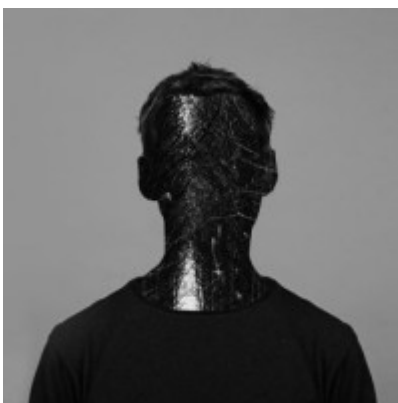


Bittles' Magazine | Record Review

Ok, I admit it. I am addicted to music! Yet, you can hardly blame me, when there are so many great new albums out there all vying desperately for my time and love. Why, in November alone we have absolutely amazing new records by the likes of **Recondite**, **Clark**, **Juju & Jordash**, **Frank & Tony**, **Biblo**, **The Twilight Sad** and many, many more. Is it any wonder that I hardly ever leave the house anymore, my friends think I'm dead and that my girlfriend has dumped me because I insist on keeping my headphones on when we talk? But enough about me, these are the LPs that should be enriching your life right now. By **JOHN BITTLES**



This month we'll start with an album that is ideal for those looking for a rich, deep journey into the very heart of techno/house. The name **Recondite** should be familiar to anyone who has even a passing interest in electronic music after a career releasing beautifully textured music for labels like *Ghostly International*, *Acid Test*, and *Hotflush*. This November sees the arrival of his rather splendid new LP, *Iffy* on the ever wonderful *Innervisions* label. The album is a slow, sultry affair, and contains ten tracks of immaculately produced techno that are so lush and spacious sounding you will be left with goose-bumps for weeks. Opener *Baro* resembles a lost **John Carpenter** soundtrack, *Levo* has a slow, steady dance floor pulse, *Garbo* is so good I get an erection when it plays, while *Jim Jams* finishes things off with a warm, introspective air. A beautifully produced album that will easily be one of the records of the year.



This month also sees the return of one of *Warp's* plethora of strange electronic mavericks, **Clark**, with a self-titled album that could well be considered his best LP in years. More sedate, mature, and varied than his normal output, the album perfectly illustrates just how talented a producer **Clark** can be when he puts his mind to it. The album works wonderfully as a whole, yet, stand outs for me include the lush *Winter Linn*, which throbs in a wall of bass, while *Unfurla* is a stunning re-imagining of vintage IDM, *Snowbird* is a lustrous head-trip of a song, and *Everlane* finishes things off with a nice cold,

ambient haze. Since I picked this up I haven't been able to stop playing it, and I literally got withdrawal symptoms when I didn't listen to it for a day. This is a good thing of course!



As anyone who has had the pleasure of hearing **Juju & Jordash's** last album *Techno Primitivism* will attest, these guys create a form of electronic music so good that you listen to it with a mixture of wonder, envy and awe. After a two year wait, the time is now right for the duo to release the much anticipated follow-up, *Clean-Cut*, which should be gracing the racks of quality record shops right about now. An aural delight from beginning to end, the record contains ten tracks (nine on vinyl) that are so amazing-sounding they could even convince a dead man to dance. Tracks like *Schmofield*, *Whippersnapper*, *Deadwood City*, and *Anywhere* are immaculately produced, deep as you like, and, most importantly, a whole lot of fun. Sounding like no one else on earth, **Juju & Jordash** have a sound that is funky as fuck, and perfect for dance floor gymnasts everywhere.



If that all sounds a bit much for you then you might find some much needed respite in the arms of *Sea Island* by **Loscil**. Like a much missed lover suddenly returning to gently massage your back, the lush ambience of the album is something that is extremely easy to submit to. In a bumper month for quality ambient music, these tracks stand out as they are so otherworldly and hypnotic that you feel yourself gripping the chair as it plays for fear of drifting away. So beautifully relaxing that it can make a class of boisterous five year olds calm down, this record should be used as medication for anyone out there who has ever suffered the perils of stress.

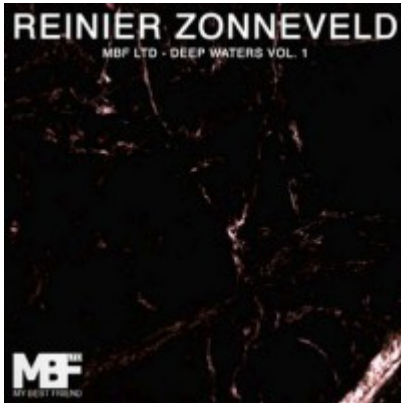


Continuing the spectral, beatless vibe comes the chillingly majestic *Absence* by **Biblo**, the brand-new LP from Berlin's esteemed *C.Sides* label. Eerie voices flutter in a twilight world of heady electronics, to create a sound which is both bewitching and guaranteed to truly freak out any overly imaginative mind. Istanbul-based **Biblo's** music is rich and so textured-sounding that it almost seems that you can reach out and caress the beautiful tones that you hear. The producer herself has rather aptly described the album as being »about the absence of desire, absence of meaning, absence of justice«. Yet, you don't need a political science degree in order to enjoy the record, since its spectral ambiance, hushed vocals and teasing grooves create something that stays with you long after the album ends.



You Go Girl is the rather wonderful new deep house album from two of the best producers in the game: **Francis Harris** and **Anthony Collins**. The duo have been recording under the alias **Frank & Tony** for a few years now, but *You Go Girl* sees them enter the album format with style. Released on their own *Scissor & Thread* imprint the record is made up of nine tracks of house based goodness, so good, that if it were Viagra you would be up for nights on end. If you don't believe me, then just listen to the sublime deepness of *Love Brut*, or the stilted loveliness of *Novella* to be truly entranced. If only all music was this good, then there would be no sadness, *X Factor*, or war.

»Nothing Matters When We're Dancing« - November's new albums



Cologne's sublime *My Best Friend Limited* launch a brand new mix series this month in the form of *Deep Waters Vol. 1*. Blended with aplomb by **Reinier Zonneveld**, the mix brings together some deep, echo-laden house and techno that revels in a sense of melody, wholesome bass, and song. After a nice build-up that steadily gets you into the groove, the set firmly finds its stride with the slinky dance floor technoisms of *Running Slow* by **Name** and *Driver* by **Yellow Bus Project**. This is the type of electronic music that I simply can't get enough of, and it is well worth spending time within its trance-like grooves.

NOTHING MATTERS WHEN WE'RE DANCING

Another compilation that you should be sure to check out is the excellent **Cocktail D'Amore** *Say Nothing Matters When We're Dancing* which has been lovingly compiled by the people at Berlin party institution **Cocktail D'Amore**. Containing twelve tracks which explore the full gamut of house music, the collection is a must for anyone that has wondered what Berliners dance to when not being pummelled by tough techno at *Berghain*. The gorgeous slo-mo house of *Under Vatten* by **Dorisburg** is an early highlight, while further tracks such as the emotional trance of *Rainbow Brite* by **Chymera**, and the dirty electro of *Flypost 971* by **Luv Jam** will also have you reaching for the skies. The complete star of the show though is *Flying Navajo* by **Young Marco**, as spine-tingling a slice of electronic music as you will hear all year. If you are too un-cool, or poor to go clubbing in Berlin then this comp could well be the next best thing.



Innhverfi is the debut album by **Óbó**, or Ólafur Bjorn Ólafsson to his mum. Now, this name may not mean that much to you, but if I told you that **Óbó** is a touring keyboard player/percussionist for **Sigur Rós** then that might get you a bit excited, while also preparing you for what to expect. Opening track *Uthverfi* adheres to this presumption by resembling the soundtrack to both the creation and the end of the world. Yet, from here the album explores a less dramatic but no less enticing musical world, with most songs delving into a quiet, contemplative, singer-songwriter feel. The spoken word vocals are, occasionally, a little jarring, yet this record is sure to find love from lost dreamers and deep thinkers alike.



If all that sounds a little soft and airy fairy to you then you might find *Soft Gamma Repeater* by **Graze** more your cup of tea. Opener *Circadia* contains a groove-inducing dance floor throb and its soaring unintelligible vocals, clanking percussion and eerie bass straight away illustrate a duo in brain-melting form. The goodies don't stop there though as *Banding* exudes an all-enveloping Detroit style melody, *Gneiss* hones the sound of UK bass, *Swartz* is a rave-fuelled techno bomb, while *Antnna* is a delightfully trippy, heads-down groove. Add in the pounding beats of *Uprizen* and the dramatic tension of *Veil (Empty Mix)* and you have an album that will satisfy any electronic music fan for months.



Recorded after producer **Sasu Ripatti** had to cancel an entire tour after being denied entry into the USA, the album *Visa*, which he is releasing under the **Vladislav Delay** alias is comprehensive evidence that he put all that extra free time to good use. Formed of five long, drifting ambient soundscapes, the record luxuriates within a beautifully involving, contemplative air. Seemingly inspired by the glory days of IDM and ambient, the gentle chimes and soft throb of *Viaton* for instance brings to mind vintage **Global Communication** and is a real gem of a song. Not for those who get bored easily, the record is sure to find fans in those who like to have no problem getting lost within an opaque world of sound.



Every so often you are ecstatic to discover one of those albums which have seemingly come out of nowhere to nestle firmly into the warm recesses of your heart. One such record that did this for me recently, is the wonderfully soulful deep house sound of *Man Is Deaf* by **Brassica**. A new name to me, the record instantly won me over within the very first strains of opening track *Be Lost*. Other highlights include *Turn Me*, which has a classic Chicago feel perfect for even the most discerning of dance floors, while *Deplore* is a beautiful, euphoric soar of a song. In contrast tracks like *The Lodger* contain a nice sense of menace that keeps the listener firmly on edge. One to check out for those who like to have their ears massaged by bass-heavy, spacious grooves.



This month we finish with some quiet ambience, that is the aural equivalent to snuggling up to a giant cuddly pillow when you feel all warm and furry inside. The annual *Air Texture* series has firmly established itself as a must purchase for those who seek soft beats, hazy atmospheres and tranquility galore. Thankfully, volume four compiled by **Steve Hauschildt** of **Emeralds** fame and *Rush Hour's* **BNJMN** really doesn't disappoint. Each disc is excellent, with the dark, isolated drones of **BNJMN's** selection being the pick of the two for me. Both are more than worthy of your time though, and will make the perfect accompaniment to these long, autumn nights that we now find ourselves in. Put this on after a hard, stressful day and feel all that tension and strain gently floating away.

A special mention must also go to: *Trust* by **18+** - From London's mighty *Houndstooth* label comes this dark, unsettling trip into the netherworld of electronic pop, hip hop, R&B and soul, *Pop Ambient 2015* by **Various** - Ten lush, beatless tracks that soothe the mind and stimulate the spirit, *Michael* by **Les Sins** - **Toro Y Moi** explores a world of playful house with a record that may seem a little lightweight, but is a whole lot of fun, *Nobody Wants To Be Here & Nobody Wants to Leave* by **The Twilight Sad** - Raw, impassioned rock music with a heartbroken soul from one of the best bands in the UK, *Phobos* by **Neel** - A sonically dense dose of ambience that matches the chill of a cold winter's night, *Kyo 001* mixed by **Oxia** - twenty tracks of the deepest, lushest house known to man, mixed with no little flair by a DJ at the top of his game and *Hyperdub & Teklife Present Nextlife* - Fans of footwork will love the hyperactive beats and rhythms to be found here, while old fogeys like me may find it gives them a sore head.

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)