE GATHERED ON A CHILLY WINTER'S EVENING TO WITNESS RUSSIAN SCIENTIST LÉON THEREMIN USING HIS REMARKABLE BLACK BOX TO CREATE "MUSIC FROM THE ETHER"

Londoners passing the Royal Albert Hall on the evening of 12 December 1927 might have shivered to the sound of eerie electronic groans and bleats coming from the venue. Inside, a few thousand early tech-heads and forward-thinking music fans had packed the auditorium to capacity. Each had paid up to five shillings and nine pence to see the feted Russian scientist Léon Theremin performing with his unique musical instrument. Theremin and his extraordinary black box had already thrilled concert goers in Paris and Berlin with renditions of works by Schubert, Saint-Saëns and Rubinstein. Now it was London's turn to experience what was dubbed "Music from the Ether".

The audience was confronted with what appeared to be little more than a plain valve wireless set, from which sprouted a vertical rod and metal loop. Soon to be named after its inventor, for many years the theremin was the only instrument that could be played without actually touching it. A circuit of oscillators, vacuum tubes and coils inside the theremin creates electromagnetic fields in the air between the antennae and these can be controlled by natural body capacitance. By gently vibrating your hands close to the antennae as if fingering an invisible fretboard, with a lot of skill and some patience, you can produce music.

The instrument was developed by Léon Theremin in 1920, while he was experimenting with radio apparatus to measure the dielectric constant of gases. Theremin, a sort of Russian renaissance man, was also intrigued by the possibilities of early television and the overlap of science and creativity, a space where sound and colour could be combined with geometric shapes, gestures, dance movements and the senses of touch and smell. He was a true multimedia visionary and his work soon came to the attention of the Soviet authorities. In 1922, he toured Russia to showcase his black box with the personal blessing of none other than Vladimir Lenin.

Two days before the celebrated Royal Albert Hall appearance, Theremin gave a private demonstration to a few critics and personalities in an upstairs suite at The Savoy in London. The dark-haired, handsome Russian appeared to the gathering more like a "diffident film star" than a scientist or a serious musician. In the front row, a fascinated George Bernard Shaw stared intently and, according to one journalist, "gripped the handle of his umbrella". Elsewhere in the room, the novelist Arnold Bennett was described as sitting rigid and surprised. For the larger audience at the Albert Hall, Theremin experimented with echo and used pitch to alter the colour

of electric light. Those present were amazed, having said to have witnessed the future, or at least a new form of entertainment they could barely comprehend.

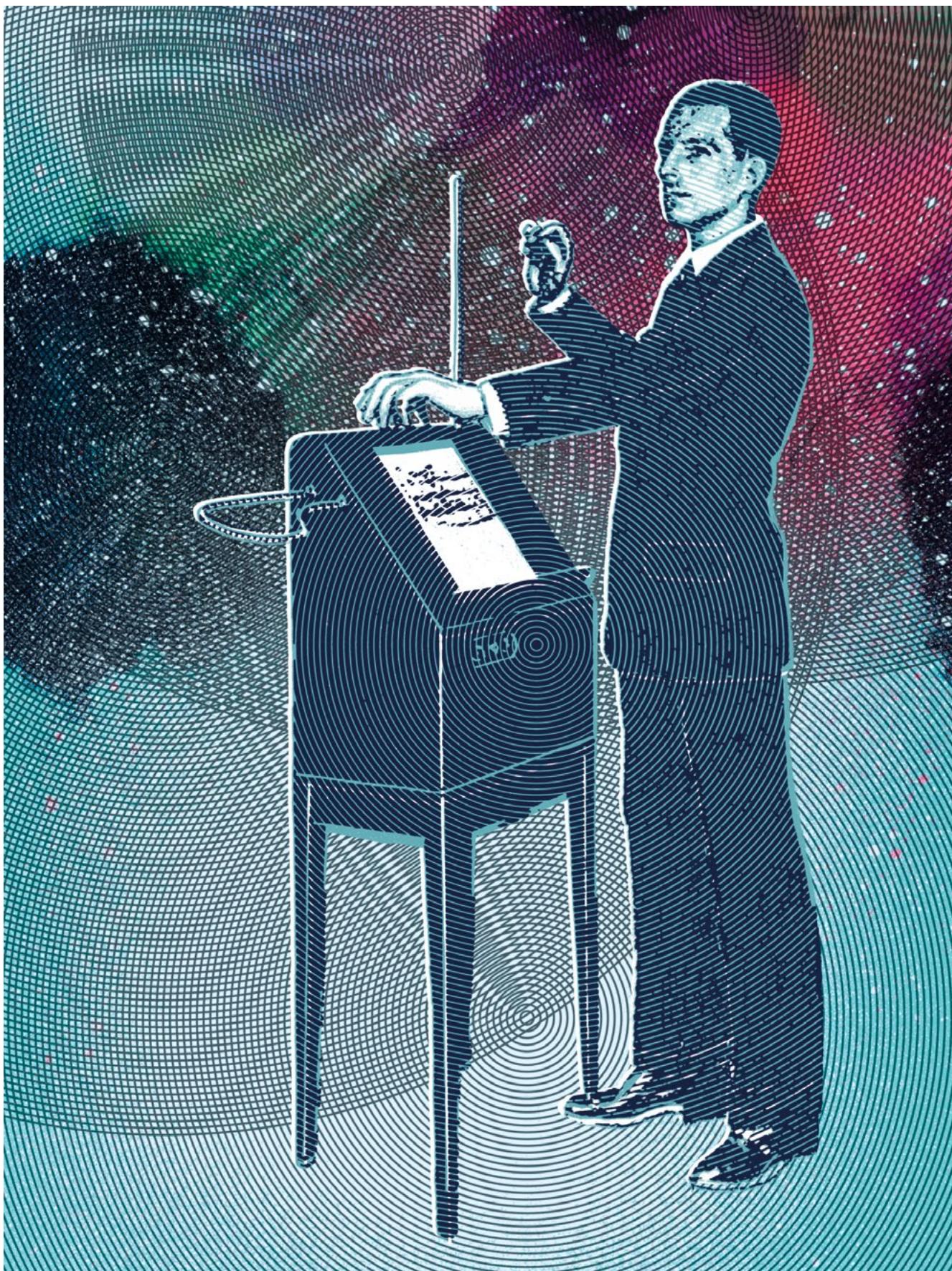
The day after wowing London, Léon Theremin boarded an ocean liner for New York. Despite an enduring loyalty to the Soviet Union, he spent the next decade in America, where the theremin was declared to be a magical device that heralded a new era in electronic music. In the post-war years, it was widely marketed as a novelty instrument, but many purchasers failed to tame its anarchic howl, eliciting sounds no more musical than a knife scraping a dinner plate. Most models were left to gather dust in the garage.

"One day, a man will come who can play much greater music than I can," Theremin announced at the Albert Hall performance. In fact, it would be a woman, the virtuoso thereminist Clara Rockmore, who worked closely with him to popularise the instrument in America. Thereafter, in the 1950s, Bernard Herrmann took it to the cinema and its ethereal squeal was perfect for movie soundtracks such as Alfred Hitchcock's 'Spellbound'. It was even used as a quirky addition to lounge orchestras. Eventually, everyone from Brian Wilson to Captain Beefheart to Kraftwerk warmed to the theremin's good vibrations. Jimmy Page has long had a special fondness for it, putting it to good effect on Led Zeppelin's 'Whole Lotta Love'.

As for Léon Theremin himself, he returned to the Soviet Union in 1938, after 11 years on American soil. According to his biographer Albert Glinsky, there were several reasons. "Walter Rosen, Theremin's American patron, advised him to return to Russia to protect himself," Glinsky says. "He was being tracked by the FBI. His company, Teletouch, was failing financially, and it was a front for Soviet operations in any case." Theremin landed in Moscow a free man, but his extended time abroad had raised suspicions with Stalin's government. After six months back home, Theremin was arrested and spent the next 10 years in a labour camp, where he worked on surveillance technology.

When he was finally freed, he continued to develop a number of inventions and by the 1970s he was Professor of Physics at Moscow State University. In 1989, thanks mainly to the new Soviet spirit of *perestroika*, Theremin was able to travel to France for the International Festival of Experimental Music. It was the first time he'd been out of Russia since his repatriation half a century earlier. In 1991, now widely hailed as a significant figurehead of early electronic music, Theremin returned to America for a visit arranged with the help of documentary filmmaker Steven M Martin. The highlight of the trip, which took place two years before his death in 1993 at the age of 97, was being reunited with his old friend Clara Rockmore in New York.

Words: ROBERT WEBB
Illustration: NICK TAYLOR



UNDER THE INFLUENCE

FROM WELLINGTON TO MELBOURNE TO SYDNEY TO LONDON TO LOS ANGELES. PIP BROWN, AKA **LADYHAWKE**, SETTLES DOWN FOR JUST ABOUT LONG ENOUGH TO TALK THROUGH SOME OF THE THINGS THAT HAVE SHAPED HER ALONG THE WAY

Interview: SOPHIE LITTLE



COLOURS

"I've always connected colours with music, it's always been a big thing for me. I feel like colours are a driving force in my life. I have this really vivid memory, I would say I was about three or four years old, and I remember we had this basket that I kept my toys in. It was one of the woven ones and it must have been quite small because I was hiding under it, looking at the light coming through the holes.

I remember seeing all these oranges and yellows, and that's one of my earliest memories of colour affecting me.

"My family used to have a little brown radio and I would often sit on our kitchen table with my ear up to it, listening to music. On this occasion, I think the radio was playing Billy Joel – I can't remember what the song was – and I was hearing that song and seeing all the oranges and yellows, and I was thinking, 'Wow, this is so cool'.

"I still see colours when I listen to music and when I make music. I never really thought that was a thing, but looking back on my life I realise that I associate colours with time as well. So when I think about the days of the week, I think of colours, and it's usually oranges or burnt oranges, reds and yellows. Whenever I think about my second album, I see greens and dark blues and black, which isn't really a good thing. For my new record, I knew I had to stop if I started seeing those colours."

FILMS AND VIDEO GAMES

"I've been into movies as far back as I can recall. I used to tape movies off the TV and I'd write my own labels for them and put them in a box I'd made. I had a massive video collection because I used to tape everything. I was obsessed. I'd even edit out all the commercials. I'm still influenced more by watching movies than I am by listening to music. I get so inspired by watching a movie and I'm pretty good at immersing myself into fake worlds. I think that's why video gaming suits me so well.

"When I was young, you were either a Sega kid or a Nintendo kid. I was a Sega kid and I rented a Sega Master System from the video store because we couldn't afford to buy one. Games have stories now, but those early games were really all about light and colours and sound. I was physically controlling what happened to the character and I loved all of it. It was great to feel like you were part of an adventure.

"I still play video games to a sickening degree. I used to take lots of games on tour with me. In 2012, when I was touring my 'Anxiety' album, I took a PlayStation 3 with me. It fucking weighed a ton. It was so heavy. I carried it in its own suitcase and I had a monitor for it as well, because you can't access the right panel on the TV in a lot of hotel rooms, you can't unplug anything, so I needed my own monitor. So nerdy. I didn't bring it on my latest tour, though. That's probably a good thing."

A CHANCE ENCOUNTER

"My first memory of being obsessively driven to make music was when I was 11. I was in school and my teacher said, 'We have a special guest coming to class today and he's going to show you the drums'. This man walked into the room and I can't even describe it. It's like I knew him or something. He sat down at the drums, played for a while, and then he said, 'Does anyone want to come up and have a go?'.

"All the kids raised their hands and I slowly raised mine. My hand was shaking. I was a complete wallflower at school, no one ever spoke to me and I was ridiculously shy, I had very few friends, but I was one he picked. After the class, I said to the man, 'Thank you so much, I think that's the most fun I've ever had in my life!'.

"A local church used to let this guy use their back room for drum lessons and I begged my mum to take me. My mum used to get all the lead roles in the town musicals and it turned out that the drummer played in the band. A little while later, he came to our house on the weekend with a bunch of flowers. He'd heard that my dad had moved on and my mum was single. That was the start of a little chain reaction. My mum and him have been together ever since. So that was my earliest memory of feeling ridiculously obsessed with doing music and it was quite a pivotal moment for me."

MELBOURNE

"Moving to Melbourne changed my life. I was in a band in Wellington and we started doing really well, we signed a publishing deal and were offered a record deal in America. So we ended up going out to America and doing showcases, and then we came back to New Zealand and got offered a spot at South By Southwest and a support slot doing a big tour. But right before we were supposed to get on the plane, my singer left the band, and then the rest of the band were like, 'Fuck this'. So my best friend and I hopped on the plane anyway. The first stop was Melbourne. I got off the plane and never looked back.

"Within a month of me moving to Melbourne, I got a phone call from Nick Littlemore from Empire Of The Sun. He had heard I'd moved over and he wanted to start a band with me. So we started a band called Teenager and that was the first step to me becoming Ladyhawke. If that sequence of events hadn't happened, I don't think I would be Ladyhawke. I really don't think I would. I think it took for my band to break up, for me to move to Melbourne, for Nick to get in touch, and then for my confidence to build up working with him. Nick always pushed me to a microphone. Before that, I never sung. Not ever. Nick just sort of pushed me to do it."

Ladyhawke's 'Wild Things' is out now on Polyvinyl

THE SCHOOL OF ELECTRONIC MUSIC

Words: JACK DANGERS

OUR RESIDENT ARCHIVIST REMEMBERS
JAPANESE MAESTRO **TOMITA**, WHO RECENTLY
DIED AT THE AGE OF 84, AND CELEBRATES THE
ENDURING MAGIC OF HIS 'SNOWFLAKES ARE
DANCING' ALBUM

When Isao Tomita died earlier this year, I dug out his 'Snowflakes Are Dancing' album. It was a really important record for me. I first heard it because my older brother had it. I remember him listening to this and 'Tubular Bells' and 'War Of The Worlds'. I was only about 10 when it was released in 1974, so I didn't become aware of it until a few years later. It opened up my ears to electronic music and I remember my brother having to explain to me what a synth was.

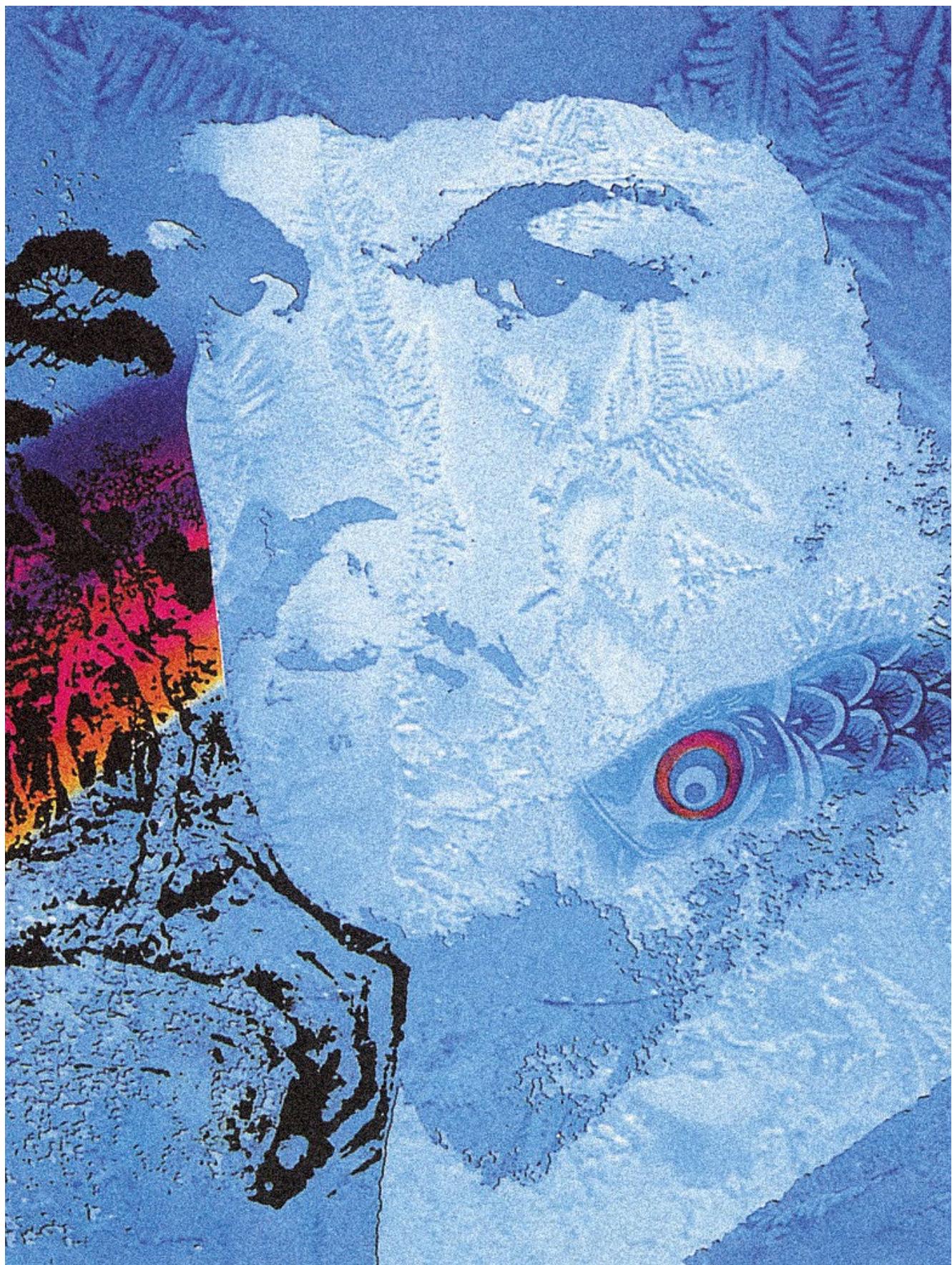
'Snowflakes Are Dancing' is the best sounding Moog classical record ever made. If you listen to the Wendy Carlos material, I don't think it sounds as good, and a lot of that is down to the fact that the album is a reworking of pieces by Claude Debussy. As far as I'm concerned, Debussy was the start of modern music. Impressionism in music began with him. His music always sounded ahead of its time. So if you're going to do a classical rendition using modern equipment, Tomita definitely chose the right person in Debussy.

Tomita is also intriguing because of the way he synthesised everything. And he did it very well. He was in his 40s when he made this record. He'd had his Moog modular system for a couple of years or so and it was the first one in Japan. He was a master of programming and he took great care in layering the instruments and in his choice of sounds. I think 'Snowflakes Are Dancing' influenced Tangerine Dream when they made 'Rubycon', which was their darkest record, and also their best in my opinion.

The actual equipment Tomita used was really interesting as well. He had a Moog modular, Mellotrons, and other classic synths. He had a Bode Frequency Shifter, which he uses a lot on this record. It's sort of a glorified ring modulator on steroids. It was designed by Harald Bode, who had been at the forefront of synthesiser technology since the 1930s and was involved in designing one of the very earliest polyphonic synthesisers, the Warbo Formant Organ. He joined Moog in the 1970s and designed the Moog vocoder, but he made the Bode Frequency Shifter in 1964. If you send a signal through it and mess with the frequency dial, it pitches it down and up at the same time. A good example of this is the end of 'Snowflakes Are Dancing'. I sampled that on my '99%' album in 1990.

Tomita's influence was central to electronic music in Japan, in the same way that the Cologne studio was key to the development of the genre in Germany and the RTF studio in Paris, where Jean Michel Jarre learned his trade, played a similar role in France. Incidentally, Tomita's assistant in the early 1970s was Hideki Matsutake. Matsutake went on to work with Yellow Magic Orchestra and record his own material as Logic System. He's the chair of the Japan Synthesiser Programmers Association now.

I was really sad when I heard that Tomita had died. He took electronic music beyond the small group of people who were interested in it in the early days and introduced it to millions of more casual listeners.

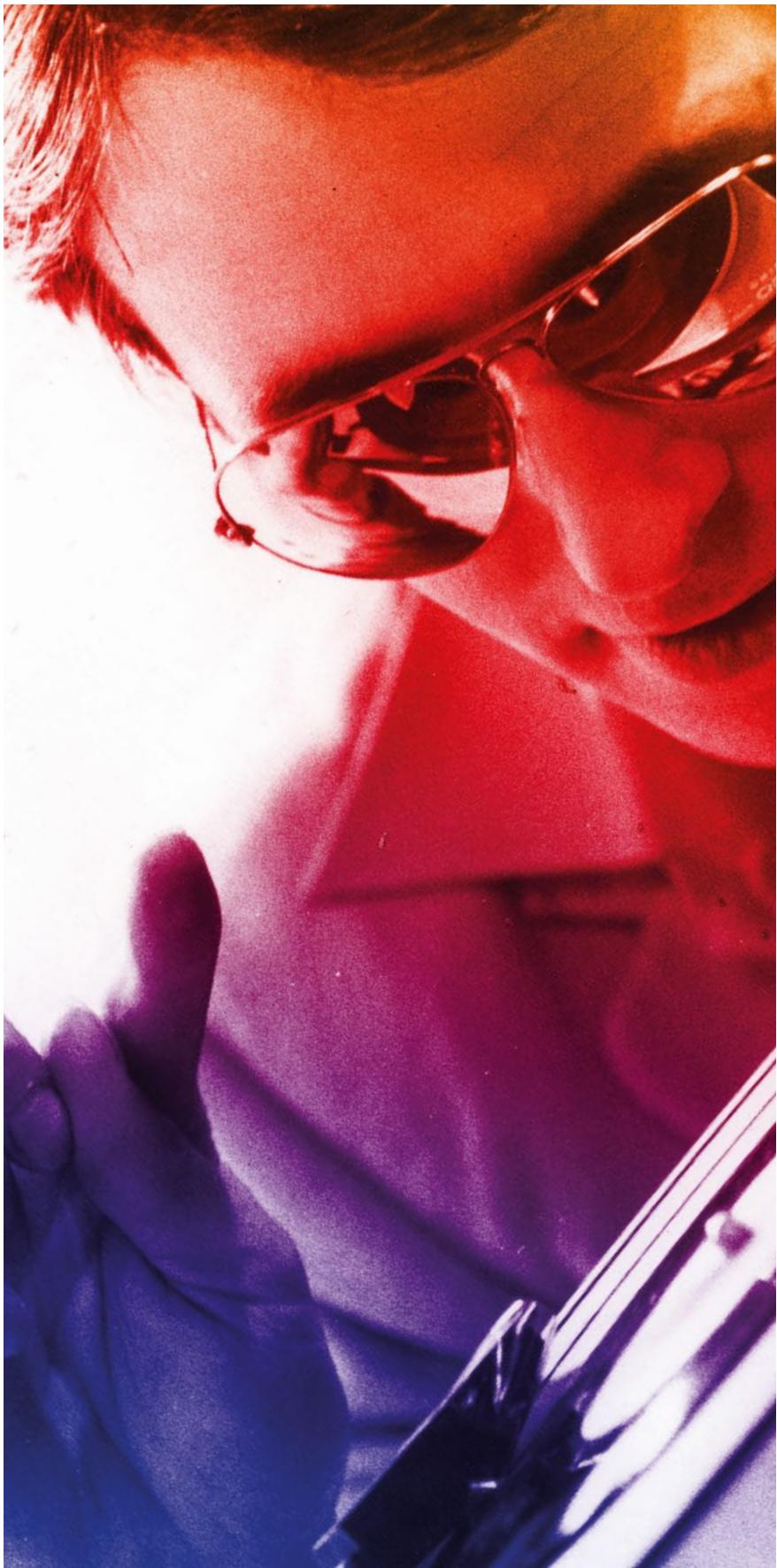


LANDMARKS

THE INSIDE
STORY OF AN
ELECTRONIC
CLASSIC

ROBIN SCOTT REMEMBERS THE
GENESIS OF 'POP MUZIK', HIS HUGE
WORLDWIDE HIT AS M IN 1979.
NEW YORK, LONDON, PARIS,
MUNICH, EVERYBODY TALK ABOUT...

Interview: MARK ROLAND



M

POP MUZIK
MCA Records, 1979

"In the late 1970s, I was running an independent label, Do It Records, and managing a band called Roogalator. We'd some interest from a major but the potential deal fell through so I was thinking, 'OK, if it's not working out with the majors, let's set up an independent', although the first release wasn't exactly connected with that. The second was something of my own, 'Moderne Man', which was recorded in a studio that belonged to Deep Purple and was an attempt to bring together the post-punk thing with Giorgio Moroder.

'Moderne Man' got quite a lot of exposure and support, particularly with Capital Radio, and there was a glimmer of hope that it might go mainstream, but it didn't. It opened the door, though. I was writing and getting together material on the fly and things started falling into place – kind of out of necessity. I'd had the idea for 'Pop Muzik' for a while, then I had the opportunity for some downtime in a studio in Paris.

The first version of 'Pop Muzik' was pretty much like a rhythm 'n' blues piece. It was easy to lay it down, but it didn't work. So I came up with the idea of making it a bit more dance oriented and did a James Brown inspired funk version, but it still had this pastiche feel about it and I didn't feel that was right. So I had to rethink again, for a third time. A guy called John Lewis came to mind, a Canadian guy who was a classical composer and very gifted. I'd worked with him during my early musical development and I knew he was running a small studio in Covent Garden. He was doing ads, Pete Townshend was funding equipment for him, and he was on the cutting edge of synthesis, he was somebody that could possibly bring something special to the song.

So I went to him with this idea, a very simple three-chord trick. John really took to it and immediately came up with the fundamental component, the sequenced part, and then he introduced contrapuntal elements that were typical of someone who had some academic expertise. I ended up with an eight-track, which was the sequential aspect of the arrangement, and I knew that was the breakthrough. It suddenly sounded like it could go somewhere. So then I had to take an eight-track over to Paris, find a studio that had an eight track and a 24-track and transfer it all over, and then continue from there. And the process was ongoing dependant on downtime at the studio. The engineer was getting a bit sick of me as I'd already done two versions and he said, 'We've got a smaller studio, you can go and work there', so that's where I took the 24-track.

I played guitar and I brought in a sax player and a drummer to play fills. It was really a workshop scenario. There wasn't a live performance of a band as such, it was playing along to sequences. Then through Barclay Records, I found a session player called Wally Badarou, who later went on to work with Grace Jones, Robert Palmer, Level 42 and Sly & Robbie. He gave it the funk element and the colour. He overdubbed synth brass and did a magnificent job. The other thing was the female backing vocals. I was always fascinated with the close harmonies of female groups like The Andrews Sisters and Brigit, my girlfriend at that time, was a singer. She wasn't performing a lot but I knew she had a voice, so I gave her the parts and she did all the backing vocals.

The song was a seminal moment for me personally and it struck a chord universally. I was just like any other punter, I'd soaked up a lot of music, and somehow I became tuned to the possibilities of the moment, but it wasn't so contrived as I think some people might have thought. At my fingertips, I had the expertise and knowledge and the technology that was about to unfold and take hold of the whole of the music industry in the 1980s. It really was a defining moment.

And then I was approached to do a music video, one of the first. The company who did 'Bohemian Rhapsody' asked my record company if they had any artists who wanted to do a video and I said I'd be up for it. There was no way the BBC were going to take outside productions for 'Top Of The Pops', but fortunately Kenny Everett stepped in and played it on his TV show. That was the spark that it needed. I didn't have a performing band and it was a difficult track to reproduce live, but it got exposure via radio and because the video could travel very easily. It went like wildfire, all round Europe and across the other side of the planet.

I don't really know how many copies it has sold to be honest, but I got a lot of gold discs. They're all packed away in boxes. It was a very interesting moment. Pretty hectic, pretty stressful and not a great experience going out there in those days, miming as you did on 'Top Of The Pops'. I found that very frustrating. You become a victim of your own making.

These days, I don't really feel like it's mine. It's out there in the public domain and I'm not as connected to it as you might think. I'm not especially possessive about it. I mean, I've taken care about the value of the copyright over the years and it's served me very well, but there have been so many interesting things that have happened with that song, in terms of where it took me and the people who have covered it. It's been very interesting to watch. It's flattering that it appears to mean so much to so many people and that it's still part of our culture."

BANGING ON

WE'RE A LITTLE BIT WORRIED ABOUT
FAT ROLAND, OUR RESIDENT COLUMNIST.
THIS MONTH, DESPITE PROMISING HE
WOULDN'T KEEP TAKING THE TABLETS,
HE'S TALKING ABOUT HIS BRIAN ENO HOT
PANTS AGAIN

The cheesy chips I just wolfed down are the blandest thing I've ever tasted. I'd have been better off licking a cardboard cut-out of Michael Bublé. They're sitting at the top of my stomach like a wet armchair. A carbohydrate paperweight.

Cheesy chips never used to be this lumpen. Maybe my taste buds have finally died. Or maybe this is a sign of the times. Everything's congealing into a pallid paste. We're so damp from a constant drizzle of terrible news and trolls and Trump, we dry ourselves with comfort blankets: Saturday night television, Facebook memes, songs by Pharrell Williams.

No-one is immune to this. History's littered with bands that went from awesome to yawnsome: U2, REM, the Manics, my Uncle Tony's hardcore rave skiffle troupe. Moby was once a hot little political potato, yet he became commercial mash when he licensed his songs to every advertising agency everywhere. Mega DJ Calvin Harris started out sharper than the needles that dropped on his records, but even he's in a feedback loop of soundalike singles. Dubstep used to sound like music rising from forest graves, a glorious and wild energy, but now it's Jive Bunny-ed itself with CDs of popular hits set to dubstep beats. Yeesh, I just shuddered.

Take washing machines. When I want to wash my Fat Roland bloomers, I stick them in the basket with my One Direction onesie and my Brian Eno hot pants, then I shove the whole lot into my washing machine. Simple. On the front of the machine is a dial. There are endless symbols on the dial, some of which I presume are messages from the Egyptian Illuminati. Which symbol is the setting I choose? Four. Always the one that says "four".

I don't know what it does, but four is the only number my old brain can cope with. The younger Fat Roland would have pressed so many symbols, he'd have unlocked a room in 'The Crystal Maze'. The younger Fats would have rewired the washing machine into the noisiest homemade Moog in the world. But no. Four. The dullest number.

As I write this, my brain's full of 'Downton Abbey' and caravan holidays and Brxit and stuff and other stuff and more other stuff. See, even my imagination has lost interest in this column. There was a time when this page was good, but now it's just clumps of dreary words. Even that sentence is comprised of single syllable words. Words. Words. Four. Stuff. Things. Words. Words. Chips. Cheese. Things. Words. Words. Words.

Words: **FAT ROLAND**
Illustration: **SEAN COEN**



MUSIC
WILL NEVER
BE THE SAME,
BECAUSE
THEY GAVE US
THE
SYNTHESISER

BOB MOOG
ALAN R PEARLMAN
DON BUCHLA
ADRIAN WAGNER
PETER ZINOVIEFF
KEN FREEMAN
HARRY CHAMBERLIN
LES BRADLEY



MEMORY MOOG

WE ALL KNOW HIM AS **ROBERT MOOG**, THE GODFATHER OF THE SYNTHESISER, A MAN WHOSE ROLE IN THE HISTORY OF ELECTRONIC SOUND CANNOT BE OVERSTATED. BUT TO **MICHELLE MOOG-KOUSSA**, HE WAS PLAIN OLD DAD, WHO HELPED HER WITH HER PIANO LESSONS, CHOPPED WOOD FOR THE FIRE, AND LIKED GARDENING AND CANOEING AND STAR GAZING. AHEAD OF A NEW DOCUMENTARY ABOUT BOB MOOG THAT MICHELLE IS PUTTING TOGETHER FOR RELEASE NEXT YEAR, WE GET A FASCINATING AND HIGHLY PERSONAL INSIGHT INTO THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF A LEGEND

Thanks for talking to us, Michelle. Everyone knows Bob Moog as the inventor of the synthesiser, but what is your earliest memory of your father?

"The earliest memory I have of my father was from a family camping trip when I was three years old. We went canoeing – all six of us in one canoe – and my father carried the canoe on his head to the lake. I don't remember how far that was, but I remember being very taken by his sense of responsibility to the family, his willingness to carry the heavy load, so to speak."

When you think about your dad, are there any particular memories that stand out for you?

"When I was about five years old, I took piano lessons. I wasn't doing very well and I could tell that my parents weren't impressed. At the dinner table one night, I professed that I wanted quit. Quitting wasn't really part of our family culture, so I must have felt quite defeated. The next day, my father sat down with me and asked me to play for him. I obliged him and bumbled through a song. He then took the sheet music away, replaced it with much larger notes that he had drawn, and asked me to play again. I got through the song with ease. I remember him calling out to my mother and saying, 'I figured it out, she can't see the notes'. Soon after that, I was diagnosed with a significant vision problem.

"This reflection encapsulates my father to me. Where most people might be quite reactive in this situation and make a dismissive assumption about talent, intelligence or commitment, my father cared enough to approach the problem with a sense of curiosity and with a goal designed to help improve the situation. I suppose this is partially due to his training as a scientist and an engineer. As a child, his ability to think very deliberately and outside the box, which ultimately leads to a thirst for discovery, was a powerful lesson for me.

"Another very fond memory came from many years later. When I was 14, I took a physical science class in high school. We were learning about the physics of pulleys and I needed some help understanding the concepts. So I went out to Dad's workshop, which at that time was located right across the driveway, and asked for his help. Normally, he was very focused on his work and didn't take kindly to being interrupted, but he hopped up from his bench and constructed a simple pulley system to show me how it worked. We were both on our knees, peering up at his creation as he manipulated it and carefully explained its functions. He was so present, so absorbed in the connection between us. He was insatiably curious and extremely knowledgeable, which made him a great teacher."

There were four children in the Moog household, three girls and a boy. Can you describe life chez Moog as you were growing up?

"Our family life was somewhat typical for those days. Mom devoted herself to the care of the family full time. Dad worked a lot and travelled a fair amount, but we always saw him at mealtimes. My mother was an amazing cook, so meals together were a time for enjoyment and bonding. My older sisters, Laura and Renee, are seven and five years older than me, and I am two years older than my brother Matthew. My big sisters helped take care of Matthew and me when we were younger.

"If there's one thread that I would identify in our upbringing, it was self-sufficiency. We were taught to be responsible for ourselves at a young age. We all learned to do our own laundry by the time we were six or seven and we all learned to cook starting at the age of seven. I can remember turning seven and Dad teaching me how to cook eggs. It was quite the rite of passage. As we got older, all of us were expected to cook and bake to help alleviate some of that responsibility from my mother.

"Gardening was also a big part of the family culture. When I was 10, we moved to North Carolina, where my parents had a large vegetable garden. The three younger kids used to help maintain the garden throughout the summer, sometimes working 30 to 40 hours a week."

The house in North Carolina was unique. Can you tell us about it and how it came about?

"This was 1978, just after Dad had left Moog Music in Buffalo, New York state. His patience for corporate life had expired. Seven years prior to that, he had been almost bankrupt and had sold his original company, RA Moog Co, to a venture capitalist. He never had much in common with the guy who took over ownership of the company, which was renamed Moog Music and moved from the bucolic Trumansburg to the more industrial Buffalo.

"It was from this perspective that he and my mother decided to get as far away from corporate life as possible, seeking out the natural beauty of Asheville, North Carolina, as a place to live with more balance and integrity. They purchased 89 acres of unspoiled mountainous land at the end of a dead-end road about 20 miles outside of Asheville. There they built a 15-sided round home. The shell was constructed in the summer of 1978, while our family lived in a 100-year-old log cabin a few hundred yards away from the property.

"My parents took a year and a half to finish the house. They did it themselves, with the help of three skilled carpenters. Mom and Dad did all the tiling, Dad did all the plumbing and the wiring of the house, and we laid all the floors as a family. The house was heated only with wood, which Dad usually chopped himself. The water was provided by two mountain springs and there was a root cellar, where my mother would can the vegetables from the garden. The house also had a large wrap-around deck, where we spent a lot of time as a family. It was very isolated, but very beautiful."

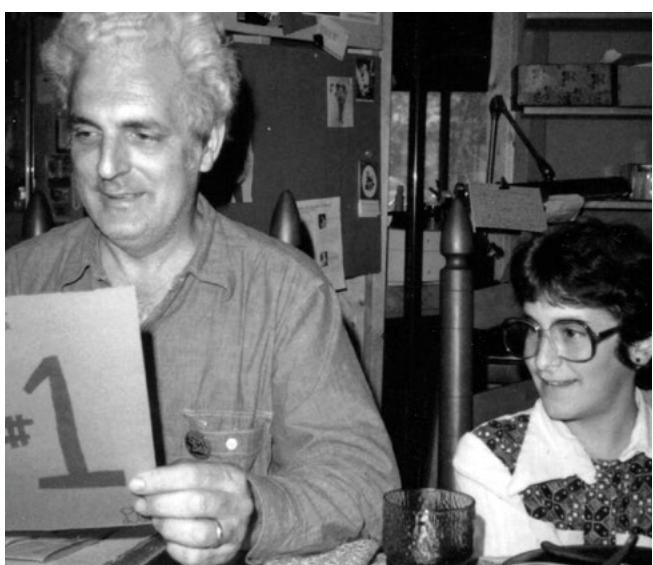
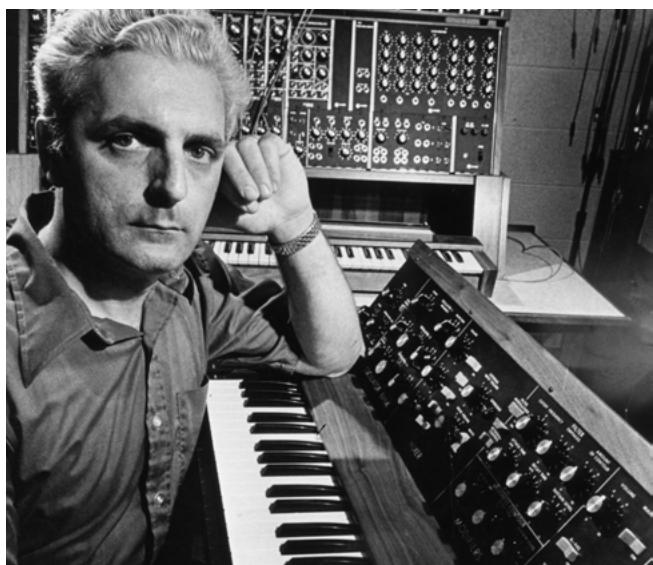
Bob Moog lost the right to use his name when he left Moog Music. That must have been a bitter moment, but then getting it back many years later must have been a sweet victory. Can you describe your father's feelings about each of those events?

"That wasn't the first major loss that he endured. The first came when he sold RA Moog Co and the name was changed to the less personal Moog Music. My father was eventually removed from the synthesiser design team and relegated to designing foot pedals for Maestro and amps for Gibson. As he so succinctly put it, 'They didn't know how to use my talents any more'. So the inability to use his own name for his own purposes wasn't entirely new to him.

"I was only 10 years old when he lost the use of his name, so I didn't really know what had happened. What I did know was that my parents were very happy to be leaving Buffalo and the toxic corporate culture at Moog Music, and that any concessions my father made were balanced by the freedom he gained to separate himself from corporate life and pursue projects that were creative and innovative.

"As an adult, I can remember the legal struggle Dad went through to get his name back and the significant financial toll that it took. By the time he finally got the name back, he was almost broke once again. He seemed happy to have the name back, but exhausted by the process of doing so."





As an entrepreneur inventor, your dad wasn't alone in facing financial difficulties – Peter Zinovieff and EMS in London, for example. Do you remember that impacting life at home?

"There were times of financial struggle throughout Dad's career, although they were interspersed with periods of financial stability. During the low periods, he was often tense, as you would expect, and would work even longer hours than usual. That made things at home more stressful for everybody, particularly my mother. But Dad almost always managed to find some kind of solution – moving to Boston and taking a job with Kurzweil in 1985 was one such solution – so those periods never lasted more than a year or so."

Were you interested in the products your dad was creating? Was there a Moog Modular or a Minimoog in the house that you could play with?

"There was never a synthesiser in the house until Dad began working for Kurzweil. He brought home a K-250 for a short period of time. I remember being curious, but daunted by it. I think all of us kids were interested in Dad's work to some extent, but talking about it was never encouraged, so it was rarely discussed."

Outside of music, what sort of things did he enjoy doing? How did he relax?

"Dad loved spending time in nature. As well as gardening, he liked hiking and canoeing. He liked hunting for mushrooms and bird watching and star gazing. He became a scout at a fairly young age and eventually became an Eagle Scout. I think that experience instilled not only a love of nature in him, but an understanding of the balance it provides to life's stresses. He also enjoyed reading and sharing a good meal with friends. He relished what are often called the simple pleasures of life."

Bob Moog was just "Dad" to you and your siblings. Can you remember a point when you realised how revered your father was? Did it come during your childhood or much later?

"When I was about four or five years old, my father was on a television show called 'To Tell The Truth'. We weren't allowed to watch much TV in my family, but my mother sat us all down to watch that. Seeing my father on TV was surreal in and of itself, but at the end of the show, the announcer said, 'Will the real Robert Moog please stand up?', and Dad stood up. That was a weird moment, where I was forced to recognise that my dad was this famous person named Bob Moog.

"I had a few more experiences like that in my childhood, but it was relatively easy to keep them pushed to the periphery of my mind and stay focused on my dad. Then in 1990, when I was 22, I attended my first NAMM event with him. Many things happened there, but the most memorable was when someone dropped to their knees in front of Dad and started raving about how he was his idol, how he'd changed the world of music, and so on. That made my father, whose humility is legendary, quite uncomfortable, but it was a step towards me realising the enormity of the Bob Moog side of him.

"It wasn't until Dad passed away in 2005 and we received thousands of testimonials from all over the world saying how he had touched people's lives, and in some cases transformed lives, that I began to have a true understanding of the magnitude and depth of his impact. That period of time, which spanned a few weeks, was a dawning for me. The walls that had been, consciously or unconsciously, built in my family to keep Bob Moog at bay came crashing down, and the reality of what my father meant to people was suddenly staring me in the face. It was quite overwhelming."

You've teamed up with Robert Fantinatto and Jason Amm, the guys behind the superb 'I Dream Of Wires' documentary, to make a film about your father called 'Electronic Voyager'. Can you tell us how the project got started and what the finished film will be like?

"Robert, Jason and I share a passion for exploring and understanding the man behind the Bob Moog icon. Most people know very little about what he was like as a person. From Robert and Jason's viewpoint, telling that story through the intimate lens of a daughter's eyes was the perspective with the most integrity.

"They approached me with the idea and I loved their vision of retracing Dad's life journey by interviewing a wide range of his colleagues and friends. With this approach, we not only learn about Bob Moog as a person, but we begin to understand the wonderful and important network of people he worked with, people who accepted him for just being Bob. Without a doubt, this documentary will reveal the yet unexplored many facets of my father, which go far beyond his accomplishments as Bob Moog."

Since your father's passing, you've been running the Bob Moog Foundation. What is the aim of the foundation and what are its plans for the future?

"The Bob Moog Foundation carries on Bob's pioneering work by inspiring people through the intersection of music, science and innovation. Our two main projects are Dr Bob's SoundSchool, a 10-week experiential curriculum through which we teach elementary school students about the science of sound, and the preservation of the Bob Moog Foundation Archives. Our vision is to grow Dr Bob's SoundSchool throughout the United States and to create a complementary set of online educational tools that can be accessed internationally. Our plans also include preserving and sharing the vast array of archival material through travelling exhibits and online assets."

What do you think is Bob Moog's lasting legacy?

"It is most certainly a legacy of inspiring legions of people all over the world through a combination of technical brilliance and creative warmth. It is also a legacy of commitment, determination, and a dedication to being a humanist. Bob Moog brought people together through the music he helped create. I think that would be his proudest accomplishment."

The 'Electronic Voyager: Retracing Bob Moog's Sonic Journey' documentary is due for release in March 2017. For more information visit electronicvoyager.com

GENTLEMEN, START YOUR MACHINES

FROM ROBERT MOOG AND DONALD BUCHLA TO PETER ZINOVIEFF AND ALAN PEARLMAN, THE 'BRIGHT SPARKS' ALBUM AND FILM CELEBRATE THE PIONEERS OF ANALOGUE SYNTHESIS WITH OBSESSIVE APLOMB

Words: STEPHEN DALTON

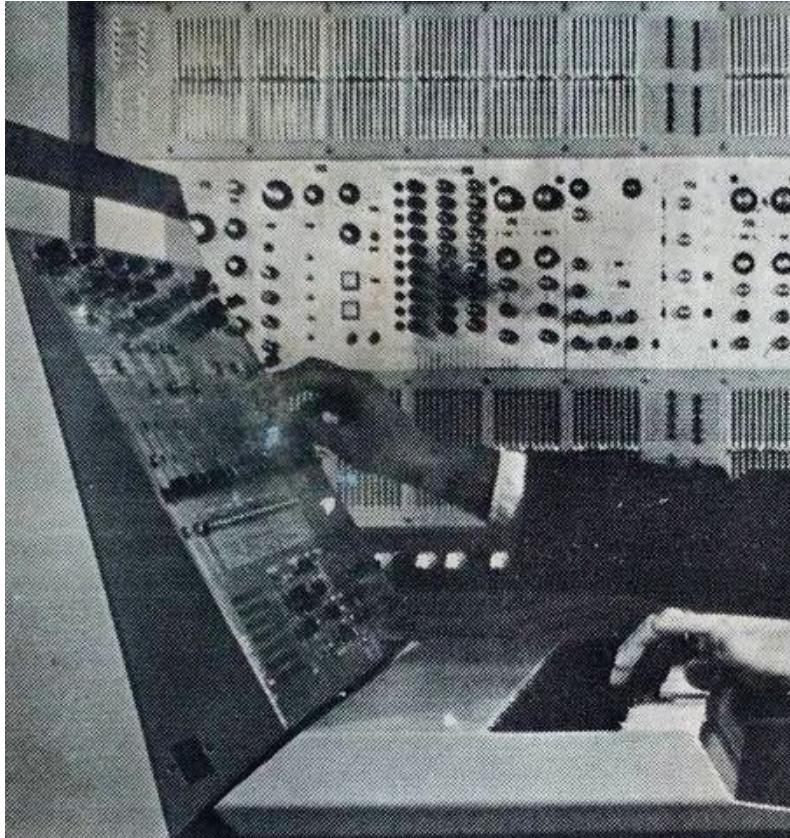
A feast of modular melodies and analogue anecdotes, 'Bright Sparks' is an audio-visual love letter to the founding fathers of electronic music. The project began as a concept album by I Monster, aka Sheffield avant-rock surrealists and antique synth collectors Dean Honer and Jarrod Gosling, but has now blossomed into a feature-length documentary exploring the colourful human stories behind the first wave of prototype synthesisers. Vince Clarke has called the film "engrossing and fascinating", while Brian Eno branded it a "loving and exhaustive study".

I Monster's 'Bright Sparks' album features eight tracks, each a droll narrative detailing the invention of a classic vintage electronic instrument and set to music made with the eight machines themselves. The subjects include iconic production models like the Moog ('The Fantastic Tale Of Dr Moog And The Birth Of The Shimmering Beast') and the Mellotron ('The Bradley Brothers Realise The Transmutation Of The Chamberlin To The Mellotron'), as well as more eccentric one-offs like the EMS Synthi and the EDP Wasp.

John Foxx makes a guest appearance on the album, as does Tara Busch from I Speak Machine. Comedian and cult music connoisseur Stewart Lee is on there too. I Monster partly recorded the tracks at the London studio of Foxx's regular collaborator Benge, who is the owner of many rare synths himself.

"He's got a 60s Buchla," Dean Honer gushes. "And he's got an ARP 2500, which was the first modular ARP that Alan Pearlman built. It gave us the excuse to use as many of the original instruments as possible. The album is sort of 95 per cent original, there are little bits of soft synth on there, but Jarrod and I have got a lot of these instruments ourselves anyway."

Once the recording was underway, I Monster came up the idea of making a documentary to accompany the album. Nothing too long, nothing too fancy. At the time, Honer and Gosling were having discussions with fellow analogue acolytes Dave Spiers and Chris Macleod from G Force Software, specialists in soft synth emulations of vintage electronic instruments, and they mentioned their plans to the G Force guys. Despite their lack of experience in the world of film, Spiers and





ALAN R PEARLMAN

ALAN R PEARLMAN
WHERE: NEW YORK, USA
WHEN: BORN 1925
WHAT: ARP 2500, ARP 2600, ARP ODYSSEY
WHY: THE FOUNDER OF ARP INSTRUMENTS INC., PEARLMAN SET NEW STANDARDS FOR RELIABILITY IN ANALOGUE SYNTHESISERS, INTRODUCING INNOVATIONS LIKE INTERCONNECTING MODULES AND DUAL TRANSISTORS
WIRED FOR SOUND: PEARLMAN SPENT FIVE YEARS DESIGNING AMPLIFIERS FOR NASA'S GEMINI AND APOLLO PROGRAMS



DONALD BUCHLA
WHERE: CALIFORNIA, USA
WHEN: BORN 1937
WHAT: BUCHLA 100-500, BUCHLA MUSIC EASEL
WHY: INVENTOR OF THE FIRST DIGITALLY CONTROLLED ANALOGUE SYNTHESIZER, DONALD BUCHLA IS BOB MOOG'S CHIEF RIVAL FOR THE TITLE OF SYNTH GODFATHER
WIRED FOR SOUND: BUCHLA IS A FORMER HIPPIE AND AVANT-GARDE TAPE COMPOSER WHO DROPPED ACID WITH KEN KESEY'S MERRY PRANKSTERS CROWD IN THE 1960S



BUCHLA EASEL | PHOTO: EMILIE ELIZABETH

ADRIAN WAGNER

WHERE: KENT, UK

WHEN: BORN 1952

WHAT: WASP, GNAT, SPIDER, CATERPILLER

WHY: FOUNDER OF ELECTRONIC DREAM PLANT, MOST FAMOUS FOR THE VISUALLY STRIKING WASP SYNTH, WHICH HAD A FLAT NON-MECHANICAL KEYBOARD

WIRED FOR SOUND: WAGNER IS RELATED TO THE LEGENDARY GERMAN COMPOSER AND IS A LONG-TIME COMPOSER/PERFORMER IN HIS OWN RIGHT

The list of vintage synths and their creators featured on the 'Bright Sparks' album was already set in stone before I Monster brought Dave Spiers and Chris Macleod on board, but there was obviously crossover in their shared interests.

"We've been doing stuff for G Force for years and we've designed sounds for their synthesisers," says Honer. "So we thought it would be nice to include all the things they have with their software."

For his part, Spiers was keen to help immortalise the early synthesiser pioneers on film, especially after failing to get Robert Moog to autograph the back panel of his Minimoog a decade ago. Moog died soon afterwards and the chance was lost.

"I was fortunate enough to know Bob Moog reasonably well and his human qualities were equally as interesting as his engineering abilities," notes Spiers. "Chris and I never emulate anything at G Force unless we love the back story. In fact, it's usually the back story that gets us more interested in the quirks of an instrument. So I started to think, 'OK, we've got a really finite amount of time, we're starting to lose these people'."

Some of the inventors celebrated in the 'Bright Sparks' documentary are sadly already dead, while others proved difficult to track down or reluctant to talk. But Alan R Pearlman, reclusive creator of the seminal ARP synths, finally agreed to appear on camera after "a lot of fanboy persuasion on the phone". Jumping on a flight to Boston, the filmmakers conducted a fascinating interview and then shared an eye-opening dinner with Pearlman and his wife, a tough-as-nails Holocaust survivor.



WASP ADVERT



EMS VCS3 | PHOTO: © GFORCE SOFTWARE LTD



FREEMAN SYMPHONIZER | PHOTO: © GFORCE SOFTWARE LTD

PETER ZINOVIEFF

WHERE: LONDON, UK

WHEN: BORN 1933

WHAT: EMS SYNTHI, VCS1, VCS3

WHY: ZINOVIEFF'S EMS COMPANY (ELECTRONIC MUSIC STUDIOS) CREATED THE FIRST PORTABLE BRITISH SYNTHS, MOST NOTABLY THE JOYSTICK OPERATED VCS3, A FAVOURITE OF PROG ROCKERS AND KRAUTROCKERS ALIKE

WIRED FOR SOUND: EMS WAS RUN BY ZINOVIEFF FROM HIS BUNKER-LIKE GARDEN SHED STUDIO IN PUTNEY, SOUTH LONDON, PARTLY TO FUND HIS CAREER AS AN EXPERIMENTAL COMPOSER

KEN FREEMAN

WHERE: LONDON, UK

WHEN: BORN 1947

WHAT: FREEMAN STRING SYMPHONIZER

WHY: A COMPOSER AND SESSION PLAYER SINCE THE 1960S, FREEMAN WORKED ON MAJOR POP PROJECTS INCLUDING JEFF WAYNE'S 'WAR OF THE WORLDS', BUT NEVER EARNED FULL CREDIT FROM HIS INNOVATIVE ORCHESTRAL SYNTHS

WIRED FOR SOUND: FREEMAN IS BEST KNOWN TODAY FOR WRITING THE THEME MUSIC TO 'CASUALTY' AND 'HOLBY CITY'

"Three concentration camps," Spiers says, shaking his head. "That was an amazingly humbling experience. In fact, we wanted to get the camera back out, but it turned out Steven Spielberg had already filmed her for his Shoah Foundation, a kind of living museum about the Holocaust."

The next stop for the directing duo was a spooky backwater town in rural New Hampshire, home to former ARP engineer Dennis Colin, who was seriously depressed after a recent bereavement.

"Dennis himself died not long after our visit," says Spiers. "He shot himself. It was horrendous. He was threatening to do it while we were there. He was quite a formidable character. But he really wanted to tell his story, and actually it was his daughter who really made it happen."

There are happier tales in the film too. The rather colourful shared history behind the American Chamberlin keyboard, a kind of prototype tape machine sampler, and its British cousin the Mellotron, feels like a cross between an Ealing Comedy and a Cold War espionage thriller.

"It is a great story," Honer laughs. "Trying to get that into a song is quite difficult, I can tell you! That could be a complete album in itself."

Between chats with engineers and inventors, the filmmakers also interview lots of famous analogue synth heads, including Mute Records boss Daniel Miller, Goldfrapp composer Will Gregory, Portishead's Adrian Utley, Alessandro Cortini from Nine Inch Nails, Billy Currie and Chris Cross of Ultravox, and Underworld duo Karl Hyde and Rick Smith.

"I've worked with Underworld since about 1991," Spiers explains. "For me, the key was

getting Rick, because Rick just doesn't talk! But he was brilliant for this. 'Good things come out of a good heart that's obsessed', that's the line I take away from that experience."

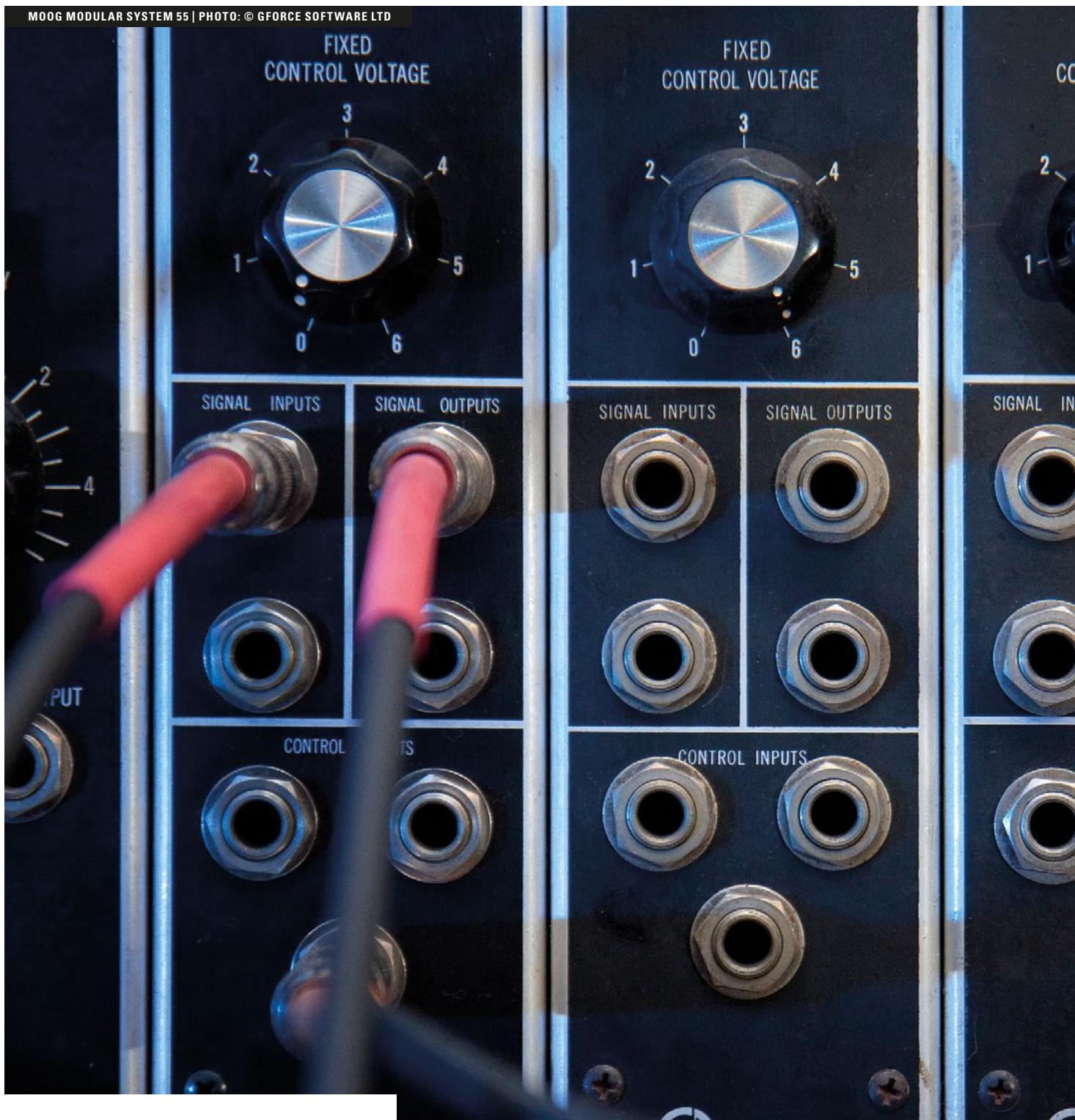
All the same, several musical and technological icons either couldn't or wouldn't be interviewed. Donald Buchla, for instance.

"I really tried to talk to Don, but he was very ill at the time," Spiers shrugs. "We also got blown out by a couple of people. Wendy Carlos blew us out big time. But she kind of justified it by saying she thought the modular Moog was a pig of a machine and that she felt everyone was looking at this stuff with rose-tinted specs."

Negotiations with Keith Emerson also came to nothing. The keyboard legend's suicide earlier this year was a personal blow to Spiers and MacLeod.

"Chris worked with Keith for about five years, but we just couldn't pin him down," Spiers says. "That was a great shame, but it just reinforced the fact that these people aren't going to be around for ever and it's really important that their stories are told while they are here."





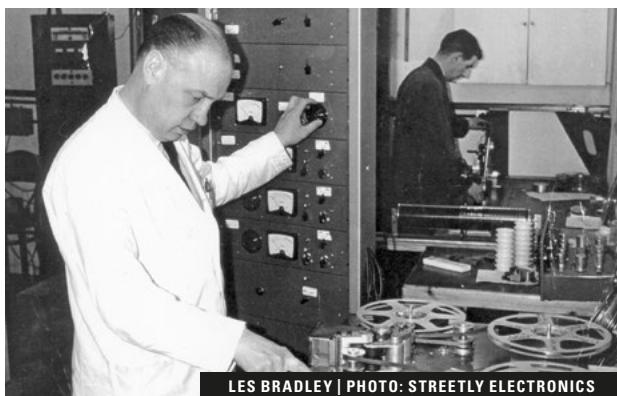
ROBERT MOOG

WHERE: NEW YORK, USA

WHEN: BORN 1934, DIED 2005

WHAT: MOOG MODULAR, MINIMOOG, VOYAGER
WHY: THE FATHER OF THE MODERN SYNTH, BOB
MOOG MADE HIS EARLY MACHINES WITH VOLTAGE-
CONTROLLED OSCILLATORS AND A PIANO-STYLE
KEYBOARD AS STANDARD

WIRED FOR SOUND: MOOG BUILT HIS FIRST
INSTRUMENT – A THEREMIN BASED ON AN ARTICLE
IN A DIY MAGAZINE – AT THE TENDER AGE OF 14



Dave Spiers is the first to admit that the 'Bright Sparks' documentary is a low-budget labour of love, full of rough charm and quirky personality, much like the machines it celebrates. But one of his hopes is to upgrade the film in the future, George Lucas style, adding interviewees he missed first time around. He even talks of a possible sequel showcasing some of the electronic innovators overlooked in 'Bright Sparks', such as Tom Oberheim, Roger Linn, Roland founder Ikutaro Kakehashi and the late Tsutomu Katoh of Korg.

"I have this idea of using it like an evolving document," says Spiers. "I think that would be brilliant."

The 'Bright Sparks' album and documentary reflect an ever-growing worldwide fascination with analogue synthesisers. So what's the appeal? Dean Honer and Dave Spiers both express a deep and enduring love for these magnificent machines, agreeing that they can be temperamental and cumbersome at times, but eagerly pointing out that they're also full of character.

"A lot of younger people coming into music are just used to seeing something on a screen and moving a mouse to move a button, one thing at a time," Honer explains. "Working like that is so laborious. Having a whole bank of knobs in front of you is more real and more tactile and it's also simpler. Ultimately, it's a lot more fun to make sounds this way."

HARRY CHAMBERLIN

WHERE: WISCONSIN, USA
WHEN: BORN 1902, DIED 1986
WHAT: CHAMBERLIN 600 ELECTRO-MECHANICAL ORGAN, CHAMBERLIN RHYTHMATE, CHAMBERLIN M1
WHY: VISIONARY ENGINEER WHO CREATED THE FIRST PROTOTYPE SAMPLERS AND DRUM MACHINES
WIRED FOR SOUND: CHAMBERLIN'S WINDOW CLEANER AND SOMETIME SALESMAN BILL FRANSEN RAN OFF TO BRITAIN WITH TWO CHAMBERLIN 600 ORGANS, WHERE THEIR DESIGN WAS ADAPTED INTO THE MELLOTRON, RESULTING IN A LEGAL DISPUTE

LES BRADLEY

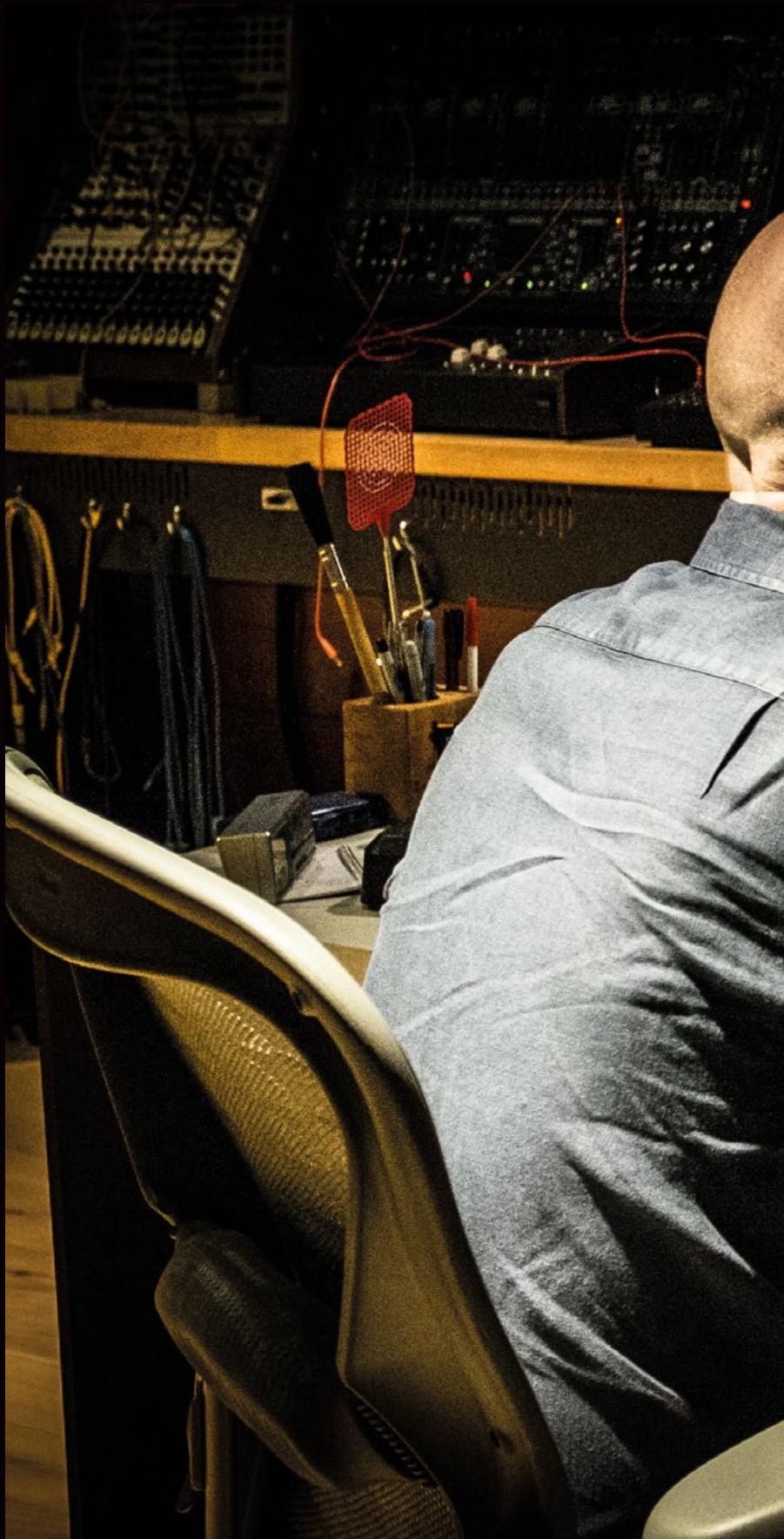
WHERE: BIRMINGHAM, UK
WHEN: BORN 1916, DIED 1997
WHAT: MELLOTRON I-V, NOVATRON
WHY: POPULARISED BY THE BEATLES AND THE ROLLING STONES, THE MELLOTRON WAS ONE OF THE FIRST BRITISH SAMPLERS, USING A KEYBOARD OPERATED TAPE MECHANISM CONTROVERSIALLY MODELLED ON THE CHAMBERLIN ORGAN
WIRED FOR SOUND: MELLOTRONICS, THE COMPANY FOUNDED BY LES BRADLEY AND HIS BROTHERS FRANK AND NORMAN TO MANUFACTURE THE MELLOTRON, WAS PARTLY FUNDED BY TV MAGICIAN DAVID NIXON

I Monster's 'Bright Sparks' album is out now on Twins Of Evil Recordings. The 'Bright Sparks' documentary is available from brightsparks.movie and will be showcased at SynthFest UK and Sensoria 2016, both of which take place in Sheffield in October

ON THE SQUARE

ERASURE WITH RAVE LICKS? ORBITAL WITH POP FLECKS? IT'S AN UNLIKELY COLLABORATION ON THE FACE OF IT, BUT THESE TWO ELECTRONIC MUSIC BEHEMOTHS HAVE SERVED UP A PROPER TREAT IN THE FORM OF **VINCE CLARKE** AND **PAUL HARTNOLL**'S '2SQUARE'. WE POP ROUND TO VINCE'S BROOKLYN STUDIO TO DISCOVER MORE, WHILE PAUL JOINS IN THE CONVERSATION ON SKYPE

WORDS: MAT SMITH
PICTURES: ED WALKER





Vince Clarke ushers me inside his New York brownstone on a quiet street in Brooklyn's Park Slope neighbourhood and immediately offers an apology for not answering the door quicker. "I was just defrosting shrimp," he says, offering a brief and mildly surreal insight into his intertwined home/work set-up, the boundary between which is two flights of stairs down to his studio.

The classic image of Vince Clarke is of someone hidden by technology. His time with first Depeche Mode, then Yazoo, and now Erasure, has usually seen him in the shadows – head down, busy, rarely smiling. In reality, Clarke is friendly, engaging and relaxed, with a sense of humour that's clearly never lost any of its British dryness, despite his many years of living abroad.

Of course, his public image may simply be a general misconception. But it could also be down to the fact that Clarke has reached the point where the idea of spending most of his time on his own in his studio is no longer very appealing. It can be a mighty solitary existence.

"It does drive you crazy," he admits. "You really need to have some kind of socialisation going on. Why make music otherwise? That's what it's about, isn't it?"

TWO'S COMPANY

How does Vince Clarke stack up as a recording partner, Paul?

"He's alright," sighs Hartnoll, before laughing loudly. "He likes to cut to the quick and get things where they need to be, so he'll always edit out any wasted space. I'm all for that. There were always lots of ideas floating around the room."

Clarke thinks there's a lot to be said for working as a duo. As he points out, the appeal is pretty obvious.

"You're dealing with just one other person, so decisions are more instant," he offers. "If there's two of you, then you can only fall out with one person, can't you? Which is good. Either that or you get on with them really well. But even if you do fall out, that often makes for a better record."

Is he suggesting there were lots of arguments during the making of '2Square'?

"Naaah, we had a great time, man," answers Clarke. "Alison Moyet and I fell out. And I fell out with Depeche Mode. But then there were four of us, so we were always arguing."





This might explain why, as well as the three groups he's been associated with over the last 35 years or so, Vince Clarke's credits include a lengthy list of significant side projects. The most notable of these are the three albums he's recorded with Martyn Ware from Heaven 17, two of them as The Clarke & Ware Experiment, and his 2011-12 releases with his old Depeche Mode pal Martin Gore under the name VCMG.

Clarke's latest collaboration is with Orbital man Paul Hartnoll. The pair have just released an album called '2Square' via Very Records, a download-only label run by Clarke. More of which later. Once we've settled down in a corner of his Brooklyn basement studio to conduct the interview, Clarke flicks on a computer and Hartnoll joins us on Skype from his home in Brighton back in Blighty. Judging by the sarcastic banter that's traded back and forth, it soon becomes apparent that there's a strong bond between the two men.

At first glance, however, this partnership seems quite surprising. You wouldn't have put the two of them together in several months of Sundays. If you rewind back a couple of decades, you'd find Paul Hartnoll whipping Glastonbury crowds into a frenzy. By comparison, Clarke would be sitting at the bottom of a tower of equipment, pressing the occasional button while swigging from a bottle of Becks. Hartnoll believes the two have more in common than you might imagine, though.

"People say I'm a showman, but I also like to hide my face by wearing torch glasses," he insists.

But while the paths of Erasure and Orbital didn't have much reason to cross back in the day, there is a bit of Clarke in Hartnoll's musical history.

"Depeche Mode performing 'New Life' on 'Top Of The Pops' was the first thing I ever taped with my brand new Ferguson VHS recorder," he laughs.

The genesis of their partnership is actually more serendipitous, as is often the case. Erasure and Orbital shared a live backline technician, who played matchmaker for the pair.

"He knew that I was experimenting with some stuff on my own," explains Clarke. "He'd heard some of the tracks and thought hooking me up with Paul might be interesting. So when we played in Brighton when Erasure were on tour in November 2014, I arranged to meet up with Paul. We went down the pub and that was it really."

"Vince was trying to do something that was very specifically a house music project," Hartnoll chips in. "He came to me with all these tracks that were in different states. He needed someone to help with the finishing process, which is quite difficult to do sometimes."

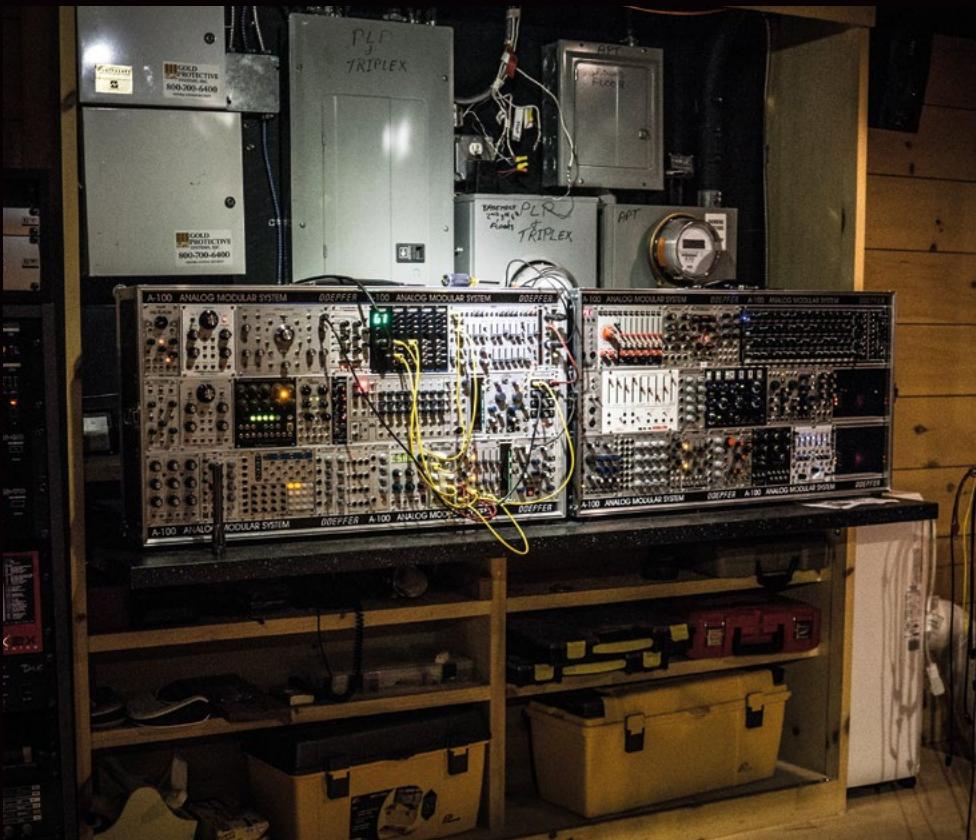
"Especially working on your own," says Clarke.

In a world where technology means that artists on opposite sides of the world can come together for a music project without ever actually meeting, the process of recording '2Square' was a little more traditional. After Clarke had sent Hartnoll his initial files, the two met up last summer for a planning session before reconvening in Brighton just before Christmas to finish and mix the tracks.

"It was perfect studio weather," adds Hartnoll. "That's why we're so productive in the UK. We have to spend a lot of time in the studio because it's so crap outside."

The pair would typically hunker down in Hartnoll's studio in the Portslade area of Brighton after the Orbital man had completed the morning school run, toiling away each day until mid-afternoon. They spent most evenings hanging out together, or Clarke would take himself off to enjoy some of the creature comforts he missed from the UK, particularly decent fish and chips.

"Paul's got a fantastic situation with his studio complex," says Clarke wistfully. "People drop in, say hello, they all go to the local greasy spoon, and it's just normal. I think that's what I need right now. Being at home all the time, being down here" – he gestures around the windowless studio with a frown – "there's nowhere to go. It's also not a nine-to-five for me and I think you kind of need that."



We're about half an hour into the interview when things get a bit weird.

"Were we being squares?" asks Clarke. "It was squares, wasn't it? I think it was squares."

"We are quite nerdy, aren't we?" responds Hartnoll after a slight pause.

"Geeky," Clarke corrects him with a big grin. "That's the cool way of saying nerds these days."

The pair are trying to fathom out how they came up with the title for their album. They eventually conclude they can't remember at all.

'2Square' is kind of what you'd expect from the Clarke and Hartnoll combination. There's the classic Clarke synth knowledge, held in lockstep by Hartnoll's intimate familiarity with the dynamics and energy of dance music.

"We had a clear path," says Hartnoll. "If at any point I was wondering what to do next, I just went back to the fact that we were doing house music. I wouldn't make these into club mixes though, because that doesn't make for a very listenable album."

The pair initially dubbed the relaxed, fun style of the record "home house".

"That was a bit of a joke," says Clarke a little uncomfortably, suggesting said joke has run its course.

Dance music has become a staple part of Clarke's musical diet in recent years. It's the product of deep listening to the mechanics of rhythm. If his VCMG recordings with Martin Gore saw him immersing himself in techno, '2Square' feels like it's coming from more familiar territory.

"I think some of the tracks on the album have been inspired by this whole new disco thing," says Clarke. "That groove, that 120bpm beat, brings back memories of when I was a kid listening to things like The Bee Gees' 'Stayin' Alive'. There's a great vibe to it and it's all very polished and very precise."

Another clue as to why '2Square' sounds as relaxed as it does perhaps lies in the fact that neither of its creators could be described as young men these days. Not that either of them seem to mind. They both agree that getting older has its advantages.

"You lose that overly earnest, overly serious, furrowed brow thing," suggests Hartnoll. "I certainly used to have the arrogance of youth but I never took myself too seriously, mainly because I was informed by bands like Kraftwerk, and they were totally silly. I've always found po-faced dance music people hilarious. The only ones who are smiling are the ones in their 40s who lived through the 90s. They're all laughing at the young men taking it all far too seriously."

"When you're that bit older, you're not worried about what other people think. At the end of the day, you do the job, you enjoy it, you have some fun. I don't want to spend the rest of my life staring at a computer screen, sitting in a white cube on my own."

"I agree totally," says Clarke. "I was arrogant as a kid. When you get your success early on, you just assume everything you do is going to be amazing. It takes years to find out that what you make or write isn't necessarily gold. Working with other people lets you see their perspective on things and that's been a life changer for me. Every time I've collaborated with someone, I can't say that I've agreed with everything they've said, but I've been more prepared to listen as I've got older. When I was younger, I'd never have done that. I'd have just said they were wrong."



Very Records isn't Vince Clarke's first crack at running a label. In the years after Yazoo collapsed, he ran the Reset imprint with Eric Radcliffe, the producer namechecked in the title 'Upstairs At Eric's' and Clarke's partner in The Assembly.

"That was just us having a laugh," he says. "Reset was basically financed by RCA. Things were so different then because money was sloshing about in the music business. We had RCA people there all the time and all they'd say was, 'That's great'. There was a lot of bullshit around then. The whole model has changed so much now – and I think actually for the better. What I'm involved in now is much more real."

"There's been a kind of democratisation of music making and it's changed everything. When I look at it, if one of my artists makes a record by banging on a desk, there could possibly be somebody out there who would like to listen to it, but I would never be able to get that record to them were it not for the internet. There's just as much crap out there as there's always been, but at least it gives people the opportunity to express themselves."

The initial idea for Very came to Clarke when he and Hartnoll were recording '2Square'.

"A friend of mine who lives in Brooklyn has a small label, a tiny download-only label,"

explains Clarke. "He started telling me about it and I thought, 'I could do that'. He said to make it download-only so you're not left with hundreds of records under your bed. The concept is simple and the mechanism is easy, but it's still a challenge for me. Anyway, I thought this record with Paul would be a fantastic start for the label."

The only snag is that running a record company, even one with low overheads, still requires you to have some knowledge of the back end of the music industry. And as the one and only employee, Clarke suddenly found himself in charge of managing the marketing, sorting out the press and having a go at radio plugging, as well as trying to keep on top of a bulging inbox of demos.

"I hope I've learned a lot of stuff in a very short amount of time, stuff I had no idea about and probably should have been more interested in before now," he laughs. "When Depeche Mode joined Mute, one of the first things that Daniel Miller did was take us to the cutting room and the pressing plant, which was sweaty as hell. This has been kind of like that for me. I kind of understand how everything functions. What also makes it different is that you're fighting on somebody else's behalf. I'm not really thinking about promoting myself with this record, I'm thinking more about promoting Paul."

BLOODY KIDS

Clarke and Hartnoll have more than 50 years experience of bashing out electronic sounds between them. But music is not their only common denominator. They are both parents and having kids has opened them up to some occasionally harsh critics.

"My children are very kind," notes Hartnoll sarcastically. "If there's ever anything electronic playing around the house, they'll always ask, 'Did you do this music, dad?'. If I say yes, they'll say, 'What a load of rubbish!'. Which is funny because they usually think it's brilliant until I say it's one of my tracks."

"My son just tells me how much he can improve whatever I do," sighs Clarke. "He's been using Logic for a long time. He'll say, 'If you do this, then it will be better'. He's 10 years old."

Mute Records, which Clarke has been a part of going right back to 1981, has been one of the inspirations for Very. He says he wants his label to have the same eclectic approach that characterised the Mute roster in the early days.

"The demos that Daniel got when Mute started weren't Depeche Mode soundalikes," he recalls. "At the moment, a lot of the demos I'm getting seem to have been influenced by Erasure and that's not the way I want to go. I was thinking it would be a bit more obscure. I've already got another artist, a new artist, who I will be releasing in October and that's not dance music at all. I can't say much about it, but it's very geeky."

As we reach the end of our chat, Clarke returns to something we talked about earlier.

"Since I've got a bit older I've kind of started thinking, 'Actually, you know what, I'm really enjoying what I'm doing', " he reflects. "I'm doing the best I can and I feel good about that. In a lot of ways, life couldn't be better. I think both Paul and I are in the very fortunate position that we can do that. We're not struggling artists looking out for the next pay cheque."

'2Square' is out now on Very

WE ARE FAMILY

FROM DETROIT TECHNO LEGEND – A KEY MEMBER OF UNDERGROUND RESISTANCE, NO LESS – TO ALABAMA CHURCH PREACHER, **ROBERT HOOD** IS A MAN ON A MISSION. NOW HE'S TEAMING UP WITH HIS DAUGHTER **LYRIC HOOD** UNDER THE NAME **FLOORPLAN** AND THE RESULT IS WHOLLY EXHILARATING

Words: KRIS NEEDS

As an early member of Underground Resistance and the architect of a genre with 1994's 'Minimal Nation', Robert Hood is one of the few techno producers who can genuinely be called an innovator. He's a legendary DJ too, an incendiary sonic preacher, and has been leading mesmerised congregations to mass catharsis for over 25 years. But he's long been aware that this kind of communal euphoria is simply a modern variation on the out-of-body abandonment that has gripped black gospel churches for centuries.

I once found myself in an East Harlem storefront church on a late 80s Sunday morning with a gospel service in full swing and I remember being hit by a wave of ecstatic energy that put New York's Limelight club to shame, even the time I saw Robert Hood perform there with Underground Resistance. So it's interesting to note the full-on gospel vibe of 'Victorious', the new album from Floorplan, Hood's parallel house music project. But it won't come as a surprise to those who know that, alongside his music career, he has been a church minister for many years.

Hood first started preaching at the New Order Missionary Baptist Church, right behind the Motown Museum in Detroit, his city of birth. His interest in the church took a giant leap 12 years ago, when he and his family relocated to Atmore, a farming community in deepest Alabama, to settle on land owned by his wife Eunice's parents. It's a far cry from Hood's days as Detroit techno royalty, enjoying the superstar DJ lifestyle during his initial flush of success. Eunice's grandfather built the house the family live in with his bare hands.

"We wanted the opportunity to start something new and fresh, so coming here just made sense," says Hood. "The city boy in the country... it was a major change, to say the least! These days, I find myself doing some of the things that farmers do. After this interview, I'm going outside to cut a massive field on my tractor mower."

When he made the move down, was he at all worried about Alabama's reputation as a hotbed of racism?

"We didn't know what to expect," he replies. "We were taking a big step, of course, but we came with the mindset that everybody has their own personality. I don't like how people generalise. When you watch television, you get these ideas of what rural Alabama is like, and it's true that there are still racist attitudes, but a lot has changed since the 50s and 60s."

"The open spaces around Atmore have helped me to relax and to think differently, as opposed to having to deal with the hustle and bustle of city life. I felt that my education in Detroit had run its course, in terms of my church and my neighbourhood, so I needed to be taught something new. It was time to graduate from that school, time to get myself into another school, time to move out of my comfort zone."

Bearing in mind his Christian faith, is the gospel vibe that surges through his Floorplan recordings pretty much inevitable?

"My gospel, jazz and blues roots have come full circle since moving to Alabama. My father was a jazz musician and my mother sang. Her uncle, who was the pastor in our church in Detroit, sang in a gospel quartet. So the influences I grew up with, like Aretha Franklin and Shirley Caesar, have stayed with me over the years. My grandmother played tambourine at the church and watching her kiss the Holy Ghost, and then feeling God's presence take a hold and seeing how people interacted with that, those things all inspired me. When I came here, where there were once slaves and sharecroppers in these fields, I found that foot-stomping sound resonated with me even more strongly."



Robert Hood released his first Floorplan 12-inch in 1996, but it wasn't until 2013 that he brought out an album under this alias. It was worth the wait, though. 'Paradise' struck spiritual gold, not least because it included the massive, Aretha-sampling 'Never Grow Old'. 'Victorious' picks up where 'Paradise' left off, presenting a series of fascinating alt-house workouts, many of them fuelled by a revivalist fervour.

'Victorious' is also notable for bringing Hood's 19-year-old daughter Lyric into the Floorplan fold. Her teenage energy and musical tastes give an edge to tracks such as the hypnotic 'Spin', the gloriously disco-fied 'Sun In The Sky' and the warped jack of 'Good Thang', the latter complete with a lowdown blues guitar.

"Lyric just evolved into this project," says Hood, who has to apologise for his daughter's absence on the day of our interview because she was at the hairdressers. "We're playing some shows and she's getting all glammed up so we can hit the road. She's getting her Beyoncé on."

He recalls how Lyric started DJing after he'd invited her to play her favourite records at her 16th birthday party. The experience ignited the music bug in her.

"She did great. I liked what she played and the way she organised her mixes. Watching how she worked with her instincts and how she approached the music, I could see she knew what she wanted to hear. It was an eclectic mixture – Rob Base & DJ E-Z Rock, Notorious BIG, R Kelly, Katy Perry..."

"I was very nervous and excited," Lyric tells me via email a couple of days later. "I had planned and prepped to do this months and months ahead of time and it actually turned out better than I thought it was going to. It was amazing."

"Sure, I gave her some pointers," laughs Hood. "A little while after that, she started DJing at our church. Every Sunday morning, she'd set up and DJ along with the choir. My wife and I are watching this unfold and eventually I said, 'How about if she played with me?'. So when I did a live set at the Movement festival in Detroit in 2014, I had her come on and DJ. I let her do her own thing, adding some Martin Garrix and stuff that she liked. I didn't question it, I said, 'If that's what you wanna do, go right ahead and do it'."

"We did Movement again the following year and then I had the opportunity to tour with my dad in the summer of 2015," says Lyric. "It was really exciting, really special. It was indescribable."

"The next step was when my wife and I said, 'How about if she becomes part of Floorplan?'," continues Hood. "For me, Floorplan always felt like it should be a group effort, right from when I did the 'Funky Souls' 12-inch in 1996. And this was a perfect fit. My daughter and I have always had a very strong connection. She was born on Father's Day and we've always bonded over music."

So when it came to 'Victorious', how did father and daughter approach the studio process? Lyric says it involved them both working with MPCs.

"When we're recording, I'll usually start by searching for sounds in my music library. I'll then tap out basslines and drum patterns on my MPC while my dad works on chords."

"She'll come to me with an idea, a bassline or a drum loop she has in her head, and that's where we'll start. She's inspired by folks like Frankie Knuckles, Todd Terry

and Ron Trent. She also likes the Fast Eddie-style jack house. Watching her getting into artists like that has helped me to rediscover all these brilliant house tracks, like the Frankie Knuckles remix of The Jackson 5's 'Forever Came Today', and it's interesting to watch how she's taking old records apart and re-imagining them.

"It's just a lot of fun working with my daughter. The ideas really often come together when we're spending some time together in the car. She'll say, 'I like this Kendrick Lamar sample' or 'What do you think of this Missy Elliott track?'. We bounce thoughts back and forth between each other. And because she's still a kid, she's very honest. She'll say, 'That won't work'. So I listen to what she's playing and find myself making the sort of beats she'd like to hear. In a way, she has really shaped this album and projected a fresh perspective into it."

"I like to listen to people like Ariana Grande and Drake, so I think I've shown dad a youthful approach to music," says Lyric. "I think I've helped breathe new life into the Floorplan sound."



"SHE STARTED DJING AT OUR CHURCH. EVERY SUNDAY MORNING, SHE'D SET UP AND DJ ALONG WITH THE CHOIR"



With the clock running down on our interview, I ask Robert Hood if there was a pivotal moment when he decided to back away from the techno treadmill and start preaching in church.

"A prophecy was spoken into me," he explains. "We had a visiting minister come to our church in Detroit and I was there working the sound that day. All of a sudden, the minister turns around and points to me and says, 'You're going to preach'. I didn't think he could be talking to me because I just couldn't see me getting involved in the ministry. After church, my wife said to me, 'He prophesised over you... he saw something you don't necessarily see'. I'm the last one to raise my hands in church and shout 'Praise the Lord', but this prophecy started to manifest itself over time."

"When we got to Alabama, the pastor at Atmore took a special interest in me. I started doing some work in the ministerial departments at the church and eventually I became a licensed and ordained minister. At the same time, I was learning that, behind the turntables, I am preaching, I am a messenger. God literally woke me up out of my sleep and said, 'I want you to put a bold message in your music'. So I got up in the middle of the night and started working on 'Never Grow Old'."

Essentially, Hood seems to be introducing a non-narcissistic twist to the old DJ-as-deity ethos that has long dominated clubland.

"Exactly. My idea is to go backwards and forwards, because I don't know if we've done that with techno and house music before. House music certainly has its roots in gospel and we're trying to take that into the future now. It's just further pushing the envelope and ushering in the presence of God."

What does he think of the way that much of today's techno still replicates the sound he forged more than 20 years ago?

"You look at most types of electronic music and it's pretty much all been done," notes Hood. "We need somebody to create another form of sampler or synthesiser or drum machine, and we need to change the way we think about making music. That will come in time, but for now this is a new-yet-old thing. For me, it's like fresh water. When you have a pond, it's just stale, stagnant water, but a river is constantly flowing so it's a living water. Things are changing and the old gospel message of yesterday is being refreshed."

"We don't necessarily like to call this gospel house. We look at it more as Holy Ghost house because it's bringing revival. People are looking for answers with everything we're facing, all this uncertainty and fear about what tomorrow might bring. Our message is knowing triumph and victory in your heart. There was a time when I didn't think like this, but then I got to this place where a revival happened within me. We don't want people to have a spiritual encounter, we want them to start thinking differently and start speaking differently. We will bring church to those who may not necessarily get the church, so it's not just playing house music with gospel samples in it. We want to bring the spirit."

Floorplan's 'Victorious' is out now on M-Plant

WAVING... NOT DROWNING

ONDEADWAVES IS A FASCINATING COLLABORATION BETWEEN MUTE ARTISTS **POLLY SCATTERGOOD AND MAPS**, ALSO KNOWN AS **JAMES CHAPMAN**. THEIR SELF-TITLED ALBUM IS ONE OF THE MOST MELANCHOLIC RECORDS YOU'LL HEAR ALL YEAR, BUT THEY INSIST THERE ARE NUGGETS OF HOPE SPARKLING IN THE SADNESS

WORDS: BETHAN COLE
PICTURES: GEORGE FAIRBAIRN

The story of onDeadWaves revolves around two renowned electronic artists who came together and made a record that wasn't particularly electronic. Two souls with individual talents who met, decided to coalesce creatively, and ended up crafting something quite special.

James Chapman, one half of the duo, you may already know as Maps, the 37-year-old musician and producer behind 2007's Mercury Music Prize nominated 'We Can Create'. Polly Scattergood, the other half, signed to Mute Records at the tender age of 22 and has also enjoyed success in the nine years since then, most recently with 'Arrows', her intoxicatingly melodic 2013 album. Together, their onDeadWaves project breaks generic boundaries and sketches a landscape of loss, yearning, beauty and charm that mixes strong acoustic flavours – hear fingers on fretboards! – with gleaming electronica.

'Blackbird', the haunting opening track of their self-titled album, features atmospheric, reverb-soaked guitar lines and a half-sung, half-breathed vocal by Polly that sounds like she's been up all night crying and drinking whisky. The album unfolds thus, an alluring and often sad suite of songs like 'Hollow' and 'Alice', where slowly strummed and gently picked strings combine with melancholic vocals. It also features an incredibly wistful cover of the pop and jazz standard 'Autumn Leaves' (previously performed by Nat King Cole and Frank Sinatra), with Polly and James duetting over sultry guitars and an icy electronic drift.

The starting point for the unique alchemy that birthed 'onDeadWaves' dates back to 2011, when the pair first met while performing at a two-night showcase for Mute Records at The Roundhouse in London. So what were their initial impressions of each other?

"Be careful what you say, Polly," laughs James. "We met in a cafe before the Roundhouse gig. I remember thinking she was really nice."

"Thank you," interjects Polly.

"She was just very easy to get on with," he adds.

"We're both pretty chilled," says Polly. "We knew each other's work – I'm a big fan of Maps and the things James has done in the past – and we're also into a lot of the same music. We have shared influences from artists like Mazzy Star and Low, so I think there was naturally a bit of a rapport between us."

A little later on, Polly and James talk about the filmic inspirations for the album – David Lynch, 'The Shining' and Dario Argento's horror flicks all get a mention – and how there are art world flashpoints too, like Edward Hopper and Gregory Crewdson. So far so good. Two kindred spirits with laid-back and sensitive natures getting together to explore common ground. I'm quite surprised it took them so long to actually do something creative with their friendship, though. The turning point came in 2014, when Polly travelled from her home in London to visit James at his place in rural Northamptonshire.

"There were no plans to record anything at that point," she says. "But we ended up writing something together that sounded good, then I stayed the night, and then I didn't leave for a while."



"THERE'S A LOT ON THE ALBUM ABOUT LOSING PRECIOUS THINGS IN YOUR LIFE"

Located in the Northamptonshire countryside, something about the bucolic setting of James Chapman's house and studio seems to have touched Polly Scattergood deeply, seducing her away from her hectic urban life in London and transporting her to a space where she felt primed to write. The pair worked on 'onDeadWaves' over the course of a year or so, with Polly making the journey up to Northamptonshire to stay with James once or twice a month, sometimes staying for a couple of days, sometimes a lot longer. And all the time they worked on the album, they barely saw a soul.

"We didn't really go out much," says James. "I think I took Polly into town once and that was it."

"And you only did that because we had to go and buy some guitar strings," adds Polly. "I remember we spoke to the guy in the shop. He was wearing a suit and a tie and we thought he looked very smart, but he was the only person we interacted with while we were recording."

This might seem like a minor, utterly inconsequential incident, but when you're locked away from the wider world, cooped up in some sort of Howard Hughes-style retreat, fleeting encounters like this take on a pregnant significance. What is a quickly forgotten meeting for most people can be a major melodrama for your serious hermit, an event imprinted on the mind and analysed over and over. I had heard that James was something of a recluse, so how serious a hermit is he?

"I don't go out much," he admits. "I think Polly and I both just like peace and quiet."

"I love solitude," says Polly calmly.

But being holed up together for long periods of time with very few outside interactions must have made them go a bit crazy, mustn't it? And they would have had lots of arguments, wouldn't they?

"Not really," says James. "We had disagreements, but we're not the sort of people to get hung up on those. And you have to be able to express yourself. That's an important thing to do. I mean, working together is often more about saying when you don't like something than about saying when you do. A lot of arguments happen when people try to keep their real thoughts to themselves and then they suddenly explode."

"We certainly didn't have any explosions or fights," laughs Polly.

Polly and James both say they are nocturnal creatures and they tend to work better at night than during the day. They worked long hours during the writing and recording of 'onDeadWaves', each day gradually and imperceptibly turning into night as they honed melodies and Polly worked up lyrics.

"We're both night owls, so we start waking up when it gets dark," notes James. "Most days, we'd start at around 10 in the morning and go right through to the early hours of the next day, then grab a bit of sleep before starting again. We pretty much worked day and night."

With such a relentless schedule, such a strong focus, it's amazing that the album doesn't sound a lot more intense than it does. They say they didn't even break to go out for a walk in the fields surrounding James' house. They admit to starting each sunny day with a cup of tea in his garden, though.

"Oh, James' garden is really beautiful and we'd sit there quite often in the summer months," says Polly. "I especially remember the lavender."

It all sounds very idyllic. Very romantic too. Not that you should get the wrong idea by me saying that. No, no, no, no, no.

"I'm happily single," says James confidently.

"And I'm happily married," notes Polly. "My husband is also a musician and he collaborated with me on 'Arrows'. That's how we met. He's been really supportive and understanding of my need to make this album and he really loves what we've done. I played him a few of the first tracks we did and he was very encouraging, telling me to keep persevering with my ideas. Loads of my friends are male, actually. And loads of James' friends seem to be female."



WITH THANKS TO SERVANT JAZZ QUARTERS, 10A BRADBURY STREET, LONDON N16 8JN



I get the feeling that the intimate and absorbing nature of the 'onDeadWaves' sessions has had a lasting impact on the participants. Is that right, James?

"I'd never collaborated with someone like that before, I'd been used to working completely on my own and not letting anyone else into the process, so it's been a very new way of approaching music for me," he replies. "I've definitely learned a lot from the experience. Working with another person means the result is always going to be different to what you might expect because you've got two heads instead of one. I guess I've also learned to let people into my space more often!"

So James was a solitary character, pretty much just happy in his own company, who has opened up to the pleasure and pain of a shared creative project. Did working with James offer any lessons for Polly too?

"One of the important things for me was being in the moment and enjoying every bit of it as a result of that," she says. "In the past, when I was making my solo records, I would spend hours and hours deliberating over every tiny sound, all the drum sounds and that kind of stuff. With this record, we both made a conscious decision not to get hung up on the small technicalities of things. We decided to just go for a vibe and enjoy that vibe without really thinking about it too much."

This was most probably helped by not having some great master plan for the album. Or any preconceived ideas at all, really. As the record evolved, the duo found that they interacted on an increasingly intuitive plane,

and having the freedom to riff on emotions and go where the mood took them is perhaps part of the reason why they produced such a haunting and atmospheric sound.

"This album is really quite abstract in places," admits James. "A lot of it is about a feeling. A lot of times, Polly would be scribbling away at the lyrics and I'd be working on musical stuff, and then we'd just kind of do it and not talk about it."

"It was like instinctively understanding each other," adds Polly.

I ask Polly about some of the lyrical concepts on the album, but she's not too communicative to begin with. When I press her, she finally acknowledges that if 'onDeadWaves' has a theme it's one of loss and longing.

"There's a lot on the album about losing precious things in your life," she reveals. "But it's about overcoming that and the journey you take, the ups and downs and highs and lows of the journey of life. So I don't think it's a sad album, it's an album about looking to the future and staying positive."

I question her about the sort of "precious things" she's talking about, but again she's not very forthcoming.

"We all experience loss in our lives," she says, somewhat gnomically.

Has she ever lost a close family member? "Friends," she says.

She won't be drawn further, but what's interesting about this is Polly's lyrics and phrasing, plus her very distinctively shivery voice, suggest someone who has been touched by their fair share of anxiety and trauma. 'Blackbird', for example, which has lines like "I've got a big black bird in my bedroom / He keeps singing to me / He says you will not believe / The shit I have seen", comes on like an avian version of the "black dog" metaphor Winston Churchill famously used to describe his bouts of depression. Maybe her bohemian upbringing – her mother was an artist, her father an actor – have made it easier for her to vocalise deep and often dark feelings. Or maybe she's simply wise beyond her years.

James has likewise been through some tough periods in his time. He dropped out of Reading University after a year due to health problems. Listening to them singing 'Autumn Leaves' – "I miss you most of all, my darling / When autumn leaves start to fall" – I suspect neither of them has had an entirely smooth ride of it. Their ability to dig out little nuggets of beauty from the emotional pain is quite an achievement, then. And with 'onDeadWaves', it makes for very compelling listening.

'onDeadWaves' is out now on Mute

130 LIVING BY NUMBERS

HOME TO A BUNCH OF UPCOMING YOUNG GUN COMPOSERS WORKING TO BLUR THE LINES BETWEEN ELECTRONIC AND CLASSICAL MUSIC, **130701 RECORDS** CELEBRATES ITS 15TH ANNIVERSARY THIS MONTH. WHATEVER HAPPENED TO MAX RICHTER, HAUSKCHA AND JÓHANN JÓHANSSON, EH? **DAVE HOWELL**, THE MAN AT THE CONTROLS, TELLS THE LABEL'S TALE

WORDS: NEIL MASON

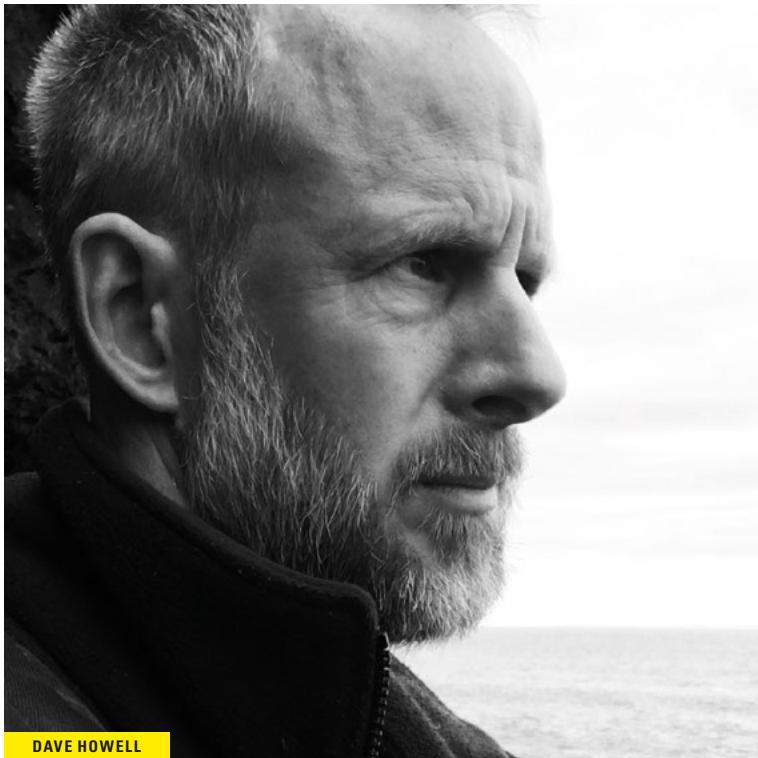
Back in 2001, long before the world went dreamy-eyed for neo-classical, that intriguing meeting point of composerly discipline and electronic experimentation, a little record label tucked away in a quiet corner of Brighton was sparking up a match and wondering what might happen. An offshoot of FatCat Records, the 130701 imprint (more about the name in a moment) is where Max Richter first made inroads with the release of his genre-defining 'The Blue Notebooks'. It's where classical pianist Hauskcha found an outlet for his groundbreaking "prepared piano" pieces. It's where the Oscar-nominated composer Jóhann Jóhannsson once called home.

From their beginnings as a record shop in Crawley, West Sussex, FatCat became the unofficial nerve centre for the rapidly expanding and mutating UK electronic music scene of the early 1990s. In more recent times, it has championed the likes of Sigur Rós, Múm, Frightened Rabbit and Animal Collective. The company has had an eventful history and 130701 boss Dave Howell has played an important part in that, having sat at the top table alongside founders Dave Cawley and Alex Knight for almost 20 years. A graphic designer by trade (his fanzine 'Obsessive Eye' was stocked by the shop), Howell joined the team to help with the fledgling record label when a whopping rent hike saw the store close its doors in 1997.

As well as creating much of the company's artwork, Howell was responsible for many of FatCat's most innovative moves. He conceived and oversaw the 'Split Series' releases, a sporadic run of 12-inch singles featuring artists pitting their different sounds and styles against one another. From there, he developed the Splinter Series imprint, taking great pleasure in what he describes as the "destabilising excitement of noise and the anchoring pull of pop hooks".

But it's Howell's work with 130701 that has really made a mark. The label was set up in 2001 (around the time that the FatCat mothership moved its HQ to Brighton), with just one aim – to release 'Sings Reign Rebuilder', the debut album by Canadian post-rock supergroup Set Fire To Flames. Fifteen years on, the label has become a vibrant and vital nucleus for a growing scene of composers and musicians who were often previously operating in isolation. The release of 'Eleven Into Fifteen', a compilation of 11 exclusive tracks from the artists who have been signed to 130701 over the last decade and a half, proves the point.

Dave Howell, it would seem, has a lot to answer for. And we have a lot to ask him.



DAVE HOWELL



MAX RICHTER

130701 is celebrating 15 years in business. Do you ever wish you had given it a more sensible name?

"I do actually like the slightly cryptic, awkward name we picked, although I think it confuses the hell out of people as to how to verbalise it," says Dave Howell. "It's thirteen-oh-seven-oh-one."

It all makes perfect sense when you realise it's the date the label was formed...

"I like its totally unpretentious grounding in just being a date, rather than trying to encapsulate something through verbal associations or allusions."

What was the original plan?

"There was never a plan. 130701 was set up purely to release the first Set Fire To Flames album, which for political reasons had to be separated from the main FatCat label. There wasn't the slightest inkling that it would become some kind of modern classical imprint. It wasn't until two or three releases down the line, after albums from Sylvain Chauveau and Max Richter, that we started to conceive of any kind of coherent aesthetic."

How much of a curveball was it to have an offshoot that paddled in classical waters?

"When you look through its history, FatCat has been one massive splattery succession of curveballs. The record shop occupied a very influential position in electronic music. It had strong links with people like Underground Resistance, Jeff Mills and Carl Craig. It was also somewhere that really helped push the early UK electronica scene. So when the shop closed and the label started, I think a lot of people expected it would be mining that same vein. But right from the off, we were trying to escape easy classifications by releasing improvised hip hop, guitar music and harsh noise stuff like Merzbow, as well as electronic records. Then came the singer-songwriters, the folk bands, the indie bands... So it's been a constant process of shredding preconceptions, shedding skins, growing new limbs."



SYLVAIN CHAUVEAU



HAUSCHKA

You seemed to blaze trails, if you'll pardon the pun, with Set Fire To Flames. Or was that sort of work always around and we just didn't notice?

"Set Fire To Flames didn't suddenly appear fully formed out of nowhere. They sit within that Godspeed, Silver Mt Zion, Fly Pan Am axis from which they emerged. You can also look back to a bunch of utopian freak-out stuff, to the work of 1960s American avant-garde composers like La Monte Young and Tony Conrad, to some 70s krautrock and bands like Harvester and Träd Gräs Och Stenar, to more contemporary artists like Jackie-O Motherfucker, the No-Neck Blues Band and Boxhead Ensemble... so SFTF weren't without peer or precedent. What was unique and fresh about them was the collective nature of the group and how the wide range of their various influences and backgrounds combined and meshed together."

You also championed Max Richter's 'Memoryhouse', reissuing a record that had pretty much killed the BBC's Late Junction classical music label in 2002. What did you know that the BBC didn't?

"Ha! Yeah, I wonder if someone there is feeling sore about the way that turned out? I don't think we knew anything for sure, we just heard someone doing something interesting and forceful and intelligent, and that ticked a lot of boxes. All three of our first artists – SFTF, Sylvain Chauveau and Max Richter – had some grounding in the wider scenes FatCat was operating in. They were all using electronics and had an experimental approach to music at some level. SFTF included seven members of Godspeed You! Black Emperor, Sylvain had one foot in the electro-acoustic world, and Max had worked with Future Sound Of London and Roni Size. So it's not like we suddenly started putting out academic classical material that had no connection to other things going on in the wider label."

"WE JUST HEARD
SOMEONE DOING
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INTELLIGENT...
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A LOT OF BOXES"



IAN WILLIAM CRAIG

And then you were joined by Hauschka and Jóhann Jóhannsson. It's no surprise people have called the label pioneering, is it?

"It is flattering, of course, and I guess it feels like a vindication that what we were doing was significant, but it also seems pretty rare to hear that sort of praise. We haven't had much label-focused press through the years. When the wave was starting to break for this sort of music, the period from around 2012 to 2015, we'd gone into lockdown and we weren't able to release anything. We had to pretty much sit on our hands and watch as others got the attention."

What was the reason for this "lockdown"? It must have been difficult, to say the least?

"I can't really go into the details of why we fell dormant, but it was not voluntary. Just prior to that happening, 130701 was in brilliant creative health. We'd signed Jóhann Jóhannsson and Dustin O'Halloran, we had Sylvain Chauveau, Max Richter, Hauschka... that looked like a seriously stellar roster. But then 130701 got caught bang in the middle of this dispute. We weren't able to release anything, so ultimately we had to let the artists go."

And the timing couldn't really have been worse...

"It came exactly as the wave was breaking for the new classical genre, and people like Olafur Arnalds and Nils Frahm and labels

like Erased Tapes came sailing through. It was a massive blow for us and it has taken a big effort to recover from it. We had two or three years in limbo and we have had to rebuild a roster pretty much from scratch. It took a while to find the positive energy to re-emerge after a kicking like that, but I feel we're starting to get back to a good place again and there's lots to feel hopeful and excited about."

What do you look for in new artists? Is there a 130701 sound or style?

"I think you can see that in some of the new signings, in people like Ian William Craig, who's a classically trained vocalist processing himself through tape loops and degradations, and Resina, an improvising cellist whose material is very layered and sprawling. They're both great performers, both really interesting, and they will help take us to new places."

Knowing what you know now, what advice would you give yourself about 130701 if you could pop back 15 years for a chat?

"I'd probably make sure I had a little word with the guys who look after the legal side of things! I'd also say we should have paid more attention to giving 130701 an identity that was separate from FatCat and not waited 15 years to give the label its own website and social media networks. I don't know if I'd have done anything different creatively, though."

If you had to pick one record released on 130701, which one would it be?

"Man, that's pretty tough... but if you were to force me, I'd say 'Sings Reign Rebuilder', the first Set Fire To Flames album. It's probably the record that least fits into the post-classical mould the label has become associated with and I think SFTF are the act that the classical crowd find the most challenging, but it was our debut release and it's also the one that chimes most closely with my own sensibilities. I just love how broad and intense it is. It's had so much spirit and love invested into its creation. As a physical thing, the packaging is amazing. As an expression of a particular place and time, it's conceptually really tight. It's kind of hard to tire of a record when there are so many different angles to explore within it. As an end to end listen, it's also a truly incredible journey."

130701's 15th anniversary 'Eleven Into Fifteen' compilation is out now

ALCHEMICAL BROTHERS

BEYOND THE WIZARDS SLEEVE

The Soft Bounce
Phantasy Sound

You need sizeable nuts to call your outfit Beyond The Wizards Sleeve. The imagery alone... Gandalf, Harry Potter, Mickey Mouse and those sodding walking buckets of water. Merlin. Catweazle. "We're off to see the wizard, the wonderful wizard of Oz..." Best not Google "wizard's sleeve", by the way. Do not do that. Then there's actual wizardy music... Rick Wakeman in that bloody cape? 'Pinball Wizard'? Roy Wood (yes, yes, two zeds)? Wizard rock (wrock) is an actual thing too. Best not look that up either.

Originally a moniker for an anonymous side project (their cover was blown pretty swiftly), it seems they chose their name just because it sounded very British and a bit 'Carry On' film daft. Move along, no wizarding here. Unless you count the pair who've conjured up this offering.

Erol Alkan was behind Trash, London's hugely influential 90s indie night, and pioneered the early 2000s mash-up craze. His Kylie/New Order hybrid was performed at the Brits by Ms Minogue herself. He's a renowned remixer (Daft Punk, Chemicals, Justice, Hot Chip), an in-demand producer (Kluxons, Late Of The Pier, Mystery Jets), and Phantasy Sound is his label. Done well for himself, all told.

Alkan's foil is esoteric connoisseur Mr Richard Norris. Fresh out of college in the late 80s, he scored a job at the St Albans-based Bam-Carus label, where psych rock, 60s garage and all manner of weird musical shizz were de rigueur. While interviewing Genesis P-Orridge for the label's in-house magazine, Norris got tangled up in 1987's infamous 'Jack The Tab' album, met Dave Ball, formed The Grid, and the rest you know. Done well for himself, all told.

Meeting through their clubbing adventures a decade or so ago, Alkan and Norris first came under the Beyond The Wizards Sleeve umbrella by carving out a niche as a DJing duo specialising in unheard underground tuneage galore. They released a few 12-inches of psych rock cut-ups that are as rare as cold chips these days (fortunately collected on 2008's 'Beyond The Wizards Sleeve Ark 1' LP), not to mention landing a pile of remix jobs (see 2009's 'Re-Animations Volume 1' set). The logical next step? A debut album. Oh look. Handy that.

'The Soft Bounce' opens with 'Delicious Light'. A sloooow builder, it aaaah-aaahs and ooooh-ooohs

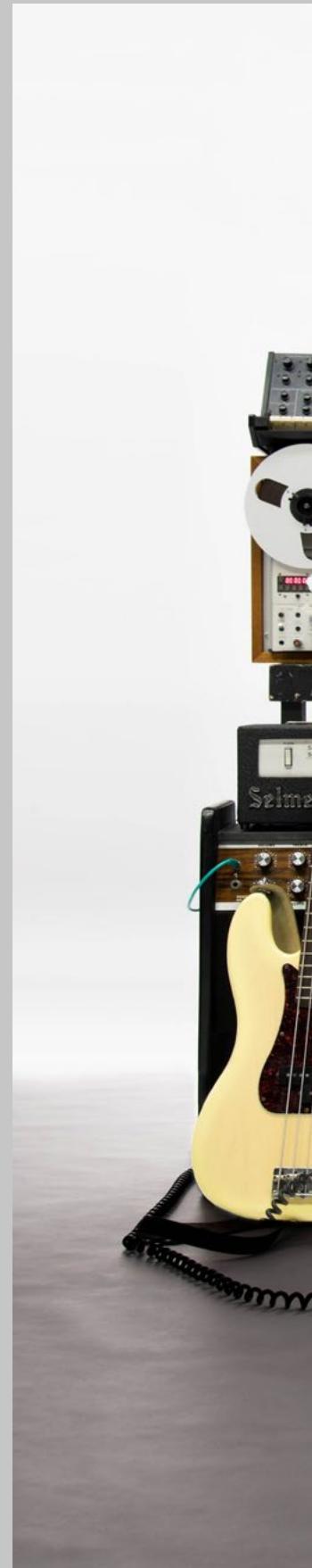
along nicely (the velvet pipes of Ms Hannah Peel no less), before the gentle throb of a bassline appears out of the mist, a motorik beat kicks in, and off we go. 'Iron Age', featuring Mystery Jets singer Blaine Harrison, is a bit Bentley Rhythm Ace, the 'Silver Machine' riffola and electronic gurgles and blips ripping a new hole in time and space. Then there's the Gallic pop Stereolab-isms of 'Creation', with the excellent Jane Weaver on vocal duties, and the Beatles-ish 'Door To Tomorrow', with Gorky's frontman Euros Childs centre stage...

Four tracks in and it's all sounding quite familiar. Is it down to the coat-tail tugging influences being so on the money that the whole thing seems like it's always been here? An album you picked up somewhere along the line, can't remember where, one you've reached for regularly in the years since because, well, it has that feel of a classic...

This notion is helped considerably by the fact that 'The Soft Bounce' is a proper record, with an A-side and a B-side, like in the olden days. So while the A-side is mainly uptempo bangers played with a pretty straight pop bat, the B-side is a proper journey, six tracks making up one complete movement across a single side of vinyl. It starts with 'Black Crow', a bruised 60s strings-drenched sway-along. It's followed by the instrumental 'Tomorrow, Forever', a seven-minute stunner that breathes in and out while its swollen orchestral sweeps have you holding your breath like the best Max Richter or Hauschka pieces. When 'Tomorrow, Forever' rolls gently into the title track, an 80s car crash of Steve Winwood 'Higher Love' percussion, The Passions' 'I'm In Love With A German Film Star' melody, and My Bloody Valentine guitar washes, you almost want to stand up and cheer. Marvellous stuff.

The whole thing really is a treat. Influences are worn on sleeves, but you get the feeling that's the point. Their people say 'The Soft Bounce' "ends somewhere that is different from where you started". Don't all journeys? For both Alkan and Norris, it's their respective musical trips that have brought them here. And now it's your go. This is an album that puts music back where it belongs and it's something that needs listening to – you know, sitting down, dropping the needle, and actually *listening* to.

NEIL MASON





Phantasy



AUDION

AUDIONAlpha
!K7

Richie Hawtin collaborator Matthew Dear makes song-based electronica under his own name and minimal techno as False. But he's best known for his muscular workouts as Audion, in particular for the 2006 anthem 'Mouth To Mouth'. 'Alpha' is more of the same: 13 big-room bangers complete with cavernous basslines and irresistible hooks. It's a shame that 'Bob The Builder' isn't actually a cover of the TV theme tune, but otherwise it's flawless. AH

GRACE JONESWarm Leatherette
Island

Grace Jones may have started out in the disco era, but it was the albums she recorded at Nassau's Compass Point Studios with Sly & Robbie that cemented her reputation. With 'Warm Leatherette', first released in 1980, Jones tackles a range of covers, including Roxy's 'Love Is The Drug'. The sessions embraced loose, dub-inflected, period funk grooves, best exemplified by the previously unavailable material featured on this comprehensive deluxe reissue, most notably the two versions of Joy Division's 'She's Lost Control'. As abrasively soulful as ever. MS

STEVEN JULIENFallen
Apron

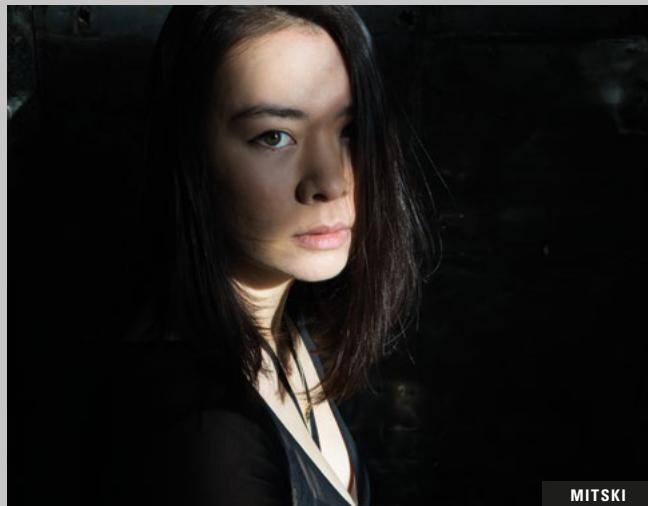
Under his FunkinEven alias, he fills floors with releases on his Apron imprint, including material by his good self as well as by artists such as Seven Davis Jr. Now west Londoner Steven Julien is doing it under his own actual real name. This debut long-player is a game of two halves, the sunny day, wonked up, jazz funk licks of Side One (see the piano house stylings of 'XL') acting as a counter to the dirt grinding techno grooves on the flip (check out the sleek, rolling 'Jedi'). It's an absolute beaut. SR

**VINCE CLARKE
& PAUL HARTNOLL**2Square
Very

Once you start thinking about unlikely partnerships, this one takes some topping. Yet the Erasure/Orbital soundclash isn't nearly as daft as it might seem. The fingerprints of both day jobs are all over every track on '2Square', but none of the eight cuts explicitly sound like one band or the other. So the deliciously ravey 'The Echoes' is lit up with bright pop flecks, while the solid four-to-the-floor of the gospel-esque 'All Out' gets a proper hi-NRG towelling down. NM



IAN WILLIAM CRAIG



MITSKI



SARATHY KORWAR | PHOTO: FABRICE BOURGELLE



THOMAS VAQUIÉ

IAN WILLIAM CRAIG

Centres
130701

Ian William Craig is a Canadian opera singer. He's also a fan of reel-to-reel tape recorders and an aficionado of circuit bending. On 'Centres', Craig constructs a sonic landscape comparable with William Basinski's 'Disintegration Loops', with passages run through multiple tape heads to simulate decay. The result is a grainy recording full of alternately sombre and elegiac gestures, often claustrophobic but frequently moving, while Craig's distinctive vocal sounds like Rufus Wainwright interacting with electronic textures. **MS**

MITSKI

Puberty 2
Dead Oceans

Behold an indie record enriched with electronic details. A guitar twangs to the quiet beat of a repetitive drum pad, buried deep in the mix. A warbling choir of organ-like synths rise up in 'Once More To See You'. Vocals lead the way; a lush, husky voice with a vast range and lyrics stripped of metaphor. The last track, 'A Burning Hill', is brief, simple and beautiful. It really is the perfect way to end any album. **SL**

SARATHY KORWAR

Day To Day
Ninja Tune

The startling debut album from American-born, India-gripped and London-based master percussionist and producer Sarathy Korwar, 'Day To Day' is released in collaboration with the Steve Reid Foundation, an organisation supported by the likes of Four Tet, Gilles Peterson and Nick Woodmansey (who mixed this set). The nine tracks here are built on Korwar's recordings of India's ancient Sidi community, combining their unearthly vocals and African-derived rhythms with jazz and electronic textures. Brave, heady and genuinely fresh. **KN**

THOMAS VAQUIÉ

Ecume
AntiVJ

These vivid and elaborate synthscapes are derived from pieces created by French composer and sound designer Thomas Vaquie for site specific audio-visual installations. Separated from its original context, Vaquie's intensely hyperreal, futuristic music retains a wonderfully portentous, filmic edge – for my money, he's a shoo-in for the 'Blade Runner 2' soundtrack – and it's surely only a matter of time before all manner of auteurs are beating a path to this ridiculously talented guy's door. **VI**



BURIED TREASURE

UNEARTHING ELECTRONIC GOLD

THEY WERE CALLED **VIDÉO AVENTURES**. THEY WERE FRENCH, THEY HAD LINKS TO THE EXTREME ROCK IN OPPOSITION MOVEMENT, AND IN 1981 THEY RELEASED 'MUSIQUE POUR GARÇONS ET FILLES', A SUPERB EXAMPLE OF UNDERGROUND ELECTROPOP WEIRDOSITY

I bought Vidéo Aventures' 'Musique Pour Garçons Et Filles' album shortly after its release in 1981, at a time when I was spending absolutely every penny I had on records. Literally; even dinner money was diverted into the vinyl fund. I went without a meal just to acquire Cabaret Voltaire's 'Sluggin' Fer Jesus'. My mother looked on with horror, as if at Imelda Marcos' vast shoe rack, at the collection of some 150 albums I'd accumulated by the age of 19. It was the period in which I enjoyed my most intense relationship with music. Each album was a precious investment. If I didn't love it at first, by golly I learned how to.

No such problems with 'Musique Pour Garçons Et Filles'. A Francophile since I was a kid, I was instantly infatuated with this mini-album, featuring eight miniatures of Gallic avant electropop recalling Erik Satie, Hector Zazou's ZNR, Bernard Parmegiani's applied musique concrète, The Residents and Jacques Tati, as well as the 1960s/70s French cartoon series 'Les Shadoks'.

I later found out that Vidéo Aventures was a project led by synthesists Monique Alba and Dominique Grimaud and featuring members of the extreme left-field rock group Etron Fou Leloublan, one of a number of outfits that were part of a still-submerged French equivalent of krautrock (frogrock?). Etron Fou were also affiliated to the Rock In Opposition (RIO) movement, which accounted for some of its more Byzantine instrumentation; the slide guitar on 'Laissez-Nous Entrer Dans Vos Cœurs', the first track of this album, for example.

RIO was co-established by Henry Cow, a band more associated with bassoon solos than playful synthpop. However, RIO was not just in opposition to record company conservatism, it also stood for a new Europeanism of rock. Henry Cow drummer Chris Cutler issued 'Musique Pour Garçons Et Filles' on his Recommended label, of which I was an avid follower. This was music too out there even for the NME.

I wasn't aware of these connections at the time; I preferred to know as little as possible about Vidéo Aventures, the way one sometimes prefers not to have an exotic language translated. 'Musique Pour Garçons Et Filles' is sculpted and wired by a wit, charm, elegance and fierce intelligence that is peculiarly French. On a superficial level, I delighted in the helter-skelter, in the shiny pleasures of 'Tina' and 'Zazou Sur La Piste' and the closing 'La Ballade Des Cardiaques', a track that builds in toxicity until it stops suddenly, like the end of the world or the final episode of 'The Sopranos'. Like everything here, each piece is an oblique pathway to possible and impossible futures.

Despite its popism, the album barely registered even in the synth-ubiquitous year of 1981. I see now that it prefigured Stereolab, even Daft Punk in its way. And for all that hindsight, I still revel in its irresistible strangeness.

DAVID STUBBS



HEAD
TECHNICIAN

Zones
Ecstatic

PYE CORNER AUDIO BIG CHIEF
DONS A NEW CAP TO EXPLORE DEEPER
ANALOGUE REACHES

Does it matter when and where a recording is made, or what it references, or what cultural baggage it comes with? These are the questions that rattle around my cranium while I absorb 'Zones', the latest release from Martin Jenkins, best known as Pye Corner Audio but recording here as Head Technician. It may seem like an indulgent way to launch an album review, but his modus operandi makes it pertinent.

Jenkins, you see, has forged a reputation on the back of Pye Corner Audio's 'Black Mill Tapes', a series of four albums produced under the cute conceit of being a collection of analogue tape recordings "discovered" by our humble "Head Technician". Perhaps this 'Blair Witch' device, the artist distancing himself from his work, helps us to assimilate the raw material without any irony?

It's a pared down affair, where Jenkins lets the machines do the talking, in this case the Roland MC-202, TB-303 and TR-606. 'Divergent' stirs with echoes of the Radiophonic Workshop's 'Doctor Who' theme, then leapfrogs several decades ahead to acid techno. 'Exit Strategy' recalls the sparse beauty of LFO. On 'A Future', a waspish gurgle soon unfurls into something more expansive, with ripples of waves radiating into the ether.

What these have in common is bass ostinato. I admit I had to google that. As soon as you hear it, it becomes immediately familiar – the taut, squelchy, modulating bassline that builds in insistence and intensity throughout 'Zones'. Most tracks revolve around its repeated patterns, even if some tweak away for a minute or so. You can hear the filmic tension bubbling up in the title cut, while 'Escape' suddenly pivots, dissipating into what sounds like a rocket re-entering the Earth's atmosphere, and 'Echo Blooms' uses the repetition for emotional effect. It's like a call sign from a long abandoned space station, full of mordant hope.

Once you've finished scoffing at the naivety of retro futurism, where do you go from there? Some scavenge among the wreckage of our analogue past. There are worse places to linger.

JOOLS STONE



THE INVISIBLE | PHOTO: PHIL SHARP

THE INVISIBLE

Patience
Ninja Tune

Their pedigree alone makes The Invisible stand out. But despite working with acts as disparate as Zongamin, Polar Bear and Adele, the London trio's third album finds them keeping things wonderfully low-key, even on this complex, multilayered axis of synthpop, funk and soul. Jessie Ware, Anna Calvi, Rosie Lowe and psych scene eccentric Connan Mockasin support frontman Dave Okumu's gauzy vocal on what turns out to be an uplifting post-Prince odyssey. JK

MARSHEAUX

Ath.Lon
Undo

Gaining attention with a cover of Gershon Kingsley's 'Popcorn'? Last album a reworking of Depeche Mode's 1982 opus, 'A Broken Frame'? Without hearing a note, you know Greek duo Marianthi Melitsi and Sophie Sarigiannidou are going to do a tidy line in warm electropop. Big choruses and thrumming melodies galore, 'Ath.Lon', their fifth long-player, nods deliciously in the all the right directions. The Cure-isms of 'Safe Tonight' and the OMD love that's almost everywhere else should catch your ear nicely. SR

KONX-OM-PAX

Caramel
Planet Mu

Producer and visual artist Tom Scholefield lightens the tone for his second Planet Mu set. Inspired by listening to old rave tapes, some of the tracks act like photocopies "where the drums have dissolved and it's just the melodies that have survived". Simple and uncluttered, the album's strongest material pairs twinkling melodies with ambient slurry. 'Caramel' may be largely beatless, but it pulses with vibrant, joyful energy. One for fans of Boards Of Canada, Lone or Clams Casino. CoG

ARIA ROSTAMI & DANIEL BLOMQUIST

Wandering Eye
Glacial Movements

Recorded at the kind of snail's pace that makes New Order seem like The Brian Jonestown Massacre, the dread-ambient pieces on 'Wandering Eye' were created in several stages. First, Rostami and Blomquist collect samples and found sounds. Next, the San Francisco duo layer piano and synths. And then, with everything sounding gorgeous, they scuff it up and add distortion. The end result is redolent of The Caretaker's Jim Kirby, mixed with the low-end darkness of Roly Porter. A compelling combination of peace and disquiet. AH



LTO

The Number From Which All Things Come
Sullen Tone

Expansive and disquieting sci-fi netherscapes give a sense of gravitas to this numerology-fixated debut album from LTO, a member of the shadowy Old Apparatus collective. Ten is the magic number here, as it was for Roman occultist Agrippa, and the arcane references (AM static, a Celtic bodhran, dirty 808 beats) range from the dystopian 'Tweleven' to the elevating 'Revive', and are sure to resonate with Future Sound Of London devotees. An utter sonic one-off, this bass operator is forging startling new ways ahead. CG

ASHER LEVITAS

Lit Harness
Planet Mu

A "lit harness" is apparently a device that holds you in a calm place while chaos happens all around. It's sadly not available on eBay as yet, but Asher Levitas – a member of experimental London outfit Old Apparatus – shows you what that might sound like from both points of view. 'Lit Harness' is an often unsettling record, but on tracks such as the choral 'Sheathe' and the wave-like washes of 'Waiting By An Open Door', you don't half feel the calm. SR

SWANS

The Glowing Man
Mute

Michael Gira's Swans, carvers of immense blocks of sound, were always about noise and poetry, and this album, the last from the band's post-2009 line-up, delivers two hours of emotion, beauty and visceral thrills. Gira's perennial themes of human fragility abide among some intense gear shifts, with 'Frankie M' and the title track (20-plus minutes apiece) particularly explosive high points of commotion, groove, restraint and release, invoking both New York's no-wave noise and Germany's motorik drive. MR

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Fractures
A Year In The Country

A skillfully weighted blend of dark folklore and synthesised experimentation, 'Fractures' is a bit special. The contributors include The British Space Group, The Hare And The Moon, and former Psylons man Keith Seatman, each adding a twist to the sometimes enchanting but often unsettling atmosphere. With reference points such as Robin Hardy's 'The Wicker Man' and the electricity blackouts of the 1970s, it will have a particular resonance for the younger baby boomers. Anyone got a light? P



DJ SHADOW
The Mountain Will Fall
Mass Appeal

JOSH DAVIS CRAFTS LINKS WITH HIS PAST AND THEN SETS THEM IN A BOLD NEW SONIC TERRAIN

What you want to know is, 'Is it as good as 'Endroducing....', right? Yes, yes, yes it is. Arguably unlike anything else that Josh Davis, aka DJ Shadow, has released since his debut in 1996, 'The Mountain Will Fall' feels like another out and out classic, not least because it makes a virtue of his hallmarks rather than try to hide them.

From its expansive and evocative title track, which opens the album, to its closing moments, 'The Mountain Will Fall' mainly relies on sample-heavy instrumentals, dreamlike mini epics that transport the listener through many moods. There are even occasional knowing nods to Shadow's early work, like the tinkling pianos sprinkled around and the distinctive marching drum break from 'In/Flux', his first single, which finds its way onto 'Ghost Town'.

It's as if these have been included less as links to the past and more like indicators to highlight how far Shadow has travelled. Because although, as ever, his work is informed by hip hop culture, this is a harsh new sonic terrain that only those who've witnessed his recent stints behind the decks will be prepared for. The influence of trap is clear on much of the material – the comforting, organic sampladelia that Shadow is best known for has been invaded by a digital savagery and an almost industrial sensibility, all edginess and fucked up aggression.

Take the heavy drums that leave dents all over 'Depth Charge' or the way that 'Mambo' starts like Herbie Hancock's spacey 'Watermelon Man' but is enveloped by a creeping acid bassline. 'Three Ralphs' is similarly an orgy of nostril tweaking sub-bass and malfunctioning drum machinery. 'Ashes To Oceans' is the closest thing to a blissful moment, the melancholic double bass and piano lazily sloping along, with soothing ambient synths on top. One of the LP's two rap joints is another friendlier moment, as Ernie Fresh voices the old skool flavoured 'The Sideshow'. The other, 'Nobody Speak', featuring Run The Jewels, is menacing and mean but equally enjoyable.

An album that sees DJ Shadow doing what he does best, only doing it in new and hitherto unexplored ways, 'The Mountain Will Fall' is classic through and through.

BEN WILMOTT



BRIEF ENCOUNTERS

A QUICK CHAT WITH MATTHEW HERBERT ABOUT THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF RECORDING A NAKED BODY...

Your new album, 'A Nude (The Perfect Body)', is quite the conversation starter. And also a conversation stopper. It's basically someone, stark naked, in a room for 24 hours... and you've recorded it all?

"In essence, yes. I started the recording process, then handed over control to the person being recorded."

Now that's not an idea that suddenly pops into your head. Has it been brewing for a while?

"Despite the modern mainstream assumption that music is primarily a form of temporary decoration, I still believe it is potent stuff, even without words. The ability to turn any sound into music is an amazing gift, so it's a question of thinking of compelling sounds to work with. I was interested in transgressive noises and the most awful sound I could think of was hearing someone else taking a shit. It seems obvious in retrospect, but it took a few months to realise I was describing a nude." So this is in the grand tradition of nude portraiture... in sound?

"Yes, its inspiration is much more in the art world than in music." Can you describe the room this person was in? We imagine it's like a squash court.

"It sounds a little sleazy, but it was a hotel room. I wanted to use a room that was the equivalent of a blank slate. We needed a bed and a bathroom, so a hotel became the obvious choice."

We initially assumed the person was you. But on listening, it's not you, is it? "I don't think the world needs another portrait of a self-regarding white male. It's the challenge of listening to another body that is the interesting friction."

We like the plop in 'Is Shitting' very much. What was the most surprising noise the body made, barring the obvious?

"There is the sound of a menstrual cup on 'Is Hurting'. I think there's something liberating about hearing a female body in its raw form, not how it has been filtered, misrepresented and abused through the years. She made the recording herself and this was what she chose to record."

The track titles are very evocative. The eight-minute 'Is Coming' made us blush before we'd even heard it.

"Both 'Is Masturbating' and 'Is Wanking' felt either too squeamish or too prurient. I'm sure it's not the first orgasm on record, but the end point seemed more important than the getting there when I listened back to the raw material."

Where do you think your fascination for recording sounds rather than instruments comes from?

"Musical instruments can be wonderful, but they don't offer a way out of music's current cul de sac. The world is full of sounds we can harvest."

We shudder to ask, but what's next for you?

"A book called 'The Music'. It describes my next record... a record that I'll never make."

'A Nude (The Perfect Body)' is out now on Accidental



NITE JEWEL



ED SCISSOR



THE DANDELION SET



HAUSCHKA | PHOTO: MAREIKE FOECKING

NITE JEWEL

Liquid Cool
Gloriette

If you like your electro-funk served skeletal and slinky, you might enjoy a glass of 'Liquid Cool'. Citing influences as diverse as Janet Jackson and Autechre, LA singer-songwriter Nite Jewel, aka Ramona Gonzalez, offers R&B vocals dripping in yearning and there are spooky, madrigal-like harmonics at play on tracks such as 'Was That A Sign'. The simple melody lines, metronomic handclap beats and sparse 80s production don't always live up to the enchanting voice, but it's still a solid return for Gonzalez after a four-year hiatus. JS

ED SCISSOR

Tell Them It's Winter
High Focus

It's not often you find a record as carefully crafted as the latest from Ed Scissor and his production partner Lamplighter. 'Tell Them It's Winter' is a tight fusion of minimalist electronics and alt-rap verses, all dark and downtempo and almost avant garde in places. Tracks like 'Week' are rhythmical perfection, with bleak lyrics layered gracefully on stripped back percussion and raw synth sounds. If there's any truth in the story that this might be the last time Ed and Lampy collaborate, then what a way to sign off. FM

THE DANDELION SET

A Thousand Strands 1975-2015
Buried Treasure

With retro-futuristic, avant-pop elements, the lysergic heart of this cracking debut resides in subterranean 60s London. Sunny psych nuggets (think The Kramford Look melded with Soft Machine and Stereolab) are elevated by spoken word quirks, imbuing the standout track, 'Bloom', with an infectious yé-yé groove. But there's an ambiguous hauntology-influenced murkiness here too, weaving a contemporary edge into the strands of kosmische folk and moody library music. All in all, a trippy, swirling record that's well timed for summer escapades. CG

HAUSCHKA

Room To Expand (Expanded)
130701

If your ears were among the many alerted to the immersive wonders of neo-classicism by Max Richter's 'Sleep', then you'll surely appreciate this newly extended boundary-challenging beauty. Classical timbres are given delicate experimental edges with sure-handed poise throughout; the piano's "prepared" string interventions (at points clamped, bound by felt, or restricted by cork, for example) are never less than beguiling, and range from hypnotic ('La Dilettante') to metronomic ('Sweet Spring Come') to reverie-inducing ecstatic ('One Wish'). CG



MALA | PHOTO: CASEY MOORE



SEMI PRECIOUS | PHOTO: BARBORA MRAZKOVA



BJARKI



LOOSE MEAT

MALA

Mirrors
Brownsville

In which the DMZ and Deep Medi dubstep don does a reverse Paddington and travels to Peru, exploring the country's musical culture and recording local musicians. As a sequel of sorts to his 2012 'Mala In Cuba' album, this is no lazy travelogue. From field tapes and panpipes to zapateo foot percussion, 'Mirrors' is a thrilling mix of traditional Afro-Peruvian rhythms and instrumentation with Mala's deep, meditative bass weight. Croydon and Lima have never felt closer.

CoG

SEMI PRECIOUS

Ultimate Lounge
Squareglass

If the title suggests one of those faceless 90s compilations, rest assured it's a deliberate nod from sardonic south London crate digger Guy Baron. As Semi Precious, Baron splices together forgotten chill-out cuts, dampened, distorted and overlaid with heavy repetition of his Robert Wyatt-ish vocals, which are particularly hypnotic and eerie on 'No Distractions'. He's making a convincing bid to be the James Blake of lounge here and his bite is worse than his bark. It would certainly soundtrack a disquieting spa treatment. JS

BJARKI

5
Trip

There are some wonderfully off-the-wall electronic manoeuvres on '5', the first of three sprawling albums from Icelandic maverick Bjarki due out this summer. The moods vary from menacing, like the rap-flavoured hard techno stomper 'Here It Comes...', to plaintive ('T4it 3') and playful ('Travel In Space'). Several tracks feel like spontaneous live jams, others more studio-based experiments, but self-indulgence is never on the menu. Bjark-ing mad but brilliant. BW

LOOSE MEAT

Loose Meat
Whipped Cream

A strong debut from the avant-disco project of Capitol K's Kristian Craig Robinson and Archie Bronson Outfit's Mark "Arp" Cleveland, with vocals from Cibelle and Viva. 'Loose Meat' is a groove-heavy mix of wacky synths and repetitive beats. The text-to-speech vocals on 'MdrnLv' are followed by eclectic, stretched out synthesisers, while 'Harbour' layers manipulated, robotic voices on top of funky percussion. It all sounds like a lost relic from a parallel dimension. We're just glad we found it. FM

DIE KRUPPS

Stahlwerk Requiem
Bureau B

Here, across two lengthy tracks, we get to hear what happens when a krautrock supergroup remakes a classic. The album in question is Die Krupps' 1981 debut, 'Stahlwerksyfonie' ('Steelworks Symphony'), an industrial music prototype recorded at Can's Inner Space studio. The luminaries revisiting it are Die Krupps main man Jürgen Engler, drummer Mani Neumeier, two of the guys from Faust, and Pyrolator (aka Kurt Dahlke), with American chum Scott Telles in the mix too.

The reworking takes the actually slower original and heats it up with more intense slashing guitar – still sounding borrowed from Keith Levene's 'Metal Box' white noise, itself prime krautrock pilfering anyway – a relentless bassline and percussive pyrotechnics. It all makes for a darkly thrilling listen. The German industrial angst that fired the 1981 album is now more pronounced thanks to precise audio engineering and discipline, not to mention the 35 years that have passed at lightning speed since then. Don't be waiting for the chorus, though. **MR**

COBBY & LITTEN

My People Come From The Sea
FilthyBroke

Steve Cobby has always been ahead of the game, whether creating the sumptuous soul grooves of Ashley & Jackson in the 80s, or founding cheeky funk-hop outfit Fila Brazillia long before Mr Scruff et al got their act together. This unique collection of songs sees him ploughing new territory again, teaming up with poet and prisons writer in residence Russ Litten.

Cobby's productions here are spartan and economic, reminding you of the kind of bedroom grime Wiley used to make before he had hits, all preset sounds and cheap drum machine clatter. That leaves plenty of space for Litten's stream of consciousness, delivered in a broad northern accent and tackling subjects ranging from the brutally realistic, like the portrait of a desperate mother driven to pre-Christmas shoplifting on 'Iceland', to the more nightmarish or impressionistic, such as the album's country-infused title track. Enduring, engaging stuff, with way more imagination than most. **BW**

ODONIS ODONIS

Post Plague
Felte

Toronto noiseniks Odonis Odonis drew comparisons with Big Black for their 2001 debut, 'Hollandaze'. Though they've since jettisoned some of their more lo-fi aspects, evidently mothballing guitars in favour of overdriven synths and fried drum machines, this follow-up is no less sonically challenging.

Reaching for the farther-flung parts of their record collection, Odonis Odonis channel early EBM, industrial music, souped-up Suicide, and the demented howling of Mark Stewart for what turns out to be a well-judged change of pace. 'Needs' chugs along with lead singer Dean Tzenos outlining his desires in the form of hysterical screaming and low growling. 'Pencils' lulls you into a false sense of security before unleashing a wall of feedback. And on 'Vanta Black', the guitars are fetched for an unholy riff-driven noise clash that's sure to clear a room.

Invigorating and thrilling. Yes, it's also a little derivative but, damn, it hits the spot. **AH**

SUOKAS

The New Cycle
PRAH

The use of electronic techniques to harness found sounds and live instruments drives the work of Russian collagist Sergey Suokas. 'The New Cycle' is an attempt to produce an avant-techno set utilising field recordings, piano motifs and percussion, something that sits in tandem with his compositions for strings, wind and traditional instruments from his Karelia home region on the Russian-Finnish border.

The results are often atmospheric and compelling, as on 'Subsekvenser', while the slow, swirling drone of 'Fleberbett' invokes late 60s London sonic alchemists the Third Ear Band, albeit probably unwittingly and albeit cast into a futuristic ocean underscored with buzzing electronic cables. That transcendent spirit continues when the *Saturnalia Orchestra* enhance the flickering 'Ruva'.

When Suokas underpins outings such as 'Echobuss' and 'True Source' with that defining thud of techno, heaving and interweaving on beats originated in Detroit's modern ruin, his mission to tread new ground with arcane sounding instruments can be considered beautifully accomplished. **KN**

NECRO DEATHMORT

The Capsule
Rocket

'The Capsule' is a spaceship, Matthew Rozeik and AJ Cookson are the pilots. They invite guests on board with 'In Waves' – a pacy track that's sharp around the edges and promises a full blown industrial party. When it seems it'll erupt into chaos, the metallic, steamy atmosphere dissipates and all that's left is a cavernous vessel and a heap of trepidation. Ripley is surely lurking around the corner cradling Jones.

From then on, each concept on this record is stretched out, with sounds lingering and hanging in isolation. It plays seamlessly with almost no need for track distinction, leaning somewhere closer to a film score or an art soundscape than a commercial album. A tea-break halfway through would be very welcome, but instead it ominously cruises in outer space towards a dark and bleak ending. A fascinating listen all the same, best consumed with lights off and eyes shut. **SL**

DM STITH

Pigeonheart
Octaves / Outset

It's been seven long years since American troubadour DM Stith's acclaimed 'Heavy Ghost' album, a strangely beautiful, melodramatic debut that blew the critics away. Echoing a similarly intricate baroque artistry, 'Pigeonheart' feels a bit like a divine intervention, with modular synths and drum machines adding oomph to the haunting balladry and florid arrangements.

On 'Amylette', Stith's soaring, plaintive voice flits in and out of the heavenly electronic thrum like a phantom, while 'Rooster' signals perhaps the most marked change to his dizzying maelstrom of sound. "Hear the hunter speak," Stith urges, before unleashing a whirling babble of clattering synths, rumbling bass and tribal rhythms.

A wonderfully accomplished and highly original record, 'Pigeonheart' finds the enigmatic New Yorker on glorious form. And with an abundance of unreleased material in his locker, there's the delicious prospect of more to come. Maybe don't leave it so long next time, yeah? **VI**



FAKEAR | PHOTO: TOM OXLEY

FAKEAR

Animal
Counter

If there was a house sound for Counter Records, what with Submotion Orchestra, Jono McCleary, Maribou State and the like on the books, you might loosely describe the Ninja Tune offshoot as having an urban R&B flavour.

The label's latest unearthing, 24-year-old Frenchman Théo Le Vigoreux, cocks a full snook at all of that with this, his debut long-player. House sound? Pft. 'Animal' brings a little something of the exotic to proceedings with a distinct world music flavour, which is not nearly as Guru Josh as it might sound.

Mixing up Bollywood beats, harps, all manner of chants, helium vocals, tabla taps and various assorted tinkles, rattles and shakes, Fakar underpins the lot with some very wholesome grooves. 'Lessons' is panther-sleek, while 'Ankara' would be a welcome sundowner choice on any Med terrace.

Counter just seems to go from strength to strength. **SR**

DEERHOOF

The Magic
Upset The Rhythm

The noise pop lifers return with their 13th studio album, the follow-up to 2014's 'La Isla Bonita'. Fifteen tracks long, 'The Magic' was recorded in an abandoned office space in the middle of the New Mexico desert, taking just seven days with no pre-planning.

While it's billed an "album about what happens when you leave your comfort zone", it doesn't deviate too far from the band's eternal state of being – spiky art rock mixed with garage punk, but always with this charming lightness to it, mainly the result of Satomi Matsuzaki's joyful vocals. This time round, they've drawn especially from the music they enjoyed as children – everything from glam rock and hair metal to doo-wop and R&B.

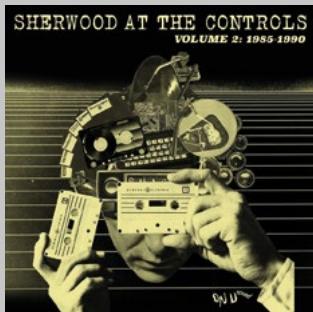
Sonic Youth man Thurston Moore once said that Dinosaur Jr's music sounded as though it was made up of component parts – 32 of them, like a perfect set of teeth. I'm not sure the comparison is a perfect fit, but it's always stuck with me as an image, and never more so than when listening to Deerhoof. **CoG**

FIGURE-GROUND

Reality Revision
Figure-Ground

After releasing three numbered EPs, Figure-Ground now uncork a whole album revolving around a concept which they explain as using sound and vision in an exploration of virtual reality and technology. The duo, who seem to be based in Yorkshire, are basically trying to pull the rug out when it comes to what audiences hear and see, drawing on 20 years immersed in rave music, drum 'n' bass and breakbeat, hot-wired with their own disruptive sonic regurgitations. The rhythms are pulsating and weighty, coloured by vocals and awash with dreamy stretches where the sky gives way to infinite space.

At a time when too many artists are using technology to chart the same old terrain, it's heartening to find a group dedicated to taking things to the next phase and using their imaginations in a way that's reminiscent of the early Cabs. To get the whole, pretty deep manifesto, visit the Figure-Ground website – figuregroundmusic.com – and enter their all-encompassing world. **KN**



VARIOUS ARTISTS

Sherwood At The Controls Volume 2: 1985-1990
On-U Sound

MORE PLANET-ROCKING RARE SONIC GOLD FROM THE ON-U MINES

By 1985, Adrian Sherwood had long been established as the UK's most audaciously experimental studio assassin. He was closely associated with maverick reggae, but he acknowledged that the most happening sounds of the day were those beaming in from New York, where hip hop and electro producers had turned the drum machine into a lethal weapon and the city into a hotbed of trailblazing electronically created music.

That DMX clatter and cut-up electro-funk served Sherwood well. Nobody mated and mutated dub and hip hop the way that he did. And he took it to a higher level when he hooked up with the Sugarhill Records house band – Doug Wimbish, Skip McDonald and Keith LeBlanc – to form Tackhead, whose defining 'Mind At The End Of The Tether' is just one riveting peak on this second collection of rare nuggets from the On-U Sound vaults.

There are several more Tackhead-related tracks here. The 'Alternate Dub' of Doug Wimbish & Fats Comet's pulsing 'Don't Forget That Beat' and Keith LeBlanc's 'These Sounds', for instance, as well as Tackhead's collaboration with vocal hurricane Mark Stewart on 'Hypnotised'. Other curios range from Michael Franti's San Francisco jazz poetry collective The Beatnigs, with a fun-packed remix of 'Television' (later famously revisited by Franti's Disposable Heroes Of Hiphoprisy), to Italian industrial outfit Pankow, who cover Prince's 'Girls & Boys'. Honourable mentions for Ministry's 'All Day' remix, the 'Kinky Sex Wet Mix' of Rinf's 'Big Bondage' and KMFDM's 'Don't Blow Your Top' too.

The selection returns to Sherwood's beloved reggae mutants for its closing stretch. This includes two from the ever-reliable Dub Syndicate (who evolved from Creation Rebel after Sherwood hit it off with drummer Style Scott), Bim Sherman's ghostly 'Haunting Ground', and African Head Charge with the space roots of 'Hold Some Version'. There's also 'Music & Science Madness', which shows what happened when Sherwood inevitably teamed up with Lee "Scratch" Perry, the other godfather of circuit-stretching studio alchemy.

Adrian Sherwood remains one of the giants of electronic sound in its wildest, purest form, and this often astonishing set shows why. It will be welcomed by the many devotees of his untouched electronic gumbo. Hopefully there's no bottom to this particular well.

KRIS NEEDS



PLAID

The Digging Remedy
Warp

GOING THAT EXTRA STEP, THEIR LATEST STUDIO OFFERING OUT-PLAIDS EVEN THEMSELVES

Let's start with Benet Walsh, guitarsmith, psychedelic folkist and perhaps someone you haven't heard of before. Walsh is the long-time Plaid collaborator who co-wrote 'Eyen', a 2001 track featuring some unforgettable guitars. I've often found myself listening to Plaid albums hoping for similar sweeping hooks. And, yes, the groovesome 'Get What You Gave' (from 'Spokes'), the 'Doctor Who'-ish 'Unbank' (from 'Scintilli') and the euphoric 'Nafovanny' (from 'Reachy Prints') are all so hooky, they are like audio Velcro.

But when Plaid men Andy Turner and Ed Handley aren't unearthing earworms, they're drilling into detail. The result is that a lot of their recent work is spikier, with brilliantly intricate electronics. Enthralling for fans like me, that's for sure, but maybe harder going for newcomers.

Welcome to 'The Digging Remedy', an album with more bait than an angler's tackle box. Turner and Handley are the kings of four-chord melancholy, as evidenced on 'Yu Mountain', but they collide the classic Plaid template with fresh influences. 'CLOCK' takes its stuttering starting point from dayglo EDM and the feather-light 'Melifer' opens as if it has been excavated from Radiohead's 'Kid A'. The urgency of 'Saladore' and the shuffling 'Reeling Spiders' both have a filmic quality, to the point that they're just waiting for credit sequences. The snappy and trippy 'Dilatone' develops into a gloriously atmospheric piece and the sustained tone of 'Baby Step Giant Step' turns into an electronic mosh pit. As for the awkward Eastern waltz of 'Lambswood', well, actually that just stays awkward, but it warrants repeat listens.

All the way through, 'The Digging Remedy' is sewn with a dark ambience that polishes the melodies rather than muddying them. This is true from the ominous opener, 'Do Matter', to the stunning closers, 'Held' and 'Wen', both of which are designed to pluck your heartstrings to breaking point.

Which brings me back to Benet Walsh. With the guitars more noticeable than ever, I reckon his input is key to the success of this album. Take 'The Bee', a perky shuffle that could be silly but turns Turner and Handley's fascination for detail into something quite memorable. 'The Digging Remedy' is Plaid-plus – charming, addictive, and their best since their 'Eyen' days.

FAT ROLAND



AIR | PHOTO: LINDA BUJOLI

AIR

Twentyyears
Parlophone

From the opening chords of the beautiful 'La Femme D'Argent', the first track on this retrospective compilation, the late nights of the late 90s all come rushing back, bathed in a rosy glow and this chic French pop music. Air's 'Moon Safari' album was put together with what now seems like architectural precision, everything in the right place; its gossamer melodies immediately familiar, the instrumentation and playing defining a new style of music that had nostalgia hardwired into it. The 1990s never felt so perfect.

It's interesting that 2004's 'Cherry Blossom Girl' is sequenced second on the disc, before the sublime 'Kelly Watch The Stars', as if Air want to remind us that their wistful art abided beyond the 90s chill-out for frazzled clubbers. The fact is that the group's Versailles touch of beauty and splendour remains one of the very best things to have come out of the dying days of century 20 and, as this collection and Nicolas Godin and Jean-Benoît Dunckel's non-Air projects prove, it was no fluke. **MW**

ALEXIS TAYLOR

Piano
Moshi Moshi

If ever an album did exactly what it said on the tin, then this is it. Alexis Taylor's 'Piano' is precisely that – a collection of 12 songs featuring the Hot Chip frontman accompanied only by a piano. Given that Hot Chip are such a wised up and knowing band, the toast of hipsters everywhere, this is a surprisingly innocent and intimate listen, the very opposite of ironic.

The keyboard playing is delicately executed and the singing is beautiful, but the overall effect is very raw, a totally uncompromising and close up snapshot of Taylor's emotional state at the time of the recordings. As he points out in the press release, tracks such as the Elvis standard 'Crying In The Chapel' and 'I Never Lock That Door' have a gospel feel, albeit an atheist's one. Like everything about this album, that's gospel with none of the token frills but all of the feeling. **BW**

MATTHEW HERBERT

A Nude (The Perfect Body)
Accidental

It's never really crossed our mind that you could, or indeed you would want to, make repetitive beats from the sound of a poo plopping in a toilet. But then we can't all be Matthew Herbert.

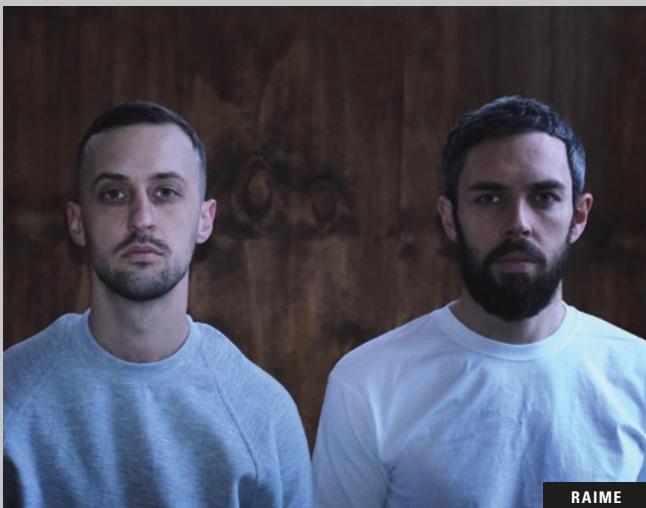
For his latest "he's done whaaaaat?" outing, Herbert has made a study of the human nude... in sound. Recording all the noises that a naked human body made over a period of 24 hours, he's created this album in eight parts – 'Is Sleeping', 'Is Eating', and so on. And no, 'Is Coming' isn't the arrival of a visitor. Then again...

This being Herbert, it isn't just a load of body noises because he's created musical passages from the sounds. As you'd expect, it's engaging stuff, at times uncomfortable and, on occasion, very funny. But most of all, it does what good art should do – it had us talking and throwing up (no, 'Is Vomiting' isn't featured) more questions than it answers.

Mr Herbert at his provocative best. **NM**



STILL PARADE



RAIME



SAMARIS



THYLACINE

STILL PARADE

Concrete Vision
Heist or Hit

It's funny to think that Niklas Kramer, aka Still Parade, hails from Berlin, because this album has the sun-drenched vibes of California positively shining out from within. It's most obvious in the layered vocal harmonies, highly reminiscent of The Beach Boys' 'Pet Sounds', as well as in the general laid-back feel of the record, but heaps of gorgeous oscillating synths drag the sound out of retro territory – particularly effectively on the single, 'Chamber' – and make it a refreshing listen. **BW**

SAMARIS

Black Lights
One Little Indian

'Black Lights' is the third album from Samaris and finds the Icelandic trio recording vocals in English rather than their native language. It's a dreamy and atmospheric record, the alien-like electronics and minimalist drums working alongside Jófríður Ákadóttir's otherworldly voice. 'Gradient Sky' is downtempo, with soft pulses and repeated "oohs" and "aahs", while 'T3mp0' aptly speeds things up, almost sounding like stripped back drum 'n' bass. We welcome the move away from Icelandic if it means more records like this. **FM**

RAIME

Tooth
Blackest Ever Black

Other than an EP under their Moin moniker, 'Tooth' is the first full release from the London duo of Joe Andrews and Tom Halstead since 2012. So what have they been assembling in the studio shadows? Raime's formidable electro-acoustic compositions have only become more focused and tightly wound, combining dark sound system sonics with the unbearable tension of post-hardcore and a vanguard post-punk spirit. Sample the stalking, nervous 'Cold Cain' for Andrews and Halstead at their best. A meticulously crafted and stunningly realised album. **CoG**

THYLACINE

Transssiberian
Intuitive

A creative and experimental debut from William Rezé, Thylacine's 'Transssiberian' is a journey in a figurative and literal sense, cultivating samples and sounds from his encounters on the Trans-Siberian Railway. 'Introduction' aptly starts the story, a building synth melody interspersed with whistles and hisses, ending on the slam of a train door being shut. What follows is a fusion of cultures, sounds and stories, all of which add up to a meticulously crafted ride – and one you'll want to stay on until it reaches its final destination. **FM**

GURU GURU GROOVE BAND

The Birth Of Krautrock 1969

Purple Pyramid

Kraftwerk were still tapping bongos in hippy arts labs when Guru Guru were formed in the late 1960s by free jazz drummer Mani Neumeier and bassist Uli Trepte, who heard Jimi Hendrix and Pink Floyd and were inspired to create their own freewheeling electric noise, stretching the boundaries from a mangled guitar angle.

Joined by assorted guitarists and like-minded musical activists at a Heidelberg studio one night in early 1968, the group filled themselves full of strong LSD and played until dawn, telling the engineer to turn the echo up full for extra spacie ness. The results, which have been recently unearthed by Neumeier, are presented here in the form of five 'Mescalito' segments, which are about as anarchic as krautrock ever got, along with three further tracks, including 1971's 'Space Ship (Live)'.

The title of the album is a lofty claim but, having been recorded two years before their epoch-making 'UFO' debut, it's quite justified. And they're still going today! **KN**

GAUDI

EP

RareNoise

Not to be confused with the Catalan architect whose wibbly work wows in Barcelona, this is the prolific Italian-born, London-based producer Daniele Gaudi, a man who has spent half a lifetime genre-bending, serving up 15 studio albums underpinned with dub and electronic experimentation.

'EP' is a two-track snifter of his forthcoming 'Magnetic' full-length, due in 2017. Teaming up with the beyond eclectic RareNoise label, Gaudi was given free run of their impressive archive to use as his orchestra. Reading the sleeve notes for the melodic, textured 'Electronic Impromptu In E-Flat Minor', you want to imagine it as a supergroup featuring Merzbow on electronics, Bill Laswell on bass, and Japan's Steve Jansen on drums. In actual fact, the track is entirely created from stems, with Gaudi hauling out his theremin and his Minimoog for a bit of topping up.

A morsel it might be, but heck, what a thrill-packed 15 minutes. Cannot wait for the full thing. **NM**

LABEL PROFILE

THE INDIE IMPRINTS CATCHING OUR EARS

**LABEL:** 100 Billion Wires**LOCATION:** London**EST:** 2015

POTTED HISTORY: Music publisher Helen Papaleontiou was struck by 'Pastoralia', a futuristic short story by George Saunders about a man working as a caveman in a theme park. The tale cuts to the very core of being a cog in the corporate machine and nudged Helen into a why-can't-I-set-up-an-indie-label-because-surely-I-have-as-good-an-idea-as-any-of-the-people-I-have-dealt-with-over-the-years moment. After much whining and haranguing, she enlisted the help of old pals Serena Parsons (a live music agent) and Tarik Nashnush (A&R man), and 100 Billion Wires was born.

MISSION STATEMENT: "That moment between holding the record you've just bought and playing it for the first time," says Helen. "That anticipation. Can that be our mission? We want you to want to put our tracks on your mix tapes because you can't bear to be the only person who knows about them."

Well, that's us sold. You?

KEY ARTISTS AND RELEASES: It's early days, but there's a couple of acts to look out for. All The People, an electro-soul outfit from south London, are fresh from the studio after finishing their debut album, while Broadway Sounds are an electronic afro beat-infused trio from Melbourne, Australia, currently basking in the release of their 'Exclusive Love/Digital Influence' six-tracker.

"We're savouring the little moments, like hearing our artists on the radio," laughs Helen. "Being played by Gilles Petersen and Lauren Laverne have been real highlights."

FUTURE PLANS: "We are running on pure instinct and our respective experiences," offers Helen at the suggestion there might be a master plan. "For us, it's about human interaction. Tech and social media are vital these days, but my heart sinks when I hear words like 'algorithm' and 'curation'. How am I going to get from Cocteau Twins by way of Pusha T via Captain Beefheart to Zapp? That's when you surprise yourself. The thing is, artists don't need labels now, so it's all about the personal relationships. A shared love of Prince helps, although it's not compulsory."

NEIL MASON

'Exclusive Love/Digital Influence' by Broadway Sounds is out now
100billionwires.com

FIRST AND LAST AND ALWAYS



FRESH FROM HIS FASCINATING COLLABORATION WITH STEVE COBBY, POET AND AUTHOR **RUSS LITTEN** TALKS ABOUT THE FIRST AND LAST RECORD HE BOUGHT, AND THE ONE HE ALWAYS GOES BACK TO

FIRST THE SWEET

Wig Wam Bam

RCA (1972)



"As a little lad, I was obsessed with Native Americans. I would boo the cowboys in the Saturday morning westerns on TV and cheer loudly whenever an arrow felled them from their horses. So when I saw The Sweet performing 'Wig Wam Bam' on 'Top Of The Pops', it was love at first sight. I pestered my mam to buy me a copy and I played it over and over again. Still the best crunchy guitar sound ever."

LAST THE DURUTTI COLUMN

Time Was Gigantic... When We Were Kids

Factory Too/London (1998)



"I've always loved The Durutti Column, but this album somehow slipped past my radar when it was first released. I heard it round a mate's flat recently and felt compelled to invest. Vini Reilly, like all true conduits of the muse, is plugged into an alternative universe. His stark and beautiful music makes me feel both very young and very old at the same time."

ALWAYS TALK TALK

Spirit Of Eden

Parlophone (1988)



"This takes references from all my favourite music – Miles Davis, Can, Neil Young, The Velvet Underground – and still sounds utterly unique and on its own. It's just got everything – anger, tenderness, wonder and elation. If there was such a thing as a waiting room for heaven, this is the record they would be playing. Like all great art, 'Spirit Of Eden' creates a real and vivid world that you never want to leave. Just sublime."

BEN LUKAS BOYSEN

Spells

Erased Tapes

Ben Lukas Boysen, the Berlin film score composer and acclaimed electronic producer under the name Hecq, is the latest addition to the revered neo-classical label Erased Tapes – home to the likes of Icelandic electro-acoustic maestro Ólafur Arnalds, ambient chamber music duo A Winged Victory For The Sullen, and German keyboardist Nils Frahm.

'Spells' is expertly mixed and mastered by Frahm (as he did Boysen's enchanting debut, 'Gravity', which is being reissued alongside this album), adding depth and lustre to the Berlin wunderkind's meticulously designed sound collages. But it's Boysen's own intricate programming – enhanced by cellist Anton Peisakhov, harpist Lara Somogyi and drummer Achim Färber, plus various echoes, delays and compressors – that underpins everything here, eliciting sparse but immersive atmospheres.

Take the propulsive, piano-led calm of 'Sleepers Beat Theme', from the soundtrack to a titular short film about the Trans-Siberian Express. Or 'Nocturne 4', building from dead-of-night eeriness into a blissful crescendo. It's bewitching stuff through and through. **VI**

COLDER

The Rain / Goodbye

Bataille

Colder feller Marc Nguyen Tan has managed to cover the bases of contemporary electronic musician and avant-garde production pioneer. His latest offerings, 'The Rain' and 'Goodbye', are made up of unreleased and reworked material, and they both show Colder at his best.

'The Rain' is a pretty dark experience. 'Market Day' is full of weird blips and crackles, with high-pitched UFO sounds that echo in and out. It's not totally otherworldly, though. 'All Along The Way' has more of a groove to it, shuffling along with a solid beat. By contrast, 'Goodbye' is more downtempo and more contemporary, the drums pulsing slowly while Tan's vocals are almost dreamlike. The standout track, 'The Hill', starts with muted guitar strums that gradually fade into the distance before whirring synth patterns and hushed vocals ease their way in.

'Goodbye' hopefully doesn't signify the end of Colder. But if the rumours are true and these two albums are to be his final releases, you can hardly ask for a stronger way to go out. **FM**



AMBER ARCADES | PHOTO: NICK HELDERMAN

AMBER ARCADES

Fading Lines
Heavenly

It's a remarkably pretty record for someone who works with human rights law and Syrian refugees by day. But 'Fading Lines' is Dutch musician Annelotte De Graaf's long-time goal finally realised, self-funded and fulfilled after months of research to find exactly the right producer (Ben Greenberg, ex-The Men) and the right backing band (members of Quilt and Real Estate).

There are influences of punk, psychedelia and indie rock here, but they're funnelled through De Graaf's knack for a breezy tune (the title track) or a plangent shoegaze ballad ('Constant's Dream'). For all the guitar and synth effects, her songs are never buried MBV-style – although that's just a Yamaha SPX90 away. The Terry Riley-esque 'Turning Light' and the Stereolab-inflected 'Come With Me' are refreshingly understated in this overproduced world, and there's even a touch of Nancy Sinatra in the lo-fi Bontempi bossa nova of 'Perpetuum Mobile'. JK

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Late Night Tales: Ólafur Arnalds
Late Night Tales

The latest in the 'Late Night Tales' series – in which zeitgeistsy artists delve deep into their music collections to curate their ultimate after dark selection – finds Icelandic electro-acoustic musician and producer Ólafur Arnalds in the compiler's chair. Featuring material from friends, collaborators and influencers, Arnalds describes his 18-track mix as "the soundtrack of my life" and it's pretty much a flawless collection.

From the gorgeously fragile loops and layers of Julianna Barwick's 'Forever' to the enigmatic brilliance of Jai Paul's 'Jasmine', the music here is breathlessly good. There's a smattering of Arnalds exclusives too, including the electro-house convulsions of 'Orgoned' by his Kiasmos side project, while other tracks are disarmingly eerie, as deeply resonant and poignant as you'd expect from the BAFTA-winning 'Broadchurch' composer. Even 'Broadchurch' star David Tennant himself makes an appearance, reading a wonderfully evocative short story by writer Anam Sufi.

Music worth staying up for, as it quite rightly says on the tin. VI

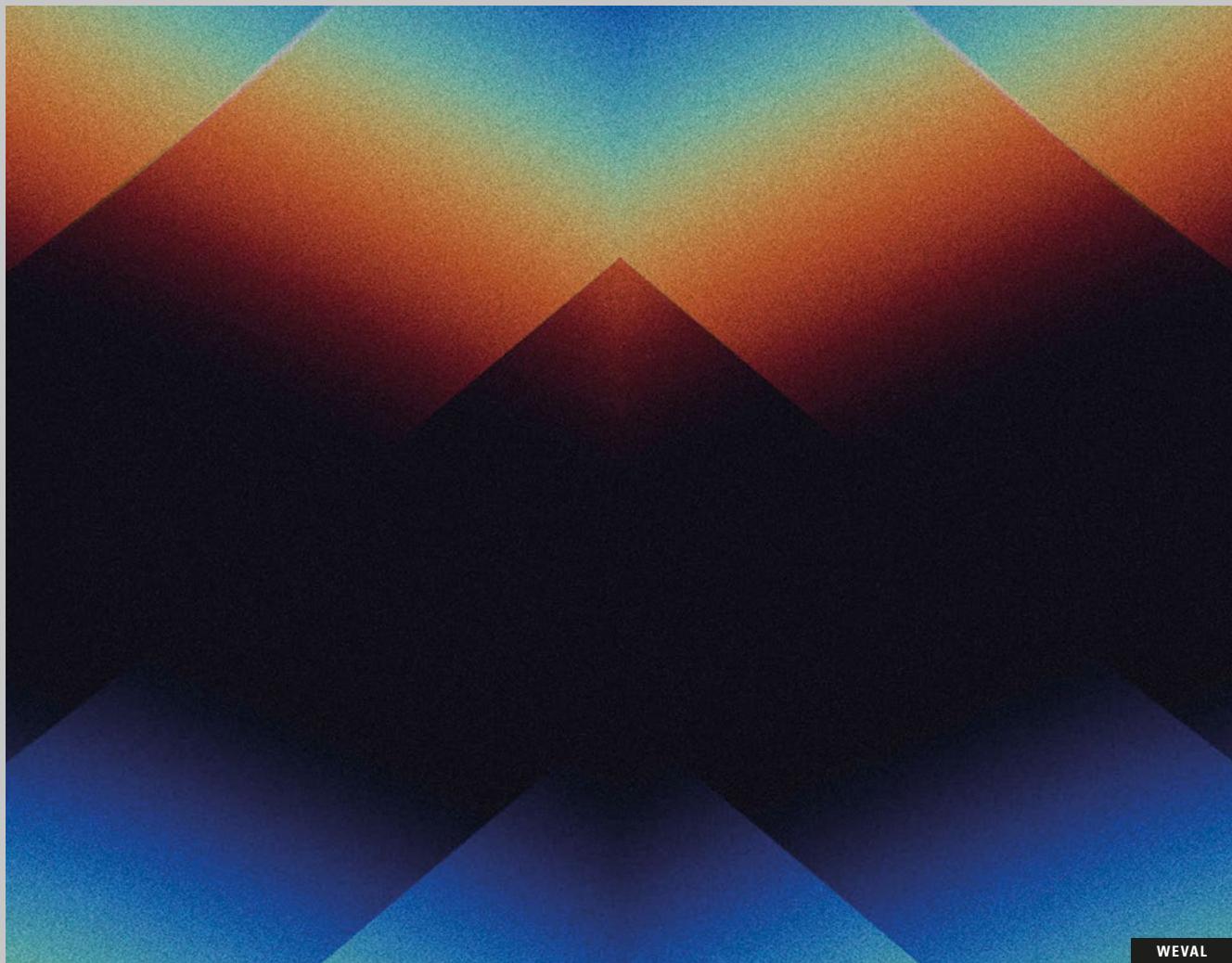
[A]PENDICS.SHUFFLE

Aware Sequence Found Life
Adjunct Audio

A mere 30 sleeps since the supremely soothing ambient goodness of 'The Evening Falls', Kenneth James Gibson has prepped yet another album – this one under his dancefloor-oriented [a]pendics.shuffle moniker.

The territory is deep and tech-house, two massive, world-shagging sub-genres that are host to way more anonymous dross than sparkling gems, but unbeatable when done right. A seeming mastery of virtually every type of electronic music means Gibson navigates easily towards the latter, and a clear understanding of what makes deep house tick is evident in the detail and texture he brings to early highlights 'Sunburned Tears' and 'Touching Space', both of which boast lush and immersive atmospherics.

Later on, he moves off-grid, embracing jazz on 'Cosmic Translations' and stellar ambience on 'Pass Through'. While the net result is never exactly groundbreaking, it's still a sure-footed new spin on oft-visited genres and a decidedly moreish experience in its own right. Highly recommended. AH



WEVAL

Weval
Kompakt

The debut album from Weval – Amsterdam duo Harm Coolen and Merijn Scholte Albers – bristles with intimate chamber pop and gnarly, after-dark funk. “We try to find the beauty in imperfection,” they say, and there’s much to love in their lurching, punch-drunk sound cosmos. The standouts are the low-burning bass-growler ‘I Don’t Need It’, the woozy ballad ‘You’re Mine’, and the endearingly tipsy ‘You Made It (Part I)’, with its out-of-tune piano and a real kink in its wonderfully off-kilter electronic groove. **VI**

UMBERTO

Alienation
Not Not Fun

Matt Hill, sorcerer of imaginary horror soundtracks, returns with his fifth Umberto album of vintage lurid fantasia. This is the sound of what you may find lurking in the cellar of your mind, from the slow creeping menace of ‘Drifters’, with its John Carpenter-esque synth waves and choral samples, to the pulsing ‘Blue Monday’ beat of ‘Dawn Of Mirrors’. There are flecks of beauty glistening in the gore, though, especially ‘White Night’, which employs the emotive tones of Victoria Gokun wailing the words of persecuted Russian poet Anna Akhmatova. **JS**

FLOORPLAN

Victorious
M-Plant

Robert Hood’s first album as Floorplan, ‘Paradise’, was one of my favourite records of 2013 and I’ll be shocked if ‘Victorious’ isn’t near the top of my 2016 end-of-year list. The opening track, the relentlessly euphoric ‘Spin’, is so captivating it takes four attempts to get past it. Mind you, that’s two less than ‘Mm Hm Hm’, which is like a 21st century take on Royal House’s ‘Can You Party’. A master at work and no mistake. **P**

IX TAB & HOOFUS

The Blow Volume 1
Front & Follow

‘The Blow’ is a new series of cassette split releases from the Front & Follow imprint, this first offering fusing West Country electronic outsider IX Tab (the spectacularly named Saxon Roach) with Suffolk oscillator guru Hoofus. On Hoofus’ individual tracks, modulating improvisations are run via dirty filters, while IX Tab presents sliced-up news broadcasts and folksy, serene weirdness. Their three collaborative pieces are exactly what you might expect with those inputs – gleefully and compellingly diverse, and just ever-so-slightly creepy. **MS**



ABUL MOGARD
 Works
 Ecstatic

RETIRIED SERBIAN NAILS LEFT-FIELD ANALOGUE ELECTRONICA LIKE IT IS IN HIS VEINS

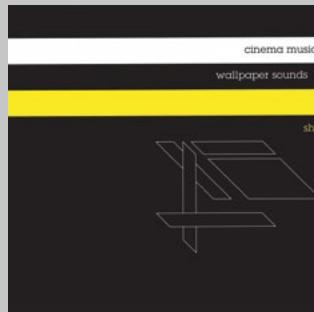
Abul Mogard's story is one of the most extraordinary in the annals of electronica. Previously employed on the production line of a steel plant in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, when he retired he found himself missing the ambient industrial sounds of his workplace, the clangs and drones and reverberations that were so much a part of his everyday life. He therefore put out onto the waters of analogue electronic music, of Moog and Farfisa organ, not just to simulate the soundworld to which he no longer belonged but, as he puts it, to "preserve my identity".

Beginning with two cassette releases on Anthony Paterra and Steve Moore's VCO label in 2012 and 2013, Mogard has built up an impressive collection of home-baked works, a selection of which is available here for the first time on vinyl. Despite only recently becoming acquainted with left-field electronica, there are reminders aplenty of established artists in these slow, burgeoning, warmly tonal, obscurely poignant pieces; of William Basinski, Tim Hecker and James Leyland Kirby (the latter particularly in the use of titles such as 'Desires Are Reminiscences By Now').

'Drooping Off' is like a moment captured from the first Suicide album, decelerated, elongated, turned over, every last grain examined. 'Post-Crisis Remembrance' hoves slowly into view like a ship approaching through the fog of dawn. 'Tumbling Relentless Heaps' is almost jolly, with its battleship grey analogue bubbles and rumbling, galley slave percussion. 'Airless Linger', meanwhile, bobs and lists and evokes moving, twinkling sodium lights on a remote horizon. Of course, pieces like this, near abstract washes of filtered sound applied in broad brushstrokes, lend themselves to all kinds of subjective comparisons and descriptions. What's indisputable is the sheer, emotional heft of Mogard's music and how that derives from the consolatory purpose for which it was originally made.

The final 18-minute piece, 'Staring At The Sweeps Of The Desert', is like voluntarily losing yourself in the vague mists of memory. It means something that Abul Mogard has undertaken this journey as an older man, guilelessly, unselfconsciously, untutored. It lends his music a sober warmth, an authenticity of sorts that is sometimes lacking in the more schematic, thought-through work of younger practitioners.

DAVID STUBBS



PETE SHELLEY
 Cinema Music &
 Wallpaper Sounds
 Caroline True

DISCOVER THE SECRET LIFE OF BUZZCOCKS FRONTMAN AS LONG-LOST ALBUM RESURFACES

Records that beg more questions than they answer are very welcome round these parts. This limited edition long-player features one track per side recorded in December 1976 by the very same Pete Shelley who popped up a year later as the frontman of The Buzzcocks.

Which coughs up the first question. Writer and broadcaster Jon Savage explains all in his sleeve notes: "These 37 minutes of proto drone/ambience were never released at the time. Pete Shelley handed out tapes to his friends". Being one of those friends, Savage recently discovered said tape in a drawer et voila. Talk about the secret life of Pete Shelley, eh?

The two pieces – the ambiently 20-minute 'Part One' and the chaotic chops of 'Part Two' – revolve around a preset rhythm machine and "fish and chips keyboards". There wasn't much choice of accessible kit in 1976 but, like anything, it's what you do with it that matters. So that fairground melody sloping in and out of 'Part One', the low-key heartbeat rhythm as it fades, and the hypnotic unsettling swirl across 'Part Two' are as infectious as they are bonkers.

Thing is, this was no flash in the pan. Pete Shelley would go on to create an electronic music high water mark in the shape of his 1981 'Homosapien' album, which he recorded with Human League producer Martin Rushent. But long before then, right the way back in 1974, Shelley made 'Sky Yen', a collection of shifting oscillator patterns akin to Cluster or Tangerine Dream that remained unreleased until 1980 when, flush with hard-earned Buzzcocks cash, he set up his own weird-shit electronica label, Groovy Records. A story for another time maybe.

Meanwhile, there's this. Beautifully repackaged, with design by Malcolm Garrett, whose work you will instantly recognise from countless record sleeves for the likes of Duran Duran, Culture Club, Peter Gabriel, oh, and The Buzzcocks. This limited run is just 500. Grab one while you can. They probably won't be around for long.

NEIL MASON

REVIEWS BY:
COSMO GODFREE
CARL GRIFFIN
ANDREW HOLMES
VELIMIR ILIC
JO KENDALL
SOPHIE LITTLE
NEIL MASON
FINLAY MILLIGAN
KRIS NEEDS
PUSH
FAT ROLAND
MARK ROLAND
SAM ROSE
MAT SMITH
JOOLS STONE
DAVID STUBBS
BEN WILMOTT

NEEDS MUST

OUR VERY OWN AUDIO MINER, KRIS NEEDS PLUGS IN THE WEIRD SHIZZ HOOVER AND FILLS HIS BUCKET WITH ESSENTIAL NEW TUNEAGE FOR YOUR LISTENING PLEASURE...



THE CULT OF FREE LOVE

Love Revolution
Wrong Way
LP

Starting from 'Pet Sounds', the sonic experiments that took place in the psychedelic 60s forged many templates later mutated by electronic trailblazers. The Cult Of Free Love, a mystery-shrouded outfit hailing from deepest North Wales but related to the Northern Star collective, give psych's early spirit a transcendental reboot on this, their first album. It begins with the ominous cable hum of 'Drone On', before 'Jaya Deva' corrals the band's swirling mix of Eastern drones, twinkly electronica and vitally unfettered abandonment. The LP then winds, floats and pulses through a roller coaster of exotic soundscapes, including three bewitching parts of 'Interpretations Of Love' and the ear-blasting aural kaleidoscope that is 'Guru Lover'. One of the grandest blends of psych and electronica for many a moon.

MANI NEUMEIER

Talking Guru Drums
Purple Pyramid
CD

Elsewhere in this issue, I've reviewed krautrock pioneers Guru Guru's seminal 1968 acid-drenched jam, which has been turned into an album after tapes were unearthed beneath several tons of bison dung and an old wall. But the really exciting outing, and confirmation that GG's original anarchic creative spirit still rages today in their long-time drummer Mani Neumeier, can be found on this 2013 set, which pits his unique percussion style against field recordings, such as Australian birds, and fleeting passing guest contributors. Neumeier's electronically treated percussion-scapes are remarkably compelling blasts of pure sonic experimentation, perhaps the strongest evidence of recent times that this music can still kick against the computerised pricks.

CHRIS PETIT & MORDANT MUSIC

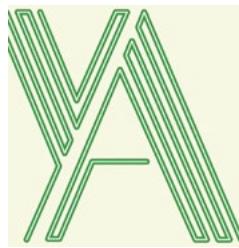
MoL Live, Kino In Die Brucke, Kln, 27-10-15
Mordant Music
Download

British crime novelist and filmmaker Chris Petit (who collaborated with Iain Sinclair on 2002's superbly evocative 'London Orbital') talks through his memories live in a Cologne venue, embellished by a spectral synth backing from Baron Mordant. Petit starts with his younger years in Germany in the 1950s, before travelling to Dusseldorf in 1978 as a Melody Maker journalist to interview Kraftwerk. When he found his tape recorder hadn't been switched on, he wrote a screenplay instead, as heard on the first 28-minute section here, during which he describes Kling Klang studios and the group's clothes, as well as what they said. He also talks about encountering William Burroughs in Mayfair ("the Indiana Jones of hallucinogenics and hard drugs"), in one of the best assessments of the man I've heard.

LORDS OF ACID

Smoking Hot
Metropolis
CD

During the very early 1990s, Praga Khan led a hardcore charge from Belgium, brandishing stupendously dumb anthems like 'Injected With A Poison' and 'I Sit On Acid'. With the success of the latter, released as Lords Of Acid, he steamed in with groaning vocalist Jade 4U's head poking over the waistband of his soiled leder-pants, ejaculating buttock-busting sledgehammer rave breaks, industrial guitar razzle, and lyrics about drugs, sex and "hairy balls", as well as a bit of simulated rumpo. This "Best Of" compilation, which includes scrotum-shrivelling jewels such as 'Voodoo U', 'Fingerlicking Good' and 'Sexbomb', is about as playground smutty that electronic music has ever stooped; the stadium jockstrap bellow to Prince's class and ghettotech's proper lowdown sleaze.



BLOODY MARY

From The Vaults
Dame-Music
12-inch

Some order is restored as French, Berlin-based producer Bloody Mary unfurls the 32nd release on her Dame-Music label. The previously unissued title track rides a flickering, accordion-like canter with deadly midway percussion tactics, while 'In Between (Rework)' is a wonderful slab of acid-flecked deep techno, boasting mellotron chorale wafting in the heavens and Mary's intoxicating whispers. 'Make Space In Your Life' floats in on fathomless, Underground Resistance-style space-strings before the tech-pulse weighs in, along with Mary's distant planet vocal. Like 'In Between', it was previously available digitally on another label but can now be heard as nature always demanded, on gleaming wax. Mary has a fantastically personal sound which is well worth checking out for lovers of the 90s golden age.

FLANGER

Spinner EP
Nonplace
12-inch

Following last year's 'Lollopy Dripper' LP, Flanger, aka Atom TM and Burnt Friedman, whip up a three-track EP of their "nuclear jazz". The title cut embellishes an album track called 'Spin', whipping up complex electronic percussion patterns in which robotic ducks splash about and weightless strings hover overhead. It all sounds like it's being tuned in from an arcane radio set. 'It From The Bit' meanwhile patters, tiptoes and whisks a sonic blancmange over shadowy beat cutlery and minimal techno pulsing. The 12-minute 'Loose Joints' ventures furthest, navigating a luminescent spectral flutter with subtle intricacy, somewhat eerily sounding like aural tracing paper has been implanted over an early 90s Frankfurt ambient creation.

FUJIYA & MIYAGI

EP 1
Impossible Objects Of Desire
12-inch

Fujiya & Miyagi are releasing their next album in the form of three limited edition 12-inch EPs, with pockets in the triple gatefold cover of 'EP 1' for when the next two missives appear. Judging by this first offering, an intriguing sonic stew is guaranteed, as it kicks off with the chugging 'Serotonin Rushes', which places David Best's trademark whispery vocals (sounding like Michael Karoli conferring with Bobby Gillespie in the gents) over a spangled throb-scape. 'To The Last Beat Of My Heart' introduces their parallel krautrock fixation in its stark clatter, before the Italo-kraut reverie of 'Freudian Slips' is underscored by gerbil's loincloth moon-dancing elements. 'Magnesium Flares' takes the EP out over a mournful Berlin ruin, paving the way for a second instalment that we await with interest.

IAN POOLEY

Meridian (Remixes)
Pooledmusic
12-inch/Download

Starting out on the mighty Force Inc Music Works imprint in 1993, German-born Ian Pooley has been firing out his pioneering tech-house monsters like an incontinent hippo ever since. His 1998 'Meridian' album has long been hailed a milestone and is celebrated here with a remix 12-inch to trail its digital debut. First up is Belfast's Bicep outfit, who garnish 'Cold Wait' with propulsive metallic sheen, before WHITE label boss Oskar Offermann unveils the turtle's head of a housey cruiser for 'Hit 'N Run'. The limb-raising occurs on the 'What's Your Number' reboot, where Pooledmusic stalwart Mathias Shober, aka SHOW-B, breaks out the Spangles and ups the emotional zap with melancholic strings aboard Tom Cruise's scrotum, flying at lower levels on his 'Beats N' FX' spinning tool.

IORI

Cold Radience
Field
2xLP/Download

Finally, some deliciously melon-whisking beatless turbulence to bring down the curtain. Field is renowned for deep ambient and techno releases and has fostered a sonic beastie with this lustrous follow-up to Japanese Berlin resident Iori's 2012 debut, 'Nexus'. Although echoing Basic Channel and Jeff Mills, the drones, swells and coruscating undergrowth snapping at rattlesnakes' genitalia on tracks such as 'Transmission', 'Distant Planet' and 'A Fall Of Moondust' also recall Suicide man Martin Rev's synthesised prairie panoramas, while 'Voices Of The Sky' is a perfect example of his beautifully rich evocations of heaven, hell, the deepest oceans and furthest galaxies. Iori says he was trying to create "an aerial sci-fi movie soundtrack". Quite likely he has, but it's also an electronic masterpiece of the highest order.

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