

SINGLE OF THE MONTH

X-PRESS 2 (H)

'Supasong' [Soul Mekanik Remixes] (Skint)

Still find it weird to get X-press 2 12s on Skint and not JBO. This is the dog's bollocks. In only X-press 2 fashion can one track cross over between house-club and techno-club, and to really make things interesting they have employed the genius talents of Soul Mekanik to remix it. Bangin' beats, driving bass and lush strings create the platform for some trademark X-press 2 arrangement and style to be filtered and twisted by Soul Mekanik into two superb mixes. The 1am mix has many progressive sensibilities and is a peak time tune, however, the 6am mix is by far the better piece of music. The 6am mix is much more relaxed and crafted in an old skool method for late nights and early mornings. It is a pity about the repeated phrase and title 'Supasong', however, this is a great 12".

RATING: 8/10 DESY BALMER

PHAT OF OUR LAND: SINGLES

T POLAR (H)

'Escort Girls E.P.' (Modernism)

Local producer Tristen Polar, aka. Gary Spence, makes his debut for fledgling UK house label Modernism in fine style with this superbly diverse three-tracker. There is nothing genre specific about any of the tracks on this EP but it would be safe to say Detroit techno has been a big influence. Title track Escort Girls is a great downbeat track brimming with warmth, and my personal favourite; What U Here For is 4/4 orientated and quite minimal, and the up-tempo crunching beats of Marmaduke, which Laurent Garnier has been spinning, completes the package.

RATING: 8/10 BARRY MCCULLOUGH

SPREE (D&B)

'All Mine' (Basic Recordings)

You have heard the buzz, seen the live show, now buy the record. The unmistakable spree vibe is now committed to wax. 'All Mine' is a soulful ride through rhythm intertwined with the vocal talents of Suzanne Savage, whose emotional yearning begs the listener to take notice. Meanwhile, on the other side, my personal favourite 'Watari' sends the collective on a jazzy path, complete with breaks so tight they could have any dancefloor in a stranglehold. Both tracks provide an insight into the blueprint of Spree's sound, where both the dancefloor and the home listening audience have been taken into account. Although neither track is openly confrontational or aggressive, you do get the impression that if the audience demands action, their arsenal will not disappoint.

RATING: 9/10 KEVIN LOGAN

RECOMMENDED SINGLES

DYLAN RHYMES (BR)

'Musika' (Whole 9 Yards)

The first of two superb releases from Mr Rhymes this month is a solo effort. Musika is a tough techy breaks number that is reminiscent of Leftfield's 'Phat Planet'. Rhymes couples tough distorted bassline and relentless crisp breaky drums to produce a slamming track. The hypnotic 'Musika' vocal gives the track even more punch. The Grooved Out Mix on the flip is equally impressive - it's another speaker shaker which again, will rock dancefloors everywhere.

RATING: 9/10 KEV TRAYNOR

FABRICE LIG (T)

'Gualapagos EP' (Raygun)

Very few European producers come close to the classic Detroit sound, however, Fabrice Lig, Arne Weinberg and Derek Carr capture the essence of Motor City and run it through a Eurocentric filter. Fabrice Lig twists the sounds of Kevin Saunderson and Derrick May into a sublime combination of funk and soul. There are three 4/4 trax and one short laidback breakbeat number. 'Fortitude' stands out with its driving kickdrum, juxtaposing percussion and dreamy melodies. Little bleeps and some acidic aria hide the deep resonant strings in the background in a total hypnotic groove. A quality EP on a promising label by a top producer.

RATING: 8/10 DESY BALMER

FAB FOR feat ROBERT OWENS (H)

LISTEN 9 TO 5

1. JUNIOR SENIOR

'Move Your Feet' (CRUNCHY FROG)

A catchy slice of punka/disco/pop from Belgium duo, Junior Senior. With its uplifting chorus, it's been a hit all over Europe and Fatboy Slim's been dropping it since way back last year.

2. NEON HEIGHTS

'Listen To The Music' (WHITE)

Currently being played by Pete Tong on a white label, it's no surprise that Nottingham's Neon Heights are mates and collaborators with Amillionsons, with lazy visions of 'Misti Blu' evident on this outing.

3. CAMERON

'Hey Ma' (ROK A FELLA)

Sometimes R&B can get a little bit too predictable, but there's always a gem comes from out of nowhere. There's no obvious answer as to why this is better than most of the genre that's around at the moment, perhaps that damn infectious chorus just shades it.

4. ROYKSOPP

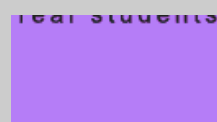
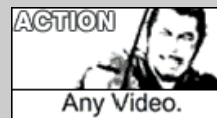
'Eple' (WALL OF SOUND)

If we didn't love Royksopp we'd be getting a little pissed off with the seemingly endless re-releases of tracks from the admittedly corking 'Melody AM'. Fatboy Slim does little to add to the original, but we never tire of hearing it again anyway.

5. FLAMING LIPS

'Do You Realise' Scott

Hardkiss mix - (WARNERS) It's the eclectic New York producer's favourite ever productions job, and thankfully he hasn't messed around too much with the already beautiful psychedelic masterpiece, by the finest band on the earth today. Yeah, you could say I'm a fan!



' Last Night A DJ Blew My Mind ' (ILLUSTRIOUS)

It must be at least two whole days since anyone last rejigged ' Last Night a DJ Saved My Life ' . Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery but when some of the impressionists have been of the calibre of All-Saints, among others, indeed must surely be regretting ever releasing it in the first place. But King Brain, DJ Pippi and Micha K have been around long enough to know when to pull out any house producers ' secret weapon - the smooth tones of Robert Owens. A lot has been done to this track in the past, but the Fab Four keep the main hook and bassline and give centre stage to good old Bob. So let ' s just call this the definitive remix and find a more recently deceased horse to flog - although I ' m eagerly awaiting the bootlegs that are bound to replace the word " mind " with something a lot less wholesome.

RATING: 10 / 10 MARTY MCCANN

DAVE CLARKE (T)

' The Wolf ' (Skint)

Is there no end to Skint Records ' attempts of global domination? Fellow Seagull, Dave Clarke releases the Wolf. This is a hard-edged, no-nonsense European-style techno monster. There are few changes throughout this record and those that happen are hard to notice. The programming is tight and subtle. Loads of percussion and hard and fast bass take you to a manic breakdown. While you catch your breath, Clarke introduces a hoarse melody and begins to increase the energy of the whole track using reverb and volume to perfection. The beat kicks back in and it is off again to hardcore heaven. There are limited picture discs available. Whilst packaging may not be his thing, Clarke shows his European peers how it is done. One of his better moments but not his best.

RATING: 7 / 10 DESY BALMER

GRAND POPO FOOTBALL CLUB (E/H)

' Each Finger Has An Attitude EP ' (BMG)

A vinyl only release, this EP has four quirky French electro house cuts that set Ariel Wizman and Nicolas Errera far apart from their Gallic contemporaries. While there may be a slight Air influence, especially on ' Each Finger Has An Attitude ' and the Goldrun remix of ' Men are not Nice Guys ' , there are also obvious sonic connections to Kraftwerk. A thoroughly European flavour then, although thankfully no Eurodance. Worth a listen or two, so that you can pretend you are a lot more cosmopolitan than you really are.

RATING: 9 / 10 MARTY MCCANN

HRK (A)

' Love World ' (Joint Records)

Ulrich Schnauss is the leftfield producer behind this remix of seventeen year-old Japanese pop singer, HRK ' s pop tune Love World. I know it sounds like a strange combination, and it is, but the end result is excellent. There are two mixes to choose from, one using the full vocal (in Japanese!) and an instrumental - head straight for the instrumental and crank it up. Love World is packed full with subtle breakbeats, great melodies and heavy swirling synth lines; if you rate Global Communication ' s style then you will love this.

RATING: 10 / 10 BARRY MCCULLOUGH

HYDRA (TR)

' Affinity ' (Discover)

I must be dyslexic! I placed this record on the turntable after glancing at the press release. ' Breakbeat mix ' it said - nice one, so I sat back waiting for some breaks, a bassline and lots of funk. Instead the bassline sat on the backburner as soaring melodies took over my room - this is god damn trance music! A second look at the press release revealed that it was in fact the ' Backbeat mix ' . Rather than feel let down though, the melody kept my spirit up. Damn, this tune is beautiful, I thought. Has trance always been this good? Or is trance just getting better? Or am I just losing some snobbery? I dunno - but please keep tunes like this coming.

RATING: 10 / 10 KEVIN LOGAN

CHRIS CARTER (BR)

' Esp / Ladybird ' (TCR)

My last request!! When I die and I ' m making my way to hell, want ' Ladybird ' to be the soundtrack to my journey. This is the sound of a no compromising attitude and complete individuality. I also like the idea of the crying bit being replaced by head nodding & foot tapping thanks to funky as feck breaks and a heart pounding bassline! Enough to wake me up again!

RATING: 9 / 10 KEVIN LOGAN

KASKADE (H)

' I Feel Like ' (Om)

My favourite house label comes through with more soulful house, as only San Francisco knows how. A city famous for its vibe and a label that creates vibes deliver a walking tempo house jam, complete with sax solo and Joslyn ' s heart-warming vocals.

RATING: 10 / 10 KEVIN LOGAN