

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

The good people at *Wikipedia* define **Posthuman** as »a concept originating in the fields of science fiction, futurology, contemporary art, and philosophy that literally means a person or entity that exists in a state beyond being human«. If you look a bit further though, you will find that **Posthuman** are also a DJ and production duo who have had a big hand in bringing the sweet sounds of acid house into our lives. By **JOHN BITTLES**



The alias of **Rich Bevan** and **Josh Doherty**, **Posthuman** are responsible for, amongst other things, running the *Balkan* and *I Love Acid* record labels, recording a series of kick ass acid, house and techno tracks, and running the successful *I Love Acid* club night. Along with artists such as **Paranoid London**, **Tin Man** and **Recondite** they have led the acid house revival which has swept through clubs and warehouses these last few years. In fact, their music has had such an impact on modern clubbing that if you haven't lost it on a dance floor to the sound of a *Roland TB303*, *808* or *909* recently then you should probably try to get out more.

Key songs such as *Back To Acid*, *Decompression*, *So Cruel* and *Inside You* highlight the duo's enviable production skills and incorporate all that is great about acid house. Rather than going for the lowest common denominator and banging the audience into submission, **Posthuman** sculpt tracks that are moody, mid paced, soulful, and perfect for causing devastation on the floor. One listen to the unhurried techno throb of *We Are The City* will tell you all you need to know; deep, loose, and funky as hell, this is music which sounds just as good in the comfort of your own home as in a dark and sweaty club.

Taking time out from his busy schedule, band member **Josh Doherty** was kind enough to answer some questions. In the resulting interview we discuss the *I Love Acid* club night and vinyl series, the *Back To Acid* album, working with **Luke Vibert**, **DJ Pierre** and **Hardfloor**, *TB303 o'clock*, *Balkan*, acid, and lots more.

So, put your reading glasses on, turn the music up loud, and let us begin...

By way of introduction, can you tell us a bit about who you are and what you do?

Hello! I'm Josh, one half of **Posthuman** (with my cousin Richard). I run a record label called *Balkan Vinyl* and a clubnight and vinyl series called *I Love Acid*.

For those who don't know your music yet, which song would make the perfect introduction to the **Posthuman sound?**

Difficult question, because over time our sound has changed pretty dramatically!

Rich and myself have been writing music together for about 20 years (17 of those as **Posthuman**) and we never did the smart thing of inventing new monikers for different styles which has on occasion made for some

awkward bookings - for example, in 2005/6 after we released an album of post-rock electronica, we would be booked to do shows by promoters expecting a full band, then turn up with a laptop, playing techno, and be very out of place!

Over the last 6 or 7 years though, we're more focussed on our love of slow, moody techno and acid house. The title track from our 2015 EP *It's A House Thing* is probably the best starting point:

[Volume 10 of your *I Love Acid* series is out now and features tracks from yourselves, **Hardfloor**, **DJ Pierre** and **Luke Vibert**. It has a limited run of 808 copies. Can you tell us a bit about the EP?](#)

The *I Love Acid* series is a set of records, each hand-numbered and stamped (usually in editions of 303) with strictly no digital downloads or represses. There have been releases by the likes of **Jerome Hill**, **Global Goon**, **Perseus Traxx**, **Cardopusher**, **Andreas Gehm** (RIP), and more. I decided to do a special edition for number ten - so I asked three of the headliners from our 2015 parties (**Pierre**, **Hardfloor**, and **Vibert**) to contribute a track each, and as residents we added a track of our own. The first 303 copies are on red vinyl with the following 505 on black (sometimes I wish I'd never gone down the hand-numbering route: 808 copies is a lot of hours stamping over and over! Haha)

[How did you manage to get these three legends involved?](#)

Luke has been involved in *I Love Acid* since day one - the first party was in April 2007, I suggested we do an event based around his track of the same name, with him DJing plus a bunch of other artists & friends who were 303 inclined like **Chris Moss Acid**, **EgeBamYasi**, **Doubtful Guest**, **Tudor Acid**...it was only ever meant to be a one-off! ...but it was so much fun we did another, and another...and now it's been nearly ten years, over a hundred parties in 8 or 9 different countries and cities. Luke comes back to DJ fairly regularly, and has contributed music to my labels numerous times.

Hardfloor played in 2015 and were two of the nicest guys I've encountered in years of promoting. We stayed in touch; they released a track on *Balkan Vinyl* and were more than happy to get involved with *I Love Acid*. **Pierre** played a party of ours in London and also did a guest set for our stage at *Bloc Weekend*. He contributed a great acid track for the label, and we've done a track for his *Afro Acid* label in return. So it's all been really easy and friendly: just a like-minded acid crew working together!



Posthuman

Photo: El Rodeo

[Your *Back To Acid* album came out on *Balkan* in April, and features 12 body jackin' grooves that demonstrate just how versatile acid house can be. With many of these tracks previously only available on vinyl, what made you decide the time was right to release a digital LP?](#)

We hadn't written a full album since 2011's *Syn Emergence*, and since we'd really started focussing on the slo-mo acid vibe: it just felt like a good time to collect together a selection of what we'd been doing, put down a marker. Some of the tracks were previously vinyl only, some were from compilations, and a couple were unheard versions and edits.

If you had to pick one song to sell the album, which would it be, and why?

The title track *Back to Acid*. It sums up where we are at perfectly. We just keep coming back to the 303; it's the perfect sound!

You are, perhaps, best known for your I Love Acid label and club night which helped spearhead the recent acid house revival. Can you tell us a little about the ideas and ethos behind the I Love Acid brand? And, what was it that first drew you to the sound of the TB303?

As mentioned earlier - it started from doing a party with **Luke Vibert** based around his track. We'd known Luke for years beforehand - he first played at one of our *Seed Records* (our old record label, from 2001-2006) over 15 years ago.

To begin with, my knowledge of acid was really built around the Braindance vibes of *Rephlex*, *Warp* and *Skam* - though I loved artists like **Plastikman**, **Black Dog** and **B12** as well. The earliest parties were much more on these kind of lines.

After **Placid** (our resident DJ) became more involved after the first couple of years, he introduced more classic Chicago acid house and Detroit techno into the mix. I really learnt a lot from him, which in turn had a huge influence on **Posthuman's** sound as well. **Placid** is a strictly-vinyl old school DJ - the real deal - with an encyclopaedic knowledge of all things acid.

We also have on the *Facebook* page, twice-daily posts by *TB303 o' clock*: at three minutes past three both am and pm. The guy behind *TB303 o' clock* digs deep into the world of acid - from unreleased weird soundcloud demo tracks to stone-cold 80's classics - several times a week I hear something totally new and unexpected. Running *I Love Acid* has been an education for me!

Why has the sound endured so well?

There's something about acid that transcends genre: it's more about a sound than a style. The TB303 is to dance music almost what the guitar is to rock. Acid lines fit perfectly into techno, house, trance, ambient, breaks...anything. It's a twisted combination of being organic, yet obviously artificial and otherworldly.

What five acid records should everybody hear?

Phuture □ *Acid Tracks*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCUPc9zVfyo>

Pretty much where it all started. The TB303 had been out, and in use, for a couple of years before this was written but it was this track that really set out acid house as a genre and coined the word Acid for what it is today. Pierre has said that it was nothing to do with the drug acid (as the media claimed throughout the 1980s) but instead more a reference to the fact that the tweaking and changing of the sound was almost like acid eating away at the synthesizers components!

Armando □ *Pleasure Dome*:

Armando was very much part of the first wave of acid tracks like *Downfall* and *Confusion's Revenge* are iconic - but this is one of his later tracks. Edging more towards techno than house, it has a funk that a lot of the harder acid of the time missed (and the acid line itself is incredible!)

Luke Vibert □ *Analord*:

With a name that was famously later used by **Richard D James**, this is my personal favourite of Luke's acid tracks: slow, funky analogue vibes. All TB303s have a slightly different sound (the result of being poorly-made analogue instruments!) and Luke's has the most rubbery, stretched sawtooth I've ever heard.

Paranoid London □ *Eating Glue*:

For my money, **Paranoid London** are the best acid producers on the scene right now. They manage to capture the raw energy of classic Chicago jacking house like no one else. It's hard to choose a best track of theirs, though this one maybe just pips *Light Tunnel* and *Paris Dubs*.

Global Goon □ *Craehzrhd*:

I may be biased, as this was released on the first 12" on my own label *Balkan* - but it's still one of my favourite acid tracks of all time. Just the right balance of dancefloor and weirdness.

[You have been taking your live shows all round Europe recently. Where will you be playing in the coming months?](#)

Our live and DJ shows are pretty few & far between, as I'm busy most weekends with **Altern 8** (classic rave outfit that I perform live with) which restricts our availability somewhat - but we do have some *I Love Acid* parties coming up in Los Angeles, London and Bristol later this year.

[For those who have never seen you play live before what can they expect?](#)

Our shows tend to be a mashup of both DJing and live - we'll mix acid tracks and edits against beats and loops, often with a 303 and drum machine as well. *Ableton* is a great piece of software to use for shows where you want to improvise and react off the crowd: usually we'll plan the first one or two tracks before getting on stage by checking out the vibe of whoever is DJing before us - but from there we just make it up as we go along! [Here is a set from last year](#) at *Moog* in Barcelona (one of my personal favourite venues).

Running record labels is like an addiction - you can't stay away for long!

You both run the *Balkan* and *I Love Acid* imprints. What made you decide to start your own record labels?

In 2001 Richard and myself founded an electronica label called *Seed Records*, and we also ran parties of the same name in an abandoned tube station in London. In 2006 I left the label (it's still run now by our old friend **Bruce McClure**, though is much more experimental in genre) and worked for *B12 Records* for a while. I then took a break, and started putting on the *I Love Acid* parties - but running record labels is like an addiction - you can't stay away for long! So in 2010 I started *Balkan*, much more dancefloor focussed than my previous imprints. *I Love Acid* came from that in 2014, as did the *Rave Wars* series.

What have been the key releases so far?

Balkan Red ☐ the very first release, part of a series of six records (each a different colour) with tracks by **Mark Archer**, **B12**, **Luke Vibert** and **Global Goon**.

Acid Relief ☐ the first of three charity compilations I have done. This one features the last ever track by **Mark Bell** aka **LFO**, who sadly passed away a couple of years ago.

I Love Acid 001 ☐ four tracks by **Room 13**, aka **DMX Krew & Bass Junkie**.

Mutant City Acid ☐ another vinyl-only release limited to 303 numbered copies, with tracks by **Mark Archer**, **Ben Pest**, **Chevron**, and ourselves.

Other than *I Love Acid 10*, what can we expect from *Balkan* and *I love Acid* in 2016?

The next four *I Love Acid* 12 (numbers 11-14) are already done and pressed: **Ben Pest**, **Luke Vibert**, **Posthuman**, and a new artist called **Type-303**.

I've also got some amazing tracks in for numbers 15-20, from **Neville Watson**, **Mark Forshaw**, **Jared Wilson**, and **Snuff Crew**. I'm very excited about 2016 and 2017's release schedules!

Do you have any final words for our readers?

Support independent music and venues!

These are difficult times, politically and financially. Most people writing and releasing underground music, and putting on parties are in it for the love of it ☐ but the most important part is the people playing the music and dancing in nightclubs. Don't let it die.

The *Back To Acid* album is available now at the band's [Bandcamp](#) page, where you can also find [I Love Acid 10](#). It is also available in all good record stores. So, whether your raving days are just beginning, at their peak, or coming to an end, the music of **Posthuman** is the most fun you can have without a bottle of gin.

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)