

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

In the noisy, hectic, dog eat dog world in which we find ourselves these days I have come to value moments of quiet reflection like little else. Those times when I can close my eyes and pretend that my cat **Mr. Fingers** and I are the only ones around can be every bit as special as a night out with friends. As any other urban dwelling dreamer will undoubtedly attest, the soundtrack for these precious moments is a vital component in the quest for peace. By **JOHN BITTLES**

This is where the *Balearic* series of compilations come into their own. With each one lovingly packaged with an extra dollop of sunshine, each and every one should be considered the perfect accompaniment to blocking out the horrors of the world. The annual *Balearic* series is compiled and mixed by former *Cafe Mambo* resident and Ibiza legend **Breese** and "seeks to express the spirit of chilled Ibiza". Responsible for many a horizontal evening, **Breese** also runs the *Balearic* imprint and is responsible for helming the excellent *Ku De Ta Bali* compilations.

The latest in the series, (*Balearic 4*), is out now and features twelve gorgeously sedate musical moments so calm and relaxing that even flipping the record over can seem like a Herculean task. The album opens with the gentle piano and hazy melodies of **Max Essa's** *Gold Hush (Part Two)*. The perfect scene setter, the song conjures images of secluded beaches and cocktails by the sea. Next, **Emerson Kitamura Feat. MMM** give us a surprisingly lovely sunshine kissed cover of **George McCrae's** evergreen classic *Rock Your Baby*, a song whose lullaby-like quality really shouldn't work, but somehow does. From here, the *On U-Sound Dub* of *Entre Dos Aguas* by **Los Twangueros** makes the most of some stunning Spanish-style guitars, **Faze Action's** take on **Private Agenda's** *Dawn* is heart-warming, tranquil and divine, while *Changuinola* by **Max Manetti** successfully brings to mind an **Andrew Weatherall** remix of a 90s baggy classic.

With *Balearic 4* bringing a dose of summer to my otherwise dreary life, I set out on a quest to discover more. In the following interview the man responsible, **Breese**, discusses the *Balearic* compilation series, the latest volume, playing at *Cafe Mambo*, his label *Balearic*, **Survivor's** *Eye Of The Tiger*, and lots more.

So, get yourself comfortable, check out the album [here](#), and let us begin...



By way of introduction, can you tell us a bit about who you are and what you do?

I curate the *Balearic* compilations, record label and party. Previously, you would catch me as long-term resident DJ at *Cafe Mambo* Ibiza, spinning daily, and soundtracking the sunset. I also compiled all ten volumes of the highly regarded *Ku De Ta Bali* albums, worked on many of the more credible, chill themed *Ministry Of Sound* albums and toured with the brand smashing clubs globally for a decade with many a good night spent in Germany!

The 4th volume of your Balearic compilation series came out on the 10th August. How would you describe the series to someone who has never heard of them before?

They are strongly focussed on the Ibiza sunset sound, so if you have ever ventured to *Eivissa* and enjoy chilling in the beach bars watching the day pass with a vino and some tunes, you will probably love our compilations.

What is your role in the series?

Literally, all roles of putting a record to market. From the spark of a release idea, selecting the incredible music heard on our summer editions, building the family of artists, co-producing and mixing the releases, overseeing artwork, manufacturing and distribution and daily runs to the post office thanks to our *Bandcamp* supporters!

Why do we all need Balearic 4 in our lives?

I think the album provides moments of escapism. The music featured is of timeless quality and flows like a story towards the finish with a crescendo closing piece. Physically, the visuals of our vinyl and CD packaging must be some of the finest out there, so *Balearic* is very much an experience.

If you had to pick one track to sum up the album which would it be and why?

Quinn Lamont Luke's *Different Aspirations* is a real winner. His soulful, funky tracks never fail to bring a smile and an 'I'm-sure-that-I-know-this' familiarity. This track gave a real feel good factor to the collection.

Max Essa's *Gold Hush (Part Two)* is a wonderful opener. How difficult was it to sort out the running order of the album, and to get all the tracks involved to work as a whole?

It is a challenge. For instance, even after five months of working on this edition, it still didn't feel right; I was missing some sun-filled, Mediterranean sounding pieces. With summer fast approaching, I went into the studio and tailor made what I thought was needed, which has given the selection a real uniqueness.

The track on the album which I find myself coming back to time and time again is the slow house groove of the **Faze Action** Remix of **Private Agenda's** *Dawn*. What can you tell us about this song?

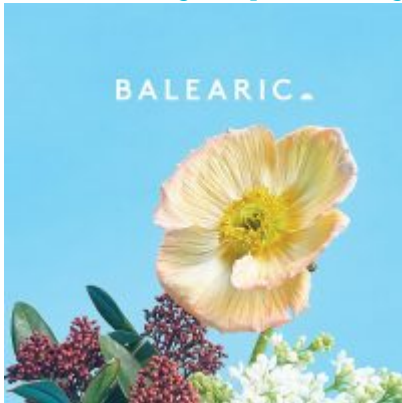
This really is a great track. I love **Private Agenda's** output, and **Faze Action** know precisely how to nail a quality record. Rhythmic and tribal, *Dawn* will sound just as superb at global beach bars as it will back at home over a chilled afternoon cerveza, but it's also a perfect match for glowing red skies after a dusty sunset.

The compilation also features your own remix of *San Vorera* by **Robot 84** **Feat. Manuel Amoscotegui**. Can you talk us through the creative process behind this piece?

This tune was purposely designed for *Balearic 4*. Scott from **Robot 84** sent me *San Vorera* and I loved it, it had a special vibe, but I was hearing it differently with a focus on the sun-drenched Spanish guitar. So I asked if I could remix the track. I started by balancing the elements differently, giving focus to alternative parts, then added some flamenco percussion to become more faithful to my original idea. The flow was then re-jiggled

bringing the chorus back around to create a second half. Once it was all working, I dubbed it out with my *Eventide* delays and reverb to take it to a totally different sonic place. I hope you all like it.

The cover image is quite striking. Where did it come from?



The visuals and packaging are an integral aspect of the label. Art Direction is from **Peter Chadwick's** studio *A Popular Space*, combined with photographer **David Ryle** who shoots our incredibly colourful floral images. We do a yearly shoot which gives the label awesome visual content for the year ahead; releases, events and posters. If you have an interest in art and design, it's well worth hunting down copies of our vinyl and CDs.

Putting together a compilation is notoriously difficult. Looking back now, are there any glaring omissions that you feel should have been included?

This year the track I really wanted to use was **Albino's** *Sea's Message* on *Astral Soda*. It appeared on a short run cassette and vinyl release, I was allowed the usage but I couldn't get it to fit and was gutted. Check it out, it's totally cosmic.

The album is out on your own Balearic imprint which you set up back in 2015. What made you decide to start up your own record label?

I just felt the need to establish a very real and honest project after years of touring globally as a DJ and working in dance music. I found myself replaying **Jose Padilla's** early *Cafe Del Mar's* and was gravitated back towards a freer and more interesting sound. A label held the opportunity of reinventing, starting again and doing things as I saw fit - doing things proper.

What have been the key releases for the label so far?

I think all four compilations are key. Not to take anything away from the singles, I use a different mindset with those and explore new sounds and ideas and take more risks. The albums are next-level in so many ways, as a series, I'm really proud of how they have turned out and flow into each other.

What else can we expect from Balearic in 2018?

The parties we've been throwing in the UK seaside town of Margate this summer have been going off and making a real name. The summer big one is *Balearic at the Sun Deck*, Sunday 26 August. Label-wise, there's a bunch of releases after *Balearic 4*. I'm going to put out a **Breese** artist EP featuring my own remixes of unreleased tunes from the label, which I'm very excited about, and **Clandestino's Nick Smith** has an EP forthcoming too. I'm thinking about some London parties this winter and there's a radio show on the cards, so lots of wicked stuff to explore over the next few months.

You have also made a name for yourself during your residency in Cafe Mambo. What is it that makes Cafe Mambo such a special place to play?

It's a special setting overlooking the ocean with a stunning sunset to soundtrack each evening. And *Mambo's* DJ booth is so iconic with countless of the world's greatest DJs spinning throughout the summer. As resident, you get to learn from the likes of **Jose Padilla**, **Sasha**, **Carl Cox**, **Pete Tong**, it's incredible really.

What is the secret to winning over a dance floor?

Follow the dancers and play what you see. Keep this circle going until you see the club go mental!

What's the strangest record you have ever played in a DJ set and gotten away with?

There's been a few thrown in for laughs. In Ibiza it was 8-hour sets every day, so you have to keep sane with the odd funny moment. **Survivor's** *Eye Of The Tiger* used to get dropped a fair bit. **The Specials'** *Ghost Town* at the very beginning of summer when *Mambo* was empty. And after we all made it to the end of summer, **Vangelis'** *Chariots of Fire* with all the staff doing slow motion running to the closing party finish line!

Do you have any final words for our readers?

Thank you to all our German *Balearic* crew, supporting the label, appreciate it!

Balearic 4 is available now from the label's [bandcamp page](#) and all good record and download stores. Do your soul a favour and treat yourself to a copy today.

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)