

Musik | Bittles' Magazine

There is a strong electronic element to this month's album review round-up. I make no apologies for this considering there are such fine releases as ›Reality Testing‹ by Lone, ›Vaudeville‹ by Inigo Kennedy and ›Code‹ by Answer Code Request in amongst an absolute bumper crop of fantastic groove-based releases. So without further ado, let's begin. By **JOHN BITTLES**



First up, we have the pretty damn excellent ›Reality Testing‹, the new album by unassuming media darling **Lone**. Previous long-players ›Galaxy Garden‹ and ›Emerald‹ ›Fantasy Tracks‹ were sublime in their mixture of, among other things ambient, house, techno and rave. ›Reality Testing‹ arrives on the nation's shelves on the 16th of June and seduces the listener instantly with its gleeful experimentation and overt positivism while still managing to sound like no-one else but **Lone**. There is a noticeable Chicago house and Detroit techno vibe at work on the record that combines beautifully with his usual scattergun approach to create something very tasty indeed. ›Restless City‹ funks on all cylinders, ›Meeker Warm Energy‹ glows with a summery IDM sheen, while lead single ›Airglow Fires‹ still sounds better than anything else on God's earth. Even my cat loves this album. And there really is no better recommendation than that!



One of the very first things you notice with every single ›Comeme‹ release, is how they always sound as if the artists involved had an absolute blast creating them. So it is with the rather fabulous ›Silver Album‹, by Berlin-based Muscovite **Philipp Gorbachev**. Within the very first minute of opening track ›Arrest Me‹ you're shaking your head in wonder, thinking how no other record label in the world would have the balls to release something like this. Not that the music is bad or anything! In fact, it's fucking great. It's just that Philipp gives us tracks here that are so crazy-sounding that you almost can't take them seriously until you hear the actual skill involved. Recorded live, with bellowed Russian lyrics (told you it was

weird) and accompanied by a frantic acid house-style backing, by all laws of nature, the record shouldn't work. That it does is, seemingly, down to each track's infectious energy together with a well-honed sense of adventure and fun. And wouldn't everyone feel just that little bit better with this type of music in their lives?



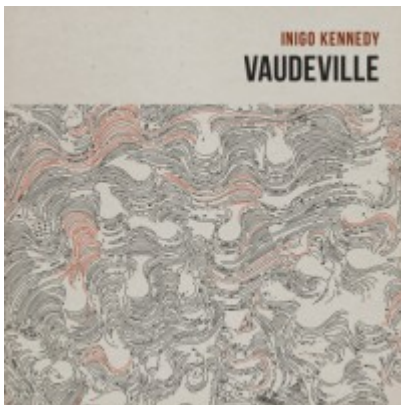
This month also sees **Nick Warren** return to the mix CD format with ›The Soundgarden‹, a double CD of textured ambience and melodic house. CD one is mostly a home listening experience and is, quite simply, one of the most beautifully emotional collection of tunes you will hear all year. **Olafur Arnalds, Nils Frahm, Of Norway** and **Clara Moto** all feature in a mix that is like a tranquil haze. Yet, this is not the type of album where you want to pick out individual tracks since it is far better experienced as one glorious whole. The second mix sees Nick Warren taking us by the hand towards the dance floor, and while excellent, pales slightly in comparison with the first CD. House and trance cuts are blended majestically in a set which builds unhurriedly with a slow, steady groove until it suddenly peaks in rip-roaring, club-shaking delight. Fans of the ›Renaissance, Balance‹, or ›Global Underground‹ series will be in absolute heaven with this.



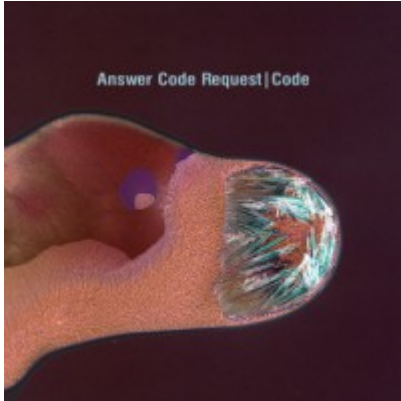
One of the best things about writing about music is that every so often you get something in your inbox from a band you've never heard of that immediately makes you sit up and think 'Wow! Where have you been all of my life'. One such record is ›Spread The Word‹, a rather special eight track record of trance-tipped house by Italian trio **Agents of Time**. ›Llawten‹, ›Stoke‹ and ›Alkatraz‹ help give the first half of the album a sedate, relaxed mood that casually and confidently suck the listener in to the record's overall vibe. This sets us up nicely for the more up-tempo second half which offers the spine-tingling techno-trance of ›Lost Dreams‹ and the epic ›HutSet‹ before closing with the gorgeous acid of ›Armonics‹. Put simply, if you are a fan of electronic music then this is as good a collection of tracks as you will hear all year.



Continuing the Italian connection, the overly talented duo **Tempelhof** follow up last years excellent ›Frozen Dancers‹ LP with ›Hoshi‹, an album of sublime emotional electronica created in collaboration with legendary producer **Gigi Masin**. With the record the trio give us ten tracks of slow burning majesty, so beautiful that they could melt the hearts of even the most evil-minded of frogs. Tracks such as ›The Dwarf‹, ›My Velvet Book‹ and ›She Left Home‹ are all quietly alluring and contain a still, contemplative air. A stunning creation of wonderful ambience the record is a thing of loveliness that is so delicate-sounding you want to gently cup it in your hand just to keep it safe.



Fans of techno music so deep you can listen to it endlessly without hearing the bottom are in for a real treat in the form of ›Vaudeville‹ the excellent new album from Britain's own **Inigo Kennedy**. The album's mixture of thumping beats, echoing bass, and emotional complexity is something to envelope yourself in, safe in the knowledge that you will never once feel bored. Tracks such as ›Aleph‹, ›Requiem‹, ›Birth‹ and ›Petrichor‹ are at turns gentle and industrial-sounding, creating an overall work which is simply stunning in its sonic agility. If this was released on ›Modern Love‹ or ›Blackest Ever Black‹ people would be wetting themselves over just how good this album is. Having been releasing music since 1996 let us hope that ›Vaudeville‹ will, finally, give **Inigo Kennedy** the success and praise which he so obviously deserves.



As if that was not enough to make June the hottest month of the year, for fans of quality techno the people at *Ostgut Ton* are also giving us ›Code‹, the debut LP by hot as fuck right now **Answer Code Request**. The album opens with the spooky ambience of the title track before ›Blue Russian‹ takes your mind to the depths of sound with a dense paranoid vibe that is totally its own. To say that this track is a bit special is like saying a biscuit goes well with a cup of tea. From there the album explores so many textures and sounds that it is entirely possible to get lost in its beautifully structured world. The sequenced hi-hats of ›Zenith‹, the aquatic funk of ›Status‹ and the melancholic groove of ›Thermal Capacity‹ all stand out in an album which is an unbridled success. Trust me, when I tell you that you need this in your life.



Having made a bit of a name for himself creating fathoms-deep dub-techno as one half of Hatikvah and sublime house with **Nadja Lind** as **Klartraum**, it is now time for **Helmut Ebritsch** to present himself as a producer in his own right. The admittedly shit title of ›Souls Transmitting‹ aside, the album is a great and surprisingly rich and varied listening affair. Apparently inspired by **Leftfield's** ›Leftism‹ the album is, at heart, a bit of a master-class in the art of deep house. The swirling synths and gorgeous bass of ›Ecstatic Truth‹ should have any right-minded person grooving in delight. ›ReStructuring‹, ›Sleep In Your Dreams‹ and ›Emerging‹ all examine the type of lush deep house that is perfect for headphones and basements everywhere. This album of surprising musical and emotional depth, in a perfect world, would reach a far wider audience than it has managed so far.



Any fan of disco or house is in for a real treat in the form of ›Punica Fides‹ (or treachery as the Romans would have it) by lovable disco deviant **Bottin**. Previous releases on the likes of ›Nang‹ and ›Italians Do It Better‹ marked **Bottin** out as a real name to watch taking in Balearic sunsets and gorgeous slo-mo house with style and panache. Yet, his brand new album is, if anything, even better than anything he has released before. ›Lies‹ opens proceedings with some shimmering synths before ›Flow Of Persuasion‹ enters the fray with a deep, funk-filled groove. **Steve Strange** of **Visage** fame adds vocals to the slightly deranged 80s funk of ›Poison‹ while ›All For One‹ is Italo-style gold. Perfect for sun-filled summer days, this is will be loved and adored by loafer wearing groovers everywhere.

And to think we never had time for: ›Like A Machine‹ by **The Emperor Machine** - may well make you dance with gleeful abandon at your local discothèque, yet it is very unlikely you will remember it by the time you get home, ›Amber's Stuff‹ by **SFV Acid** - a strange, yet very lovely collection of electronica that swells with love and loss, ›Dark Tales & Love Songs‹ by **Elefantz** - melodic house with depth, vocals and soul, ›Everybody Down‹ by **Kate Tempest** - a gloriously poetic hip hop delight, and ›Initiation‹ by Haunted Hearts - a great scuzz-filled rock 'n' roll trip from rock's new power-couple.

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)