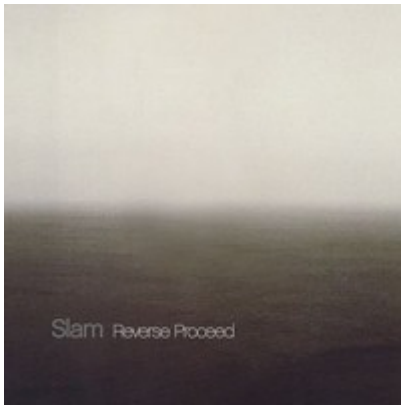


Bittles' Magazine | Record Review

I was arm-wrestling a tiger the other day (my editor told me I had to make the beginning of my articles more exciting) when I suddenly realised that I had no time for such frivolity as I had some great albums to review. Quickly admitting defeat, I retreated to my listening studio (bedroom) and immersed myself in some of the fantastic records that will be hitting the record store shelves this October. By **JOHN BITTLES**

We have the UK house of **Huxley**, the indie bleakness of **Grouper**, the disco diva-isms of **Munk**, the techno bass of **Distal** and so much more. But really, in a month when there is, finally, a new album by Glaswegian duo **Slam**, there is only one place we can begin.



Stuart McMillan and **Orde Meikle** have long been established as bona fide legends of the house and techno scene! Their record label *Soma* is over 400 releases old, their DJ sets at clubs like *The Sub Club* and *The Arches* in Glasgow are discussed with an air of awed reverence, and, as **Slam**, the duo have released some of the finest electronic music known to man. And now, in the year 2014 they give us their first album in seven years with the deep and moody brilliance of *Reverse Proceed*. The cinematic ambience of *Tokyo Subway*, *Visual Capture* and the title track open proceedings and are the perfect introduction to the deliciously deep sounds to come. In fact it's not until the techno futurism of *Synchronicity* that we even get our very first sign of a beat. From here the album heads directly towards the clubs, with the gorgeously spectral *Ghosts Of Detroit* serving as a highlight, while the acid flecked *Pattern A3* sees the record pretty much erupt into dancefloor gold. From here the body jerking techno just keeps on coming, before the record comes to a close with the majestic ambience of *Resolved*. Sounding like a complete body of work, rather than a collection of individual tracks, *Reverse Proceed* is, without doubt, **Slam's** strongest album to date.



Hitting the shops, and download sites at the end of the month is **DJ Koze's** 2nd

volume of his *Reincarnations* series, which collects together some of his most highly sought after remixes. The first volume released in 2009 was a leftfield house gem, and, thankfully, the next edition is every bit as good. With a seemingly innate ability to inject an extra dose of emotion into even the most mundane of tracks, the standard in these thirteen remixes is extremely high. His much lauded versions of *Bad Kingdom* by **Moderat**, *It's Only* by **Herbert** and *Black Water* by **Apparat** are all present and correct. Yet, it is the dose of melancholy which he adds to his remixes of *Jo Gurt* by **Superflu**, *Found Out* by **Caribou** and *Faith* by **Ada** that are the real stars of the show. Highly recommended!



How do you follow up an album like *The Man Who Died In His Boat* which was described by **NME** as “a master-class in medicated bleakness”? If you’re anything like **Liz Harris**, who releases majestically immersive ambient folk music as **Grouper**, you relocate to Portugal and record something spellbindingly affecting, bleak and beautifully sad. Out at the end of the month, *Ruins* is a collection of eight tracks of mystical soundscapes which are so sorrowful and dejected sounding that, at times, it is hard not to burst into tears. Yet, there is something about the album which is undeniably beautiful and makes you hold it ever closer to your heart. Sounding like someone crying forlornly in the rain, **Grouper’s** music should be heard by everyone who has ever been devastated by the ravages of love.



Continuing the austere feel, Copenhagen trio **Future 3** return this month with their first album in thirteen years. *With And Without* is as stunningly strange and exquisite sounding as anyone who has had the pleasure of hearing their music before might expect. The record is a twinkling, lovelorn collection of lush ambient pieces and downbeat pop that, even after repeated listens, still manages to send shivers down the spine. *Mmn* opens the record with an eerie, yet epic electronic air, with the half-heard vocals and strange melody-line combining majestically to form something to both unsettle and delight. From here the album emits a hazed, all enveloping fog, with tracks like *Revenant*, *Signature* and *August* revelling in a world of drug induced lethargy. Those missing the hushed beauty of **The Cocteau Twins** or **Slowdive** will

find much to love here.



If all that sounds a bit too gloomy for you then you might be impressed by the uplifting disco of *Chanson 3000* by Gomma mainstays **Munk**. Opener *Cartoon* is a slo-mo vocal house delight, which paves the way for the retro disco sound of *Happiness Juice* and the **Joey Negro** getting his sweat on sound of *The Beat*. *Misterio* features a rave-tinged synth and a Chicago-style spoken word vocal, *Transient Lover* is sexually charged house, while the excellent *Desire To Believe* recalls the tribalism's of **Deep Dish**. While some of **Munk's** previous releases have left me rather cold, this is a fun album to stick on as you get yourself ready for a night out.



Even more smile inducing house-based grooves can be found on the packed label compilation *Permanent Vacation 3*. Out on the 24th of October, the record boasts two CDs of the type of dance music that could convince even the most sour-faced of house haters to break out into a shuffle every now and again. And while some of the names on here will be unfamiliar to most, don't let that put you off since there are some absolute gems to be found. While tracks and remixes by the likes of **John Talabot**, **The Field**, **Woolfy**, **Daniel Wang** and **Recondite** all feature, it is the tunes by the lesser known acts which make the album such a wonderful listen. A must buy for space cadets, future boogieists, and cosmic pioneers everywhere.



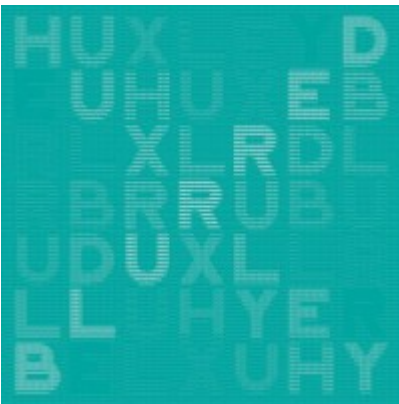
Another great album to get you excited about music and life is *Five Years Lost*, a very special collection of tracks that is being released to celebrate five years in existence for the Berlin-based *Ritter Butzke Studio* club. Residents **Patryk Molinari**, **Karlose Naturale** and **Mario Aureo & Manuel Moreno** all contribute highlights, with **Patryk Molinari's** *Paranoid* being the pick of a thoroughly excellent bunch. Featuring a variety of styles from disco to techno, and deep house to electro, the quality doesn't once let up. If this is the type of music they play at the *Ritter Butzke Studio* then I need to book my next trip to Berlin pretty damn soon.



Another album which shocked me with its greatness comes in the form of *Yaruto* by **Kalipo**. A new name to me, **Kalipo** is the pseudonym of Jakob Häglsperger, who is best known as one third of electronic pop act **Frittenbude**. His solo album *Yaruto* is a strikingly melancholy affair, awash with soft synths, soaring melodies and a sense of yearning that eagerly worms its way into your soul. Tracks such as *Lux*, *Come* and *Take Care Of Your Paradise* recall the emotional electronica of **Caribou**, while *Get Rich* could well be vintage **Paul Van Dyke**. A gloriously moving listening experience, that deserves to be heard by just about everybody in the world. It is up to people like us to make vital records like this a success.



When I read the press blurb for *Retrograde Space Opera* by **Distal**, which claims the album forms the “back-drop to an extensive label-long space opera”, I wasn’t particularly sure what to expect. Is this where the bassbin botherer crawls up his own backside where he will reside until we all proclaim him the God of the netherworld? Thankfully, that is not the case! In fact, this densely produced album is an exciting and vibrant collision of genres and styles. Tracks like *Sewers Of Gattaca*, *Jaws Of Deltroy* (you can see why I was worried) and *Holding Pattern* expertly fuse the wilful experimentation of the best of UK bass music together with the urban futurisms of Detroit techno to simply stunning effect. Recalling the aural delights of **Juan Atkins** or **Derrick May**, this is an absorbing listen for those who like their techno tough, and with a raw, cerebral edge.



After a few years of exciting the underground, bass-infused house artist **Huxley** is now ready to hit the big time by releasing his debut album *Blurred*. Coming out on **Will Saul’s** respected *Aus Music* label, the record sees **Huxley** expand his palette with a warm, house record that is a versatile little beast. The strings on opening track *I Want You* alone are enough to make most house fans give praise to God. The futuristic RnB of the opening track is quickly followed by the dubstep bass wobble of *Barne Dance*, while *Give 2 U* fuses vocal house, techno and rave. From here we get drum & bass, **Disclosure**-style house, lush soul grooves, and so much more. A little exhausting at times, this is dance music that will hit the spot for anyone under the age of eighteen.

Some Albums To Keep Your Toes Warm This October Pt 2.



Now entering the 3rd edition of their colour themed compilation series, this month sees Ghent-based record label *Eskimo Recordings* release the charmingly sedate and groove-some *The Green Collection*. Containing twelve tracks designed to soothe as much as make you dance, the comp will have those who like their house music rich and deep in raptures for months. A gorgeous experience to listen to as a whole, tracks by **Alexander Skancke**, **Vinny Villbass** and **Duncan Gray** still manage to stand-out. Cosmic disco, slo-mo, slouse, call it what you will; when the music is this good the only label you need use is great.

A special mention must also go to: *Mind Holding Pattern* by **Cuticle** - An excellent house infused album on the ever reliable *Not Not Fun* label, *Tulgey* by **Timoka** - A funk-filled collection of skewed house and electronic experiments, perfect for when you want to dance or explore the possibilities of the dancefloor, *Applied Remixes* by **Application** - The *Applied* album gets the remix treatment with mixes by **Pye Corner Audio**, **Geiom** and **Scanner** standing out, *Human Voice* by **DNTEL** - A highly emotional collection of sublime electronica which makes the perfect accompaniment to a lonely, rainy day, and *Regional Curse* by **Regional Curse** - A dark as night five track album of soundtrack inspired ambience for those who like strange dreams.

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)