

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

Since its formation in 2011 **Amanda Brown's 100% Silk** label has firmly established itself as one of the finest purveyors of house music around. Starting out as a more club focused alternative to parent label *Not Not Fun*, the LA-based imprint has since become the go to place for anyone with a passion for classic sounding grooves. With the finest A&R skills in the business, Amanda and her team have helped bring the likes of **Octo Octa**, **Fort Romeau**, **Nackt**, **Policy**, **María Minerva**, and more to the attention of the world. By **JOHN BITTLES**



This month the label's impeccable taste is evident yet again with the release of Russian artist **Åmnfx's** fantastic new LP. *Moscow Beat* is out on the 24th of March as a digital download, or as a limited edition cassette, and contains eight dance floor friendly, groove-laden tracks. Songs such as *Forget*, *Build A Home*, *In The Café*, and *Strictly Dub* successfully merge moody basslines, vintage drum machines, and analog synths to create a series of musical moments that are drenched in good time vibes. While his previous releases on *Opal Tapes*, *Neo Violence* and *Dirty Tapes* highlighted a producer able to squeeze every last drop of emotional energy from his machines, **Åmnfx's** new album is a huge stride forward in every way.

With *Moscow Beat* on heavy rotation these last few weeks, when the chance arose to send some questions to **Vasily Skobelev** (aka **Åmnfx**), it seemed an opportunity too good to refuse. In the resulting interview we discuss the album, working with *100% Silk*, the joys of classical music, being a night owl, the power of love, and lots more.

So dust off your dancing shoes, have a sneaky listen to the album [here](#), and let's begin...

**First off, can you tell us a bit about who you are and what you do?**

Å: I'm an electronic music artist, based in Moscow, Russia. I have made music for the last eleven years, I think, and as a performer I've played live & DJed for about 4 years. I started working as **Åmnfx** in May 2015 when I reflected on the way I write music. I felt that I needed a complete change in my vision, and one day I sat down in front of my piano and recorded a piece and then transformed it into a wonderful track called *Amen* (main track from my second release). I achieved this unique and distinct sound with a lot of old guitar amps and pedal effects, and because of this I took the abbreviation **Åmnfx** as a name - originally **Amen To FX's**; I believe that there would be no modern music at all without effects, which were invented in 20th century. So, in my music I do things that I've never heard anywhere. It can be a new hook in arrangement or a new sound, made with some unusual tool. Each of my works contains its own mood and message, and I'm always happy if the listener gets it.

**Your new record, *Moscow Beat* is out on the 24th of March. For those who haven't heard it yet, what can they expect?**

Å: It's way more mature than my previous records. During production the shape of sound and the overall feel went together; it's a complete work with a lot of deep thoughts inside, even in the main bangers *We Got It* and *Moscow Beat*. In places it's lo-fi deep house, elsewhere - acid-techno bangers with catchy melody on a piano. A

great record both for listening at home and for the club night.

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



Å: For me, it will be *Forget*. It's a powerful track with emotional piano passages and a strong acid line, which catches you in a second and holds you till the end. I wrote it in one 8-hour take when I wanted to pour all my sadness about my ended relationships - it was a sad, sad time, I was in need of a new start. The melody came immediately, and it was like I was playing on piano with my right hand and on the bass synth with the left one. A kind of really deep emotional breakthrough. I get most of my inspiration from love and from people who are able to love. There is so little love on our planet nowadays! I want people to know what true love is. Maybe it cannot be heard in my music but I try as much as I can.

I'm a big fan of the woozy melodies and subdued beats of *Build A Home*. Can you tell us a bit about how this song came about?

Å: Thank you very much. At first it was an experiment with minimal beats, but at that time I had a lot of thoughts about the future and this track came to be about basic things. As you can hear, there are very common structures on the track, which are merged with an unusual sub bassline and outer-space sounds. In my mind, that embodies the idea of the structure of everyday life - at a glance it's very simple, but if you go deeper you'll find a lot of interesting little things which make the life of each person so unique.

Another favourite is the dance floor groove of *Strictly Dub*. How did you manage to create such a sense of depth?

Å: Actually it was a result of a very limited framework. I picked up seven sounds from my library and made everything in this track only with them. It was kind of research - what can I do with that. At first it was about fifteen minutes long - you know, sometimes you want it to be endless - but in the process of making a complete tape I cut it to eight, and it came to be a strong 'opener', as I call these deep groovy things.

Tracks such as *In The Cafe* and *Zhenya Vernulas* are gloriously chilled. What do you like to listen to when you simply want to relax?

Å: Lately, when I really need to chill, I listen to classical music. **Ravel, Rachmaninov, Chopin, Liszt**. I love this music and it gives me the feeling of balance. If I want to chill at a party, I prefer to dance to some disco tunes, because for me with disco you can achieve this happy feeling of life perspective.

In the press notes you claim that „Most of the good ideas come around 4-7 in the morning, when you're tired as a dog.“ What is it about this time of day which makes it so productive creatively?

Å: I love to work at night. Usually I start the process around 00:30 AM and continue it to 8 AM. With this timing, at some point you lose the sense of what you're actually doing, so it becomes like a mind flow. Then, when the track is finished, you go to bed and when you wake up you can't even realize how you did this or that. You look at your own work and it surprises you. A few years ago I realized that I can't make things like this by day so I manage to do them by night. Let's say this is night music.

Moscow Beat is coming out on the highly respected 100% Silk imprint. How did you hook up with the label?



Å: I've been a huge fan of *100% Silk* for a long time. One day I dropped them an email and later they responded to me. We worked on the tape together for about six months and I'm really really thankful for their patience and support. Also, I'm so glad that they were open to the ideas - we did the cover with the work of my friend **Sasha**.

When did you first get into house music? And what is it about electronic music that keeps you excited today?

Å: I don't remember actually. My parents had a lot of *Warp* and *Ninja Tune* releases in their collection, I grew up listening to this kind of stuff. The thing that keeps me excited is the endless possibilities of electronic music and that pulse which electronic music gives you. When you listen to it, you have a the feeling that everything is possible.

Do you have any final words for our readers?

Å: Never give up.

*Moscow Beat* will be available from the 24th of March at all good download stores and record shops. Do yourself a favour though, and get it from the *100% Silk* [Bandcamp](#) page where every penny spent goes towards the creation of quality music.

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)