

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

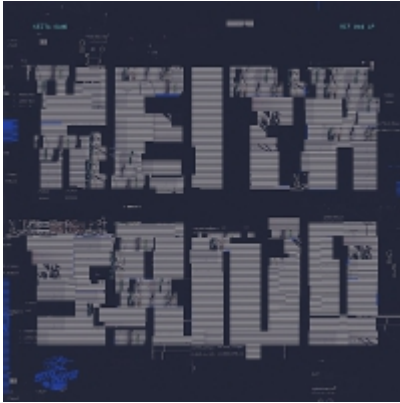
Going by the number of overly cheery adverts on the telly I think it is safe to assume that Christmas is on the way. With everyone from family to friends willing to embrace this over-commercialized rubbish by demanding presents from yourself make the break from the slimy claw of capitalism this year by simply spending your hard-earned money on yourself. By **JOHN BITTLES**

This week I will be bringing you some great new vinyl releases which are guaranteed to cheer you up more than buying your annoying nephew a bike. We have the smoky hip hop of **Romare**, the delicious deep house of **Keita Sano**, the alt-rock introspection of **The Notwist**, the Balearic brilliance of **Psychemagik**, and lots more.



With a string of releases from the likes of **Illum Sphere**, **Bonobo**, and **Letherette** (review coming soon), as good a reason as any for clearing the wax out of your ears, it seems British label *Ninja Tune* are on a bit of a run right now. This November **Romare** adds to the list of fantastic new *Ninja Tune* albums with the sample-heavy downtempo grooves of his *Love Songs: Part Two* LP. Continuing the creative splicing of cultural influences which made his debut album *Projections* such a blast, *Love Songs: Part Two* is a rich and heady trip full of dusty samples, funk-strewn struts and lush beats.

The languid majesty of *Who To Love?* confidently opens proceedings, inducing shivers in those smart enough to have pressed play. Another early gem, *All Night*, is the sound of the blues and disco coming together to create one glorious whole. Other picks include the stop/start piano roll of *Come Close To Me*, the **Rolling Stones** on heroin rock dirge of *Don't Stop*, the euphoria inducing swing of *Who Loves You?*, and the mid-paced house groove of *L.U.V.* Go buy! **9/10**.



Sometimes, when the gods are smiling and the stars are aligned a record can come along to steadfastly claim a place in both your heart and soul. One such album is the sublime house rhythms and mid-paced techno grooves which make up **Keita Sano's** self-titled LP. Out now on **Prins Thomas, Rett I Fletta** imprint, the label head himself describes Keita's music as "Technoid yet lo-fi version of music for discotheques that's uniquely his own". I couldn't put it better myself!

The album's seven tracks have a drive and vitality which are sure to cause scenes of rapture in living rooms as well as on dance floors. The Detroit-style synths, acid squiggles and subdued throb of *Full Of Love* act like a good warm up set, getting the listener firmly in the mood. Just as good is the chunky **Masters At Work** style wallop of *Leave The Floor*. Other highlights include the deep disco swoon of *Honey*, the cut-up thump of *Sucker Pt. 2*, and the **Mark E** style chug of closer *None Of Your Business*. With each and every tune a success, **Keita Sano** has released a record full of wonderful club based delights. **9/10**.



The closing of London clubbing institution *Fabric* was an event which shook UK clubland to its core. Along with the closure of legendary venues such as *The Arches* and *Plastic People* this illustrated how perilous the very act of dancing has become. Thankfully, after a lengthy battle with Islington council, and a rallying cry across the nightlife community *Fabric* is due to reopen on the 6th of Jan. Part of the fight to finance *Fabric's* legal process was the release of the jam-packed *#Savefabric* compilation.

Composed of a total of 111 tracks, any fan of electronic music will find something here to enjoy. From the brutal electronics of *Bumshit (Vox)* by **µ-Ziq**, to the *Kompakt* style splendour of *Tribute* by **Agoria**, the heavy bass rumble of *Equal Lies* by **Addison Groove**, to the nostalgic rave of *Jam The Jam* by **Roman Flügel**, the comp spans the entire breadth of the dance music spectrum. With so many songs to chose from, you probably

won't be listening to this in one go, but the real joy of *#Savefabric* is in discovering a whole host of new artists and sounds. **8/10**.



Recorded on the 16th of December 2015 at *Ut Connewitz* in Leipzig, German experimentalists **The Notwist** return this November with a rather wonderful new live LP. The aptly named *Superheroes, Ghostvillains & Stuff* is available in competent record shops now, and finds **Markus** and **Micha Acher** and friends in sparkling form. Mixing their trademark brand of melancholy and electronica, **The Notwist** create the perfect soundtrack for cold and grey autumn days.

If you haven't had the pleasure of hearing the band before, then this hit-packed record is an excellent place to start. After the gentle fuzz of *They Follow Me*, *Close To The Glass* raises pulses with heavy percussion, fractured vocals and an almost techno tone. This sets the stage for *Kong's* combination of krautrock and Markus' gorgeously accented vocals which enchants from the off. With old favourites such as *Pick Up the Phone* and *Neon Golden* sitting next to some dazzling newer tracks, *Superheroes, Ghostvillains & Stuff* is a lot better than any live album has any right to be. **8/10**.



Separated into three parts - *Love*, *Beach* and *Dance* - disco connoisseurs **Psychemagik's** new opus is available either in download, three individual double LPs, or as a bumper triple CD pack. Out now on the always reliable *Eskimo Recordings*, *Ritual Chants* is a melodious and tranquil trip through the outer realms of club music. Adhering to the anything goes ethos of the classic Balearica of **José Padilla** or **Alfredo**, all the mixes conjure images of calm beaches, cold cocktails and sunburned feet.

CD1, (*Love*), is a suave collection of laidback gems, taking in Spanish guitars, mellow beats, French lounge-pop, and more. Disc 2 (*Beach*), meanwhile, introduces subdued disco and elegant electronica to proceedings, while the rare groove and funk-filled CD3 (*Dance*) is a fun and eclectic mix, yet might be a little too self-aware for some. Full of leftfield turns and ear-catching obscurities, *Ritual Chants* might just be the closest some of us get to basking in the sun over the next few months. **8/10**.



A special mention must also go to: *Music From The Film Before Dawn* by **Thomas Ragsdale** - Originally released back in 2014, the gorgeously melodic ambiance of this soundtrack highlights just what a wonderful producer the *This Is It Forever* artist is, **9/10**, *Sound Of The 17th Season* by **Sven Väth** - The techno legend presents the latest of his annual round-up of tunes which made his *Cocoon* night on Ibiza such a blast with a double CD packed with peak time delights, **8/10**, *The Aura* by **Pavel Dvugal** - Beautiful and majestic, *Project Mooncircle* come up trumps yet again with an album of delicate trip hop grooves, **8/10**, *She Thought She Would Last Forever Remixed* by **Abstraxion** - Acts such as **Tuff City Kids**, **Kasper Bjørke**, **Clarian** and **Ripperton** take the melodic ambiance of **Harold Boué's** original compositions and drag them firmly towards the floor, **7/10**, *The Second Annual Fundraiser - War Child* by **V/A** - The 2nd of *Craigie Knowe's* yearly charity comps features smooth ambiance, lush house, deep electro and more from artists including **Chaos In the CBD**, **Shanti Celeste**, **The Burrell Connection** and **Legowelt**, **8/10**, and *In Dub* by **Jah Wobble** - After last year's 6 disc *Anthology*, *Cherry Red Records* release a double CD compiling some of the bass disciples' greatest dubs. If the gloriously deep *Club Scene Dub*, or the cool ska tones of *Kojak Dub* don't get you in the mood then you should hang your head in shame, **8/10**.

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)