

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

The thing about house music is that you can have all the technical expertise in the world yet only make songs which are tepid and limp. Without heart and soul any electronic track is nothing more than a succession of bleeps and beats. Two people who understand this concept all too well are **Fabrizio Mammarella** and **Phillip Lauer**. By **JOHN BITTLES**



To date the duo have been responsible for creating some of the most stimulating and downright funky dance music around. Working together as **Black Spuma** the pair have given us three gorgeous EPs (*Oasi*, *Onda* and *Orme*) which are so good they could entice even the most reticent of foot shufflers to bust some moves.

Italian artist **Fabrizio Mammarella** is perhaps best known under the alias **Telespazio**, releasing a series of Italo influenced tracks with a slow, decadent feel. After some excellent singles and EPs, his self-titled album came out on *Hell Yeah* in 2015, its soft focus house and warm druggy chug acting as the perfect introduction to his sound. Partner in crime, **Phillip Lauer** meanwhile, is one half of **Tuff City Kids**. Together with **Gerd Janson**, he has remixed everyone from **Joe Goddard** to **Alter Ego**, while last year saw them release *Adolescent*, their highly praised debut LP. Phillip is also one third of **Talamanca System** together with Gerd and **Mark Barrott**, and has released a pair of excellent solo albums (*Phillips* and *Borndom*).

This month the duo rekindle their celebrated **Black Spuma** partnership to release the Balearic house groove of their *Orme* EP. Out now on **Mark Barrott's** [International Feel](#) label, their third record comprises four acid-tinged songs which find the pair steadfastly avoiding cliché to bring you only the most delicious of beats. The title track gets things off to a blistering start, dark, booming low end joined by an emotive 303 and some soft focus synths. Next, *Ceephab* sounds like *Selected Ambient Works 85-92* era **Aphex Twin** creating a beautiful love child with **Larry Heard**. Add the *MFS* style trance of *No Cube* and the Italo bassline juggernaut of *Presidential* and you have an EP as lovable as a puppy in oversized shades.



After some gentle pestering, both **Phillip Lauer** and **Fabrizio Mammarella** took time out from their busy schedules to answer some questions. In the resulting interview we discuss the new EP, how they first met, the enticing prospect of a **Black Spuma** LP, working with *International Feel*, why they aren't on a yacht cruising along the Mediterranean Sea, and lots more.

So, stick [Orme](#) on the stereo, crank up the volume, and let us begin...

For those who have never had the pleasure of hearing your music before, can you tell us a bit about who you are and what you do?

Phillip Lauer: My name is **Phillip Lauer**, I live near Frankfurt in Germany and I have produced music for over 20 years. I met Mammarella approximately 8 years ago and at some point - not too long ago we started to collaborate under the name **Black Spuma**.

Fabrizio Mammarella: I'm based in Italy, and I've been making music and DJing for 15 years. I record my solo music and I work with bands and other artists. I've known Phillip since 2006, but we started doing stuff together only a couple years ago.

Your new EP *Orme* is out on the 25th of August. Why do we all need this record in our lives?

P: I don't know.

F: Because you want to buy every record *International Feel* puts out.

If the EP was an article in a tabloid newspaper what would the headline be?

P: »Native American Shaman Priest sets whole tribe under mass Hypnosis«

F: »The Italo-German couple is high on apfelwein once again«.

The title track is an acid-tinged slice of house. How did it come about?

P: We always discuss what we do before we do it. I think Mammarella had the idea to combine acid and house.. ;)

F: We both like acid, that's why we often put a TB303 line in our music. In *Orme* we just combined it with the amazing Lauer chord progression and that's what came out.

Final track Presidential is another fave of mine and will sound perfect in a club. What's the secret to making music which moves the floor without resorting to cliches?

P: Thanks for the nice words.. I don't know.. we're just trying.. and sometimes it seems to work for some people.. if we knew such secrets, we'd be on our own yacht right now cruisin' thru the Mediterranean sea.

F: Yes, as Phillip says, we're probably tired of cliches, so we try to pick the most relevant elements of our backgrounds and to elaborate them to sound new and fresh.

The record is released on Mark Barrott's International Feel label. How did you first hook up with the good people there?

P: I know Mark thru **Talamanca System**, a project I have with him and **Gerd Janson**. One time when we met in my studio, Fabrizio had just left the day before, so the first **Black Spuma** tracks were still on the desk.. and when I played them to Mark he offered to release them, which we were really stoked about.

It has been almost exactly a year since your last EP Onda. How do you think the two EPs compare?

P: Hard to say for me. Fabri ?

F: Can't compare them, we're at a stage where we're trying to set our sound, so the 3 EPs (including the first one *Oasi*) are all different but important to us in order to define our vision.

You have now released three EPs as **Black Spuma** on International Feel. Is there any sign of an album?

P: We were just talking about this recently. We'll see.

F: We might have it sooner than we expect actually.

How did you two first meet? And what made you decide to start creating music together?

P: Fabri please tell the story..

F: 2006, Lauer was running a super cool record label called *Brontosaurus* and asked me to join the label with a remix of *The Exile Missile*. Later I was invited to play records in Frankfurt, Phillip came to Pescara a couple of times and remixed my project **Telespazio**. After a few years of silence I received an email from Lauer saying "hey we should record some music together" and I booked a flight straight away.

Both of you have been releasing quality music individually for a few years now. How does the music of **Black Spuma** differ from your other output?

P: All the projects I'm involved in have different workflows. With Fabrizio it's really easy as he is a much better producer than I am, that way I think we kind of manage to combine our ideas, and the outcome mostly sounds good to us. We've never fought about things, so far.

F: I just don't have an academic music knowledge, so working with Lauer is exciting and fast. The music we

make together is more melodic compared to my solo stuff.

What does the future hold for yourselves?

P: Hopefully good things.. family life, music, good food and a lot of money.

F: What else?

Do you have any final words for our readers?

P: Un miliardo di grazie for reading this far!

F: :)

Orme is available now in all good download and record stores, while more information and some handy shopping links can be found on the *International Feel* [Website](#). Make your parents proud by purchasing a copy of this today.

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)