

Music | Bittles' Magazine: The music column from the end of the world

An influential figure in the rise of acid house, **Justin Robertson** is a musician who always pushes boundaries. In doing so he can be relied upon to create music which constantly catches you by surprise. **Justin Robertson's Deadstock 33s** is a relatively new alias which sees the British producer create a body of work full of twists, turns, and mesmerising grooves. By **JOHN BITTLES**

Anyone familiar with Justin's previous work as **Lionrock**, **Revtone**, or **Gentleman Thief** will find themselves instantly at home within **Deadstock 33's** rich musical world.



Following the excellent *The Pilgrim's Ghost* LP, 2015 saw the release of the acid-flecked Balearic allure of *Everything Is Turbulence*. Described by the artist himself as »a collection of lysergic soul and atomic machine boogie, stripped down and urgent in places, delicate and dark in others, tight but loose, combining the visceral needs of the dance floor with the rich heritage of years of psychedelic audio research□ the album is a lavish, exuberant trip through the giddy heights of a night on the town. Full of post punk, dub and funk flourishes the record takes electronic music as its starting point then travels down rarely trodden roads.«

This month the album receives a welcome revisit in *Everything Is Turbulence (Remixed)*. It is a varied album where house/techno luminaries such as **Gerd Janson**, **Andrew Weatherall**, **Slam** and **Cavern Of Anti-Matter** twist the originals into strange and funky shapes. Moving from the dubbed-out house of *Running Back* label head **Gerd Janson's Melodica Dub of *Metal Taste* to the darkened warehouse crunch of **Oliver Deutschmann's Acid Strip** version of *Bajo La Luna* the record runs the full gamut of electronic sounds. Highlights include the woozy disco of **Andrew Weatherall's** take on *For One Touch* and the hypnotic pulse of **She Made Monster's** trippy refit of *If You Want To Get Into It*. Other picks include the heady electro of **Cavern Of Anti-Matter's** remix of *Soft Geometry* and the sleaze-drenched groove of **Sigward's** mesmeric revamp of *Sacred Bone*.**

With the album enjoying repeated plays on my stereo these last few weeks, the chance to send a few questions Justin's way was too good an opportunity to resist. Over a nice cup of cyber tea we discussed topics such as *Everything Is Turbulence*, how the remix project came about, his early days as an acid house originator, the art of remixing, **Hawkwind**, and lots more.

If you like a little music to accompany your reading then you can stream some choice tunes from the LP right [here](#).

[For anyone out there who has had their head in a bucket these last few years can you tell us a little about who you are and what you do?](#)

Sometimes I wish I could answer that question myself! I like to keep busy, and I like to involve myself with lots of different creative avenues, but I guess I'm best known for my life as a DJ and producer? I started to play out around 1986/87 when I was a student studying Philosophy at Manchester University, mainly doing student parties.

From 1988 I threw myself into the emerging acid house scene, and began to produce and remix for a variety of folk. From the early 1990s I was signed to *Deconstruction* as **Lionrock**, which was a studio and live project that had its up and downs, finally calling it a day in 2000.

Since then I've had a few different projects including **Gentleman Thief**, **Revtone**, and most recently **Deadstock 33s**. I have done literally hundreds of remixes, and played all over the place. I also do art having had a couple of shows that have travelled around a bit from London, Leeds, Stockholm and Manchester, the most recent being the *Explorer's Chronicle* that took the form of a 3 day multi disciplined mini festival in London's *Red Gallery*. I'm married to Sofia and have a dog called Monty.

[Your new LP, »Everything Is Turbulence« \(Remixed\) is out on the 27th of January. How did the album come about?](#)

Well, I really wanted to see what some of my favourite producers would do with my music. The original album came out last year, and was very well received, but its always exciting to see what other people can do with your parts! I chose people who I knew would be exciting and fearless, and not just some collection of remixers

that satisfied some kind of marketing plan. So between me and *Skint*, we contacted everyone and they came up with the goods. I'm absolutely delighted with the results.

The album features artists such as **Gerd Janson**, **Andrew Weatherall** and **Slam** remixing tracks from your *Everything Is Turbulence* record. How did you get such a stellar cast of contributors involved?

Most of those involved are old friends, so a friendly phone call was all it took, maybe a round at the bar? Some like the **Cavern of Anti Matter**, I admired a great deal, but didn't know personally, but once we found a contact, everyone was keen to be involved, which I was so happy to hear. **Gerd** and I have only met once or twice in person at various festivals, but we had a good email chat! Yes I'm very much a fan of all the contributors. They are all legends and future legends, so to get them all on board was a real buzz.

Remixes can be a strange experience for the original artist! You spend so long getting every detail just right, only for someone to come along and change everything. How did it feel to have the songs from *Everything Is Turbulence* reworked in this way?

Like I said before, I was really hoping that everyone would just add their own personal stamp to whichever track they chose. I didn't care if they only left a hi hat in, if that's what they wanted to do! There was no brief, except to fire at will. I think every version is a bold and personal take, they've all done marvellous work.

You have produced some fine remixes yourself, with your refits of **Björk**, **Bryan Ferry** and **The Stone Roses** firm favourites of mine. What is the secret to making a great remix?

I think its important to make it your own. To hear something you like, a part, a feeling or just a melody, and add your own spin, by way of a compliment to the original, because you've got to think the artist is happy with their version, and doesn't just want an imitation of it. That can take many forms from complete destruction or a subtle warped dub, but something of you has to come across I think?

The original *Everything Is Turbulence* album was released on Skint Records last year. For anyone out there who hasn't had the pleasure of hearing it yet, can you tell us a bit about the idea behind the LP?



It's a collection of lysergic machine boogie! I guess its taking elements of psychedelia, elements of dub, the raw rush of early Chicago house, a nod to cosmic disco and the spirit of Balearic, all blended up into a dance floor cocktail. Or something like that. There are a variety of moods on it, to match my own varied moods! But I think there is a coherent thread that binds it all together. Oh yes, and there's a **Hawkwind** cover version on it!

What is your personal highlight of the LP?

That depends on where I am and what time of day it is! I'm very happy with all of it, but I love my wife's voice on *For One Touch*, and **Lisa Elle** on *Metal Taste*, quite *Compass Point* that one! *If You Want To Get Into It* is

fun in the club!

What five songs should everyone in the world hear at least once in their lives?

Again, if you ask me tomorrow, the list will be different, but today I'm going to say...

1. **Orpheus** - *I Can't Find The Time To Tell You.*
2. **Nicklas Sorensen** - *Solo 3.*
3. **Barrett Strong** - *Ain't No love In The Heart Of The City.*
4. **Bongwater** - *The Drum.*
5. **Rod Taylor** - *His Imperial Majesty.*

Out now via UK house institution *Skint Records*, the album can be found on all good record stores, download sites, or enticing freaky dancers at your local club.

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)