

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

As I write this I have cocooned myself in a semi-professionally built pillow fort which I am hoping will withstand the coming winter months and keep me protected and warm. Right now the outside world seems so hideous that hibernating for as long as humanly possible seems like an excellent idea. Therefore, for the next few months I shall be hibernating with nothing but my loved one, a bumper packet of *M&Ms* and a batch of great music to keep me company. By **JOHN BITTLES**

If life is also getting you down, and you fancy following my lead, then I can heartily recommend the following wonderful LPs.



Originally released on **Sonia Pottinger's** esteemed *High Note* label, **Errol Brown's** *Dubb Everlasting* and *Dub Expression* have long been sought after by those with a love of low end bass. Unavailable since the 1970s, second hand copies of both LPs have been selling for silly money on sites like *Discogs*. This has meant that only a select few have had the pleasure of wallowing in, what are widely recognised as, two of the finest dub albums of all time. This month the good people at *Doctor Bird* reissue both records as a single CD, making it available for all. Mixed at *Treasure Isle* studio in Kingston and featuring session musicians including the legendary **Sly & Robbie** this is a package worth anybody's hard earned cash. In fact my only gripe is that both albums have been squeezed into one CD rather than each of them having a disc all to themselves. With each featuring a string of laid-back instrumental bass delights, the best way to listen to *Dubb Everlasting/Dub Expression* is with the volume turned as high as it will go. **9/10**.



Bill Brewster is a DJ/producer/curator/writer who is nothing less than an encyclopedia of musical knowledge, (a fact his *Djhistory* website or his book *Last Night A DJ Saved My Life* will attest to). This November sees the release of *Tribal Rites*, a three disc ode to the joys of record collecting. Out

now on *Eskimo Recordings*, the collection spans a massive 41 tracks covering multiple genres. It is meticulously crafted, and constantly keeps the listener on their toes by throwing up surprise after surprise. The set opens with the dirge like blues of *Rejoice* by **Agape**, a song which seems to settle into a guitar led groove before suddenly morphing into a joyous gospel refrain. From here we get a fabulously twisted version of *Animal Rhapsody* by **The Raincoats**, the sublime soul nugget *I Just Gotta Get Down (Part 1)* by **Curtis Green**, the joyous disco throb of **Floyd Beck's** *Party Is the Solution*, the soft electronic sleaze of *Message Of Love* by **Mother Tongue**, and lots more. Full of glorious obscurities and half-remembered gems, *Tribal Rites* is the fruit of a love affair which shows no signs of coming to an end. **9/10**.



A collaboration between **Jon Brooks** of **The Advisory Circle** fame and **Jim Jupp** from **Belbury Poly**, the debut album from **The Belbury Circle** is a record full of warm synth tones and a light wistful air. With stunning packaging designed by **Julian House**, *Outward Journeys* is a nostalgic trip into the 1970s/80s, a time when synthesisers seemed exciting and new. Opener, *No Cat's Eyes* is a tender, soundtrack inspired slice of melancholy. Recalling the pensive ambiance of the *Stranger Things* soundtrack, the introduction of shuffling beats towards the end injects a welcome sense of momentum into the song. Next up, *Forgotten Town* is the first of two tracks to feature the highly influential **John Foxx** on vocal duties. Deadpan lyrics and electronic flourishes ensure that those with a penchant for new wave pop will go a little misty eyed. Other gems include the motorik groove of *Cloudburst Five*, the wide eyed wonder and soft bass clanks of *Transports*, the tender ambiance of *Cafe Kaput*, and the electronic romanticism of *Departures Int.* The entire album is a thing of sonic beauty, making the purchase of *Outward Journeys* a must. **8.5/10**.



If there is a better label around right now than the *Houndstooth* imprint I will be surprised. This year the London institution have mesmerised with killer records by **Special Request**, **Guy Andrews**, **Throwing Snow** and more. November sees them continue their hot streak with *Arpo*, the excellent new album from **Call Super**. Three years in the making, the follow up to *Suzi Ecto* is everything fans would

expect and more. Deep and mysterious sounding, the LP's eleven tracks combine the best of experimental techno and 90s IDM with a thoughtful, emotion drenched sound entirely his own. After the 59 second long title track, *Korals* enchants with lush bass and hazy synths. Subtle and romantic, this is a song I could listen to on repeat for days. From here, *OK Werkmeister* has a bouncing bassline which refuses to stand still, *Music Stand* is gorgeously graceful, *No Wonder We Go Under* is full of open hearted innocence, while *Trokel* is so beautiful it hurts. Reminiscent of *Ginger* era **Speedy J**, *Arpo* is full of moments of wonder which linger long after the record has come to an end. **8.5/10**.



This week we'll finish with *Reworked By Detroiters*, an album which sees the output of the mighty **Funkadelic** reinterpreted by the cream of Detroit's house and techno producers. The idea of remixing the work of the seminal **Funkadelic** is not an act to be taken lightly. So revered is their music that artists including **Theo Parrish** and **Carl Craig** chose to withhold their versions for fear they were not up to scratch. Yet, with legendary acts such as **Alton Miller**, **Moodymann**, **Underground Resistance**, and **Claude Young** involved there is still an abundance of talent here. Picks include **Moodymann's** long and sexy take on *Cosmic Slop*, the loose funk swing of **Underground Resistance's** version of *Music 4 My Mother* and the wonderfully woozy fog of the **BMG Dub** of *Maggot Brain*. While some of the remixes sound a little too reverential to the original source material, *Reworked By Detroiters* is still an awful lot of fun. **7/10**.



A special mention must also go to: *Stranger In The Alps* by **Phoebe Bridgers** - Slow, thoughtful, and with an air of melancholy which hangs heavy in the air, *Stranger In The Alps* is an album of wistful beauty, **9/10**, *Cerulean* by **Merveille & Crosson** - For their sophomore LP, the duo of **Cesar Merveille** and **Ryan Crosson** invite a selection of jazz musicians to add a sense of organic warmth to their downtempo grooves, **8/10**, *The Curious Hand* by **Seamus Fogarty** - With a voice full of emotional resonance, the London based Irish singer's debut LP for *Domino* is heartfelt, meaningful and enchanting, **8/10**, *Mirapolis* by **Rone** - With touches of trance, house, rap and EBM, *Mirapolis* is an album full of character and ideas,

7/10, *Re-Creation (Remixes Compiled)* by **Deetron** - A bumper collection of dance floor slaying tracks which includes the Swiss artist's take on **Todd Terje**, **Jamiroquai**, **Honey Dijon**, **Aril Brikha** and more, **7.5/10**, *Irregular Passion* by **Francois X** - Dark, throbbing electro and sleazy disco jams combine in a record made to soundtrack the decadence of the night, **7.5/10** and *Amsterdam Gets Physical 2017* by **Paris Green** - Tracks and remixes by the likes of **Eagles & Butterflies**, **Motor City Drum Ensemble**, **DJ T.**, **Ricardo Villalobos** and **DJ Pierre** are blended together to form a fabulous house stew, **8.5/10**,



And let's not forget: *FBA21: Collected Works 1996-2017* by **Future Beat Alliance** □ Anyone who likes their house music deep and funky need this retrospective in their lives, **9/10**, *In Trance* by **Jah Wobble** □ Following the excellent *Redux* and *In Dub* retrospectives, *In Trance* was compiled and annotated by **Jah Wobble** himself and features three discs of lush ambient dub, **8.5/10**, *Parabolabandit* by **Sequoyah Tiger** □ Beautifully trippy, the debut album by **Laila Gharib** mixes pop and electronica to create a record which nestles in the mind like some half remembered dream, **8.5/10**, *SoMe* by **Anja Schneider** □ The techno legend launches her new label *SoUs Music* with her first LP in nine years, **8/10**, *Time Being* by **CYNE** □ *Project Mooncircle* reissue the very first album released on the label, now with added bonus tracks and instrumentals, **8/10**, *MAKTUB* by **Satori** - Recorded on a farm in Belgium, **Satori's** debut LP blends crackly jazz, driving house, downbeat jams and world music to create a fully realised record which has more to say than most, **7.5/10**, *Sato Relatives In Descent* by **Protomartyr** □ With a dash of punk rock here, **Sonic Youth** there, **Protomartyr's** fourth full length is a challenging yet invigorating listen, **7/10**, *Hypersex* by **Moulinex** □ Conceived as a 'love letter to club culture', the Portuguese artist's third album is a deliciously groovy beast, **7/10** and *From Sound To Silence* by **V/A** □ Italian imprint *Obscura* present an eight track compilation full of tough, club based tools, **7/10**.

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)