

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

Without a doubt one of the musical highlights of 2013 was the album *Somewhere Else It's Going To Be Good* by the Berlin-based duo **Kim Brown**. Its lush deep house textures, orchestrated beats and dazzling synth melodies instantly won it universal love and critical acclaim. Three years later and it still sends shivers up and down the spine. By **JOHN BITTLES**



In a house scene dominated by unimaginative four to the floor monotony, songs such as *Camera Moves*, *Christabel* and *Based On A True Story* refreshed jaded house-heads like myself. Here was a band who understood that just because you like dance music doesn't mean you don't want emotional resonance, or a story with your grooves.

Since the success of *Somewhere Else It's Going To Be Good* the band have released the excellent *Batteries Not Included* and *Nabi 1970* EPs, remixed artists such as **Grandbrothers** and **Stanley Schmidt**, toured comprehensively, and delighted clubbers the world over with some absolutely storming DJ sets. In other words, the duo formed of **Ji-Hun Kim** and **Julian Braun** (hence the recording name **Kim Brown**) have had a successful and busy few years. Yet, somehow, they still found the time to retire to their Berlin-Kreuzberg studio to record a follow-up LP.

The result of their labours is the stunning and expansive *Wisdom Is A Dancer*, the band's highly-anticipated sophomore album. Out now, the record takes the deep house template, and injects it with emotion, musicality and soul to give us a house album which you simply have to listen to from beginning to end. After the ambient hues of opener *Rehearsed Engineering*, *Optionism* effortlessly raises a smile with its gentle hand-claps, subdued beats and gorgeous piano refrain. Make no mistake, if the likes of **Larry Heard** created a tune this good we would rightly be talking about it for months. From here, *Everything But A Piano* conjures images of sunsets and blissful evenings spent alone, *Transparent* successfully merges a gentle piano refrain to a melancholic techno throb, *Unperfect Circles* is so beautiful it made my cat cry, and *We Are Elementary* is sure to get people a little bit emotional on the dance floor. In short, it's ace!



In the following interview **Kim Brown** talk about the new record, the power of dancing, storytelling in house music, ambiance, Berlin and much more. And, if you are looking for a soundtrack to your reading you can stream the LP via *XLR8R* here [Wisdom Is A Dancer](#).

**For those who haven't heard your music before, can you tell us a bit about who you are and what you do?**

We are **Ji-Hun Kim** and **Julian Braun** from Berlin. We both started DJing in the late 90s and became friends in 2004. After playing and organizing some parties, we decided to produce music as a duo. It took a while, since we released our first EP *Spring Theory* on *Just Another Beat* in 2012. Beside making music, Julian works as a freelance motion and visual designer. Ji-Hun works as an editor, lecturer and journalist and runs the online magazine *Das Filter*.

**Your new album *Wisdom Is A Dancer* is out on the 22nd of April. Why do we all need this album in our lives?**

If you want to share our expeditions in order to find the perfect song in a house track and triggering emotions which are beyond the typical dancefloor paradigms, *Wisdom Is A Dancer* might be a good choice. It's also about storytelling, enjoying a special moment with your best friends, showing that dance music is not only about quick pornographic orgasms, rather something intimate, audible and tactile in a subtle sense. We also wanted to arrange an album as an album. A narration, something with a meaning and not just a random compilation of club tools with filling skits in between.

**Does the title have any special significance?**

Obviously, the title refers to a famous hit from the early 90s. But in times of overwhelming social media noise, short attention spans, dumb EDM drops and selfish representations, we wanted to explore the basic feelings dancing to music can give people. Is there a different, sustainable approach to club music, was something we were discussing a lot. But in the end, it's also a joke, hopefully not the worst.

**If you could pick one track to sell the album which would it be and why?**

*Everything But A Piano* represents the album in a good way. It's minimalistic, romantic, classy, but also leaves a lot of space for individual interpretations.

**The record opens with the lush ambiance of *Rehearsed Engineering*, which is a great way to start any LP. Can you tell us a bit about the idea behind this particular track?**

Thanks, we hoped it to be a good intro for the album. We started working with mellotron-esque sounds and those chords and thought: This sounds quite indie, oldschool electronica maybe a little bit like **Boards of Canada**. But in the end, it was Thaddeus who runs the label *Just Another Beat*. He said: „I'm going to release your album as long as *Rehearsed Engineering* is the opening track.“ We were lacking any arguments against it.

Have you ever considered scrapping the beats altogether and creating an ambient LP?

We love ambient music. But even though we tried to release ambient music before, we always ended up adding grooves and harmonic beats to ambient sound sketches, because we think grooves and drums are somehow the social elements of music. Something which brings people together, makes music communicative, physical and tactile. But never say never ...

Tracks such as *Optionism*, *Millions* and *Datasette (Vogue As A Concept)* are gorgeously melodic, and contain a real sense of emotional depth. What's the secret to creating emotional house music?

You are flattering us. Thank you. We don't think there is a specific secret on creating emotions. But important is some solid knowledge about songwriting, harmonies, arranging tracks, trying to anticipate reactions and feelings as well as working constantly on smooth, elegant chord progressions and interesting, unconventional bass lines. But whilst producing music, you have to feel something, whether these are cinematic associations, wanderlust or, sorry and quite pathetic to say, love.



*Everything But A Piano*, *Transparent*, *Trinity College* and *We Are Elementary* are beautifully deep and exactly the type of songs I love to hear in a club. How important is the appeal of the dance floor in the music that you make?

In our opinion, dance music is one of the most democratic music genres around. You don't have to understand lyrics and words in a foreign language, you don't have to know about any specific subcultural codes. Either you want to move your body to the music or not, that's it. That's what we love so much about music for dancefloors.

The album was recorded in your studio in Kreuzberg, Berlin. In what ways do you think your surroundings

[affected the music you made?](#)

Berlin, as the capital of electronic music and club culture, definitely influenced the way we make music. We both have a history in playing clubs, spinning techno and house records. When you go out, the percentage of spending time in a 4-to-the-floor-location is pretty high. But these circumstances make it even more exciting to figure out the shades and facets in between.

[You DJ, as well as playing live. What are the key components to working a dance floor?](#)

Try to understand, react and interact with the audience. Have a good selection. Let the music be the protagonist. Play music like having a deep conversation on a perfect dinner party.

[The album is coming out on Just Another Beat who also released your debut LP Somewhere Else It's Going To Be Good. How did you first hook up with them?](#)

Ji-Hun and **Thaddeus Hermann**, who runs *Just Another Beat*, used to work together as editors for *De:Bug Magazine*. Ji-Hun played an early *Camera Moves* demo version at the office and the rest is history.

[What does the future hold for you both?](#)

To continue what we love, making music.

[Do you have any final words for our readers?](#)

Thank you and we hope you enjoy our new album.

The album is available now in all good download stores and record shops such as [Phonica](#), [Hardwax](#) and more.

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)