

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

When I first heard the *Somber Clarity EP* by **AntiAlias**, the very first release on new Berlin based label *Schakal Records*, it felt as if I had discovered a brand new friend. Deeply hypnotic, trance-tinged, sexy and propulsive it leapt right out of the speakers and into my heart. Backed up by a long, percussive remix by **Midas 104 & Jonas Saalbach**, the record seemed to make June 2015 a great time to be alive. By **JOHN BITTLES**

Over the next year top releases by **Mallone & Arne Spremberg** (*Minos*) and **Nightvisions** (*Twin Peaks*) helped cement *Schakal's* status as one of the most essential house music labels around. Seriously, every time I play the track *Tesla* from the *Minos EP* it's all I can do to stop myself from writing love letters to the beats! These were bookended by *The First Hunt EP*, something of a label showcase, which featured the tough techno of **Nicolas Bougaieff**, the 90s *Harthouse* crunch of *Trion* by **Someone Outside** and more.



This month *Schakal* make a welcome return to the world's dance floors with the release of *Feral Child* by **Lorenz Lepus**. Formed of two original compositions and two remixes by **Floyd Lavine** and **VII Circle** the record is a stunning marriage of melody and beats. The title tracks gets us off to a stunning start, swirling synths and ominous bass pulses helping create a mid-paced dance floor tune which has an overwhelming sense of emotional depth. When the piano refrain kicks in just before the five minute mark it's hard to resist the urge to set up your own fan club page. *Lost* is moodier, yet every bit as good, its techno throb and ominous chords crafting a gorgeous slice of atmospheric house. Of the remixes, **Floyd Lavine's Dubman Remix** turns the title track into a dub heavy groove, while **VII Circle** up the pace and beat quota of the same track to edge it towards peak time plays.

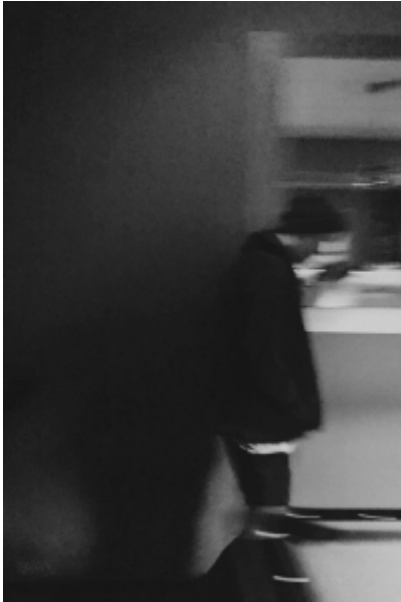
With the EP having earned repeated rotation on my stereo it seemed a great time to track down *Schakal Records* to fire some questions their way. Here's what they had to say...

[To start us off can you tell us a bit about your record label Schakal Records?](#)

Sure, we are a small Berlin based crew of artists that, some day, had the idea to develop our own platform together. Our concept from the beginning was to take the music that inspired us, be it Dub Techno or 80s synth pop, and create something new out of those influences.

[Schakal has been around since 2015. Who is involved in the running of the label?](#)

Basically we are four guys at the core of our label. First there's **Nick (Mallone)** who is taking care of pretty much all of our A&R duties, **Uli & Uli (Nightvisions)**, who are responsible for our showcases/booking and **Butch (AntiAlias)** is managing the record label.



Schakal is onto their fifth release now with the gorgeous deep house/techno grooves of the *Feral Child* EP by **Lorenz Lepus**. Do you think the label has a signature sound?

Not so much a signature sound, as a signature vibe.

We don't want to set ourselves too many limits regarding the musical aspect of the label.

When you listen back to the records we've released so far, they all share a similar atmosphere even though the records are vastly different. Our influences are all hard to pin down, which gives us a large sound diversity.

The record came out on the 13th of October. Why do we all need it in our lives?

Because it's a one of a kind record in our opinion.

Lorenz is a sound-design wunderkind and manages to captivate you literally within the first ten seconds of the title track. We're very happy to have him on our label.

If you had to pick one track to sell the EP which would it be and why?

For both of us that would be the title track *Feral Child*, no contest. This doesn't mean that the other tracks aren't incredible as well. The remixes are much more club focussed but *Feral Child* is simply where the EP has its very core.

How did Lorenz first get involved with the label?

We've been friends for a very long time even before we started *Schakal*. So when he first sent us some of his productions, we immediately knew that we wanted him on the label.

Is this a relationship you are looking to continue and develop?

At this point of the interview, the question should kinda be answered already. :) He's a part of this label now as much as we are and, considering the amount of music he makes, there will definitely be much more to come.

Schakal's very first release was the *Somber Clarity* EP by **AntiAlias** which came out in June last year. Can you tell us a bit about this record, and how it came about?

At the beginning we were collectively pooling our music to get an idea in which direction we'd want to go with the label. When **Butch** came through with *Somber Clarity* we pretty unanimously decided that it was the perfect starting point.

The First Hunt EP was released in March and features four artists from the Schakal family each contributing a track apiece. How did all these artists get involved?

Very differently.

Nicolas Bougaieff has also been a long time friend of Nick, for example, while **Natural Flow** just happened to send us a very good track when we were in the midst of compiling the record.

Someone Outside is somewhere in the middle of those two and **AntiAlias** had his track lying around for a while and it simply complimented the release very nicely.

Going back to the beginning, what was it that led to you setting up your own record label?

Mainly passion for music. Also, building our own platform seemed like the right way to go. We were talking about the stagnation of big labels so this idea started. An idea that got us to the point of releasing our fifth record now.

And, what can we expect from Schakal Records in 2016?

We don't want to tell too much but you can definitely expect an absolutely incredible EP from **Nicolas Bougaieff** up next, which we're excited about for a while now.



Do you have a dream list of artists you would like to work with in the future.

And, if so, who's on there, and why?

We've been fortunate enough to actually have worked with some artists we're really looking up to already like the amazing **Kero**, who drew our latest cover artworks, and **Sasse** who has been kind of a mentor to the label while also supplying us with a killer remix on our second release. Other than that we don't really have a dream list.

We, of course, all have favourite artists whose music we adore, but we would rather work together with the ones we have gathered around us on the label's journey so far.

Schakal Records is based in Berlin. How do you think the city affects the music that you release?

Pretty much in exactly the way you would expect. Having such a vibrant city around you, inevitably leaves traces in what you create.

What five places should any visitor to Berlin be sure to check?

We'll leave the obvious stuff out here since we think that's self explanatory... Our opinion is that everyone should explore this city for themselves. Find a run down building, climb on its roof and enjoy the view. You'll be engulfed by the atmosphere one way or another.

Do you have any final words for our readers?

Sure, thanks for reading the interview! :)

More information about the label can be found on their [Website](#), while the *Feral Child EP* should be available in all good physical and web based record stores. Do yourself a favour and get some *Schakal* today!

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)