

Bittles' Magazine | Record Review

With **Prince** having released not one, but two new albums this week I had sort of earmarked this slot for a purple extravaganza. But after a cursory listen I decided that rather than reviewing something which, obviously wasn't very good, I would review some great music instead. By **JOHN BITTLES**

Life's too short to write about crap music, and as there were some fantastic singles and EPs sitting on my hard-drive screaming to be heard, I decided it would be a lot fairer to write about them. So, rather than dissing a musician well past his prime, we'll be hearing about the Balearic excellence of **Sad City** and **Joel Hood**, the trance-tinged melodies of **Noetics**, **Dauwd**, and **Matias Aguayo**, the techno head-fuck of **Paula Temple**, **Lakker** and **Surgeon**, and so much more.



To start us off, we have ›Introduction To Lisboa,‹ a gorgeous six-track EP by **Sad City** which is hitting the shops at the end of the month. Now, I know that this is a long time to wait, but trust me when I inform you that this record is more than worthy of your time. The EP is a lush, sun-filled, Balearic affair, that heralds Glasgow-based producer Gary Caruth as a producer at the top of his game. To prove the point have a listen to ›Scyphozoa,‹ which is eight minutes of mellow, melodic brilliance. ›Apricot‹, meanwhile, seemingly makes time stand still, while ›Sloe‹ is emotional ambience at its very best. For those of us who are content to simply close our eyes and allow the world to drift by on a sea of gentle melodies and heart-wrenching synths this could well be our next musical crush.



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Based in Cologne, ›Acker Dub Records‹ have long been releasing quality house music to win over the mind and heart. The soft, trance-like melodies of ›Panorama‹ by **The Micronaut** for instance will justifiably be one of my albums of the year. Fans of trance or house with an emotional kick will also find lots to adore with the ›Rotterdachs EP‹ by relative unknown **Noetics**. Usually I get extremely

pissed-off when a label claims something is an EP when it is merely four remixes of one song. But in this case I am more than willing to make an exception, for the very simple reason that the music is so damn good. The **Mollono.Bass & Seth Schwarz** and the **Schäufler & Zovsky** remixes are the pick of the bunch for me, since they both utilize mournful strings, hi-hats and a fluffy bassline to stunning effect to create something just a little bit special. More please!



Staying in Cologne, ›Kompakt‹ have got some fantastic music coming out this month. If the new **Gui Boratto** album (review next week) wasn't enough, we also have a trio of sublime releases to make you gush like a love struck fool. Firstly **Dauwd** gives us ›Saleh‹, a gorgeously funky two-tracker, so deep it's like getting lost in the dark. This is so great it is possible to have it on repeat for hours and never get bored, (I have tried this, and it's true!). Equally spine-tingling is ›The Prins Thomas Remix EP‹ by **Vermont**. Taking three tracks from the duo's eponymous album, **Prins Thomas** injects each one with a sense of playfulness, while also adding his trademark lightness of touch to truly mesmerising effect. Due out on the 13th this is easily the best thing the cosmic disco don has done in years. In fact, his version of ›Elektron‹ is so good it can make grown men cry (I'm a delicate angel, OK!). As if that isn't enough, also be sure to grab a copy of ›Legende‹, the brilliantly echoey and enthralling new EP by **Matias Aguayo**. The title track gives me goose-bumps every time I hear it. Nuff said!



As everyone with a mullet and a blog knows, Balearic record label ›International Feel‹ add an extra dollop of sunshine into each and every track they release. A case in point is ›Gone‹, the beautifully laid-back, yet melancholic new four-track EP from **Joel Hood**. There is a distinct air of wistfulness about these songs, with the title track and ›While You Were Sleeping‹ brimming with the sadness that comes when there is something missing from your soul. ›Pissholes In The Snow‹ is a little bit more dancefloor friendly, while ›In Turmoil‹ is the sound of one man breaking apart. This is one to play for those people out there who foolishly claim that dance music can't do emotions or has no soul.



If this sounds like it may be a bit too downbeat and depressing for your delicate disposition then may I recommend the ›Theseeus EP‹ by **Locked Groove**, which is out on ›Permanent Vacation‹ right now. ›Theseeus‹ is a Detroit-infused club-slaying bomb of a track; it's persistent kick, stabbing synths and ominous bass combining majestically to give us a heads down delight. ›Meditations In An Emergency‹ in contrast sounds like a lost **B12** track which, while more sedate than the lead track, is every bit as good. The package is completed by the **Clockwork** remix of ›Meditations‹, which adds an air of sadness together with a generous helping of bass to the fore to bring proceedings to a nicely rousing end.



Those who like a lot of noise with their techno will be positively orgasmic when they hear ›Deathvox‹, the latest EP by **Paula Temple**, which is coming out on ›R&S‹ soon. The full-on body throb of ›Monstro‹ is the real star of the show here; a track so menacing sounding that it could lend even the most mundane task a foreboding air. If you like your music low down and dirty then this could be the one for you. I sooooo want to hear this played in a club! Another ›R&S‹ record to look out for this month is ›Mountain Divide‹, the very dark new record by rising star **Lakker**. The three track follow-up to ›Containing A Thousand‹ is every bit as good, with the juddering bass of the title track practically guaranteed to blow your mind. After a string of indifferent releases, it is great to see ›R&S‹ back on top form.



Another label with not one, but two great new releases this month is Canadian house label ›My Favorite Robots‹. First up we have **Flowers and Sea Creatures** with a remix EP of earlier release ›Afternoons & Afterhours‹. Containing three separate remixes, for me it is all about the **Adriatique** version of ›The Very Next Day‹. A low-slung bass and a gorgeous melody combine in a track which simply builds and builds to create a truly spine-tingling moment in what may well be one of the remixes of the year›.‹ Also on ›MFR‹ this month we have ›Burning Daylight‹ by label mainstay **Sid Le Rock**. Available on the 20th›Fade To Black‹ and ›Butterflies (Original Mix)‹ are, pretty much, a tech-house fan's wet dream.



Next up we have some rock/dance crossover grooves with the ›Leave My Room EP‹ by **DBFC**. Also out on the 20th, the record offers four tracks of dirge-like hums, skewed electronics and slurred vocals that do that trick of sounding as if they're not even there. And if that doesn't sound like your type of thing then don't worry, as I'm sure **Michael Bolton** will have a new album out very soon. Those with taste should dive right into the title track to experience the type of music that you would expect **Death in Vegas** or **Andrew Weatherall** to play. A disorientating trip of a listen, just play this in Hoxton to immediately make new friends.



I think it is fair to say that one-man production titan **Trevino** has had a great 2014 so far! So, it is only fitting that he brings this article to an end with the four cuts of sublime house that make up ›EP01‹. Released to launch his brand new label ›Birdie‹ these tunes bristle with the type of druggy, yet euphoric house music that makes you feel ecstatic to be alive. ›To The Core‹ brims with a driving and thoroughly hypnotic Detroit vibe, while ›Warmer‹ is as good a piece of house music as you will hear all year. ›Playtime‹ is a dark, brooding piece which leads up nicely to the lush head-trip of ›Mesmerise‹ which finishes the record on a high. House music this good deserves a place in your life!

A special mention must also go to: ›Freaks‹ by **Richard Norris** - A rough-as-fuck analogue five-tracker that will make even the most discerning warehouse party come alive, ›Fixed Action Pattern‹ by **Surgeon** - Play the spooky and absorbing dub mix to find out what people mean when they talk about 'Next-level shit', ›The Sound of Sheffield vol 3‹ by **The Black Dog** - A deep, dark techno beast, with ›Fraction Slide‹ being the star of the show, ›Monochrome‹ by **Blow** - two tracks of dub techno heaven that you should be tracking down on vinyl right now, and ›Palace‹ ›(›Foals‹ Remix)‹ by **Wild Beasts** - Dreamy synths, soaring melodies and heartfelt lyrics combine to create a six minute electro-pop gem.

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