
DELANO SMITH
BOB CLAUS (DJ REC)
VINCE HALLIBURTON
ERNO THE INFERNO
FAHRENHEIT 2040 (MIND CAPTIVE)
ARCHER RECORD PRESSING
DETROIT ELECTRONIC QUARTERLY
VOLUME 8 ::: SUMMER EDITION

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wine bar + shop

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3RD **Deep Crates** - Daniel Andres + guests
4TH **Soul 'n Conga** - Craig Huckaby, Live percussion, guests
5TH **Structured Sound** - John Collins(UR) + guests

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C O N T E N T

detroit electronic quarterly

FAHRENHEIT 2040

We meet on a chilly, wet spring day for coffee in Ferndale. He goes by several names, but I'm hoping his DJ name — Fahrenheit Temperature 2040 — will warm things up a bit.

FT2040 has been in Detroit and under the radar since the early 1990s, when he moved here after time spent in Missouri and Louisiana. He was born in the indigenous territory known as Kaddo (corporate name: Shreveport, LA).

His story is fascinating. It goes deep into native cultural identity and spiritual growth. We hang out and talk. I scribble notes about his geographical, historical, personal and musical journey, waiting for the rain to stop to take a few pictures on the street. It doesn't. Dodging raindrops, we get it done —he's a photogenic guy in his late 30s and appears relaxed and unpretentious in front of the camera — and go our separate ways.

Later he sends me music. It ranges from instrumental hip hop to ambient, inspired by both techno and classical music. It's inspired work, really lovely, filled with sonic ingredients born of his time in the south and nurtured in the north. There is some Detroit grit and bite, but not obviously so. The effect is subtle, music meant to penetrate head and the soul at its own pace, no rush.

Even later, we reconvene for a Q&A, where he can tell his story in his own words.

WW: Shamush El is your indigenous name, yes? And Fahrenheit Temperature 2040 is one of your artist/performance names?

FT: Shamush El is my indigenous appellation; I am Kadohadocho paternal, and Aniwaya on my maternal side. Fahrenheit Temperature 2040 is my DJ title. Some know me as Nek, DJ Red Eyes and Nicholas the Natural. My current title with my music of today I go by Mind Captive, but in a positive sense, hahaha, with my current release on the DEQ release called 'Drummer Dreaming.'

WW: You talked about being from a musical family - when did you first become interested in music and begin playing? Was this in Louisiana? Where exactly?

FT: I first became interested in mixing and making music in 1992 from listening to the radio. My mother and sister both worked in the radio broadcasting field in the Kaddo, what is corporately called Shreveport LA. My big sister Cheryl G, also known as Foxcee, in particular would always have the new records and would bring me to the radio station. I had my uncle (known in the streets as Candy Man) who I enjoyed watching play records. I also caught vibes and influences from my mother's other brother, Uncle Norman (who goes by the name Norman Brown, a well known jazz musician under Motown records) of the Wichita Arapaho territory.

WW: When did you come up to Detroit for the first time? What first got you excited about Detroit music?

FT: I came to Detroit in 1993 for my first time due to unfortunate circumstances, my mother's illness of breast cancer. I was between Missouri and Louisiana at my sister's and father's when my mother stressed the great importance of living with her. She was feeling it was very urgent at the time. What really hit me were her stories of her upbringing and listening to Motown as a young woman. She would speak of the days of the Brewster projects and Southwest Detroit. She talked about hearing her favorite songs that inspired her to want to be a part of the sound that led her into the radio broadcasting field.

I remember when I came to Detroit and the first thing I heard was radio. I discovered 96.3 late night. I was loving it. It reminded me of Fort Eustis VA and the radio station out of Richmond VA. At that time I was listening to Stretch Armstrong and Babito live. This was when I would visit my sister who was in the military there at that time. Detroit had the same flavor but more like in between east coast and west coast. Later I found out it was the Midwest vibe and it was complete, all in one: perfect! But what really popped my cherry was the Hip Hop Shop on W. 7 mile in 1997-2000. That was the real official experience of Detroit hip hop in its purity for me. Great times!

WW: You talked about being influenced by Carl Craig to do techno. Who else influenced you? In classical? Jazz? Hip hop?

FT: Yes, I was influenced by classical and jazz. The inspiration came about through my high school days of sampling and making beats in 1996, when I originally used jazz samples and then switched to classical. Classical music was a major influence. It mainly filled a need to explore other genres of music and a want for originality with my beats. At the same time, I started doing a type of hip hop with a close friend of mine, who was an inspired MC with a spiritual style of rap. We wanted to compose an authentic style of sound other than the average jazz samples and funk breaks. We decided we wanted to offer an eclectic, classical sound over drum breaks with conscious, spiritual content.

In 2002, I first heard of and experienced Carl Craig, which took me into the electronic stage of my own evolution. I was experimenting with ambient sounds, house and techno melodies and textures that influenced me to explore outside of composing music using just samples and breaks.

WW: Describe your process when you produce a track. What gear do you use?

FT: I have used various processes, but at the present time I'm using what is available to me. I am a new Ableton user, along with my phone, iPad and other gadgets I have at my reach via friends, studios, etc. My process is simple: I create when I feel. I don't push it or 'try' to make anything if it's not there. I usually hear the sound before it manifests through me. I'm just a receiver: when I tune in the sound flows through.

WW: Name 5-6 records you always carry in your bag, ready to play anytime.

FT: Intricate Dialect, Cosmic Handshakes, Andres, Jay Dee, and some control vinyls just in case I have to flip digital and play what isn't on 12s.

WW: What is next for you? Any more tracks coming soon?

FT: Next move is an EP release under Mind Captive.

WW: Final thoughts?

FT: The sounds I receive and offer in return, are reflections of my various dimensions, views and schools of thought. Sound is touch, so I can translate my thoughts and feeling through it as a medium. I may sound a little shamanistic, but sound plays a huge role in spirituality and indigenous rituals. Music today that we enjoy on so many planes has a greater origin: I sometime pride myself on these facts, and love expressing in that context. It's much like water - it always returns to itself. I like it all in all forms it comes, beyond genres. It's much like how I DJ, flipping between genres, between analog and digital.

It's no secret that turntablist, producer, Bob Claus (a.k.a DJ Rec) has long been one of the biggest advocates for Detroit music, especially in the area of Detroit hip hop, soul and funk 45s. His studio, in a secret location deep in the metro area, has records neatly stacked records in every room including the kitchen!! We met up on a crisp Sunday morning…

ESJ : Let's start from the beginning. Where did you grow up and when did you get into music?

DJR : I was born in Detroit. I bought my first album when I was seven years old. I stole the money out of my mom's purse to buy Elton John's Yellow Brick Road album for $13. I liked "Crocodile Rock" but really didn't get deep into music until later on. Around 1982, I was listening to stoner rock such as Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath. I also remember hearing Sugar Hill's "Rappers Delight" on the radio. I used my mom's tape deck to record it so I could learn the words.

A few years later I went down to the park and some guys had a boom box. They were playing a style of music I never heard before. I asked them what tape is this? It ended up being Rap's Greatest Hits (on K-Tel)! There was Run-D.M.C. "Rock Box" and "Sucker M.C.'s" played that day, but the song that really blew my mind was Newcleus "Jam On It!" That is was what started it all for me. I was hated on for listening to rap and electro at the time. I was hanging with a rough crowd. Just walking down the street, you could get your ass beat by some stoners for playing rap. I started buying records at K-Mart, usually 45s for $.59 because that was the cheapest option back then and I listened to them on my crappy Fisher Price record player. There wasn't a wealth of knowledge of music, so it was basically hanging out in the culture to learn what was going on with music.

ESJ : What was your first introduction into the DJ culture?

DJR: When I was about eleven, we moved to California because my step dad got a job out there. My friend Jose DJed college parties. I would go with him to help carry his records and gear just to hear what he was playing and watch what he was doing. I'd hear a song that I liked and would write it down. One day, he showed me how to beat match using the BPMs of each record. I asked (at his house) if I could jump on the turntables and I picked it up right away just from watching.

Shortly after that my mom took me to Radio Shack and bought me a turntable and a Realistic mixer that I still have. I even made my own slip mat with an old shirt that I cut all sloppy. I started trying to find records to scratch phrases or even listening to the radio to see what the DJs were cutting. Two big cuts for me were Egyptian Lover "Egypt, Egypt" and LL Cool J "I Need A Beat." I'd rush to the record store looking for these records not even knowing what they were, but just by the hook. I would ask someone that worked there if they ever heard of these tracks and they were usually unhelpful. They dumped me in the 12" singles section so I would guess by the titles. I remember one time coming up on $40 (that was a lot of bread back in the 80's) so I went to the record store and spent it all. I got home and ended up hating every record I bought. It was a crap shoot unless someone told you what song it was, but it was still hard and it took me a year to accumulate a crate and a half of records.

ESJ : When did you come back to Detroit?

DJR: In 1985 I was 17. It was the winter right after the Space Shuttle Challenger blew up. I came back with my two crates of records and a skateboard. I left my turntables and mixer out there and my friend's dad shipped them back after two months to me here. There was a point that I thought he ripped me off because it took so long, but after that it was on. I was clocking every record I had to match the BPMs. It took me a day and a half to perfectly blend two songs together. I was so excited after doing that. I was living a few blocks away from the original Record time on 10 Mile Road. I had some rock, punk, rap ,12" dance and west coast electro. I went in and met Mike Himes (owner of Record Time) one day. I had three records to play for him to see if he had anything of the same style. He was tripping because not many people here were up on the electro stuff and he asked if I wanted to sell them. That's how he and I became friends. We both showed each other tracks.

ESJ: What were some of your first DJ gigs?

DJR: My first DJ gig was actually a wedding. After that I was doing small house parties with my friends. I'd get sick of playing records so I'd take them into the record store and trade them in for new ones. Then around 1988-89 I got a gig at St. Andrew's Hall where I'd play way upstairs in a hot room by myself before and in between bands. I did not get paid much and there was some free beer, but the one plus was all the great shows I saw. Around that time I took some time away from the music to skateboard. People would freak out hearing me play metal to rap. Then winter would hit and I'd get back into the music. I was a wreck all over the place, OCD style. That's how I got my name. In the early 90s I had a night for about two years at Impound (which then turned into the Viper Room) on Harper playing alternative rock and rap. It was the same spot Eminem did his party for the Slim Shady EP. I played the grand opening of The Majestic.

ESJ: How did you get into production?

DJR: I had a drum machine. I think it was a Roland R8. I was using it to add kicks on top of records while I was DJing. I then started noticing how people were just sampling the drum breaks off old records and so I bought a four track recorder and a Gemini sampler. I was sampling anything I could, like a tone at the end of a song or even like Cypress Hill sampling weird stuff like a cow moo. Anything I could find. We were ghetto back then.

ESJ: You eventually got a job at Record Time.

DJR: Yes! Mike and I were friends. He knew I was handy and one day he just asked if I wanted to work there. When Plus 8 moved their offices out of the back area, I set up the big overstock room, built the record bins, listening stations, warehouse display signs, whatever they needed. I was Record Time's handy man.

ESJ: Are you a handy man now?

DJR: Yes I'm very handy, but I make my brother Greg Cheap do everything.

ESJ: There's a rumor that you are rebuilding your studio.

DJR: I am taking a break for the moment to do more DJing and redoing the studio. I went on a buying spree. Getting re-inspired. I am learning piano because I get sick of sampling. I want to do more original stuff.

ESJ: Tell me about the track you submitted to DEQ.

DJR: It's called the "Space Race Theme." I bought a Roland AK Mini keyboard that has a vocoder on it. This was the first track that came from it. I chopped and sampled the drums, but I did rest of the track on the keyboard. There's no rap. I was just on my own little trip, thinking about sound track stuff. It has kind of a complicated keyboard. No sequencer. I just had to play with it a lot to get the right sound, but once you get there, it sounds good.

ESJ: What's in the future for you?

DJR: Once my studio is finished, there will be lots of new music to put out and DJing. Be on the lookout, you never know where you are going to catch me. I'm kind of a mystery man.

ESJ: Last words of advice?

DJR: Never sell your soul. Keep it real.

Interview by East Side Jon // Photo by Josh Greenwood

ARCHER RECORD PRESSING

Ask anyone making records in Detroit who resides at 7401 East Davison and the answer will very likely roll off the tongue as an immediate reflex. Through the highs, lows, booms and busts of the music buying public, the Archer family and their now legendary record pressing plant have entrenched themselves as the go-to record pressing plant for nearly every genre imaginable. However, like many supporting characters of the Detroit music scene, they prefer their craftsmanship to stay in the background and are very reticent to offer any interviews. DEQ was lucky enough to snag a few minutes of Mike Archer's time.

RT: First let's start off with a bit of history. Archer opened in 1965 when the tsunami of Motown and the hundreds of orbiting labels of aspiring producers/artists/entrepreneurs were at a fever pitch. It was also the time when vinyl was one of the very few formats available from which to listen to music. Give us a sense of the business at the time. Was Motown a major customer? Was it similar to the current vinyl explosion we're enjoying? If not, how was it different?

MA: My grandfather, Norman Archer, started the business in 1965. He started a number of businesses in his life and Archer was the last one. He noticed there were no pressing plants in Detroit and thought that presented an opportunity. Motown was pressing many of their records at American Record Pressing in Owosso MI, so we didn't press records on the Motown label. We did, however, press many independent or side projects from Motown artists. My father was handling much of the day to day operations at the time. He says the artists usually wouldn't even mention the Motown connection and were very humble. He didn't know many were on the Motown label until years later when he would see them on Motown specials on television. The demand for vinyl was much greater in those days than it is now, but there was much more capacity back then. Even though the amount of records pressed nationally was much greater, the turn times were faster.

RT: Obviously the departure of Motown, the decline of the economy in the region, and the introduction of new formats led to fewer records being manufactured. How did your family manage to stay afloat throughout those lean years?

MA:The demand for vinyl was steady up until the early 80's when CDs hit the market. Many large pressing plants started to shut their doors. As large plants shut down, we were able to pick up some of the work that they had, but there were still some lean years. By the mid 80's, the Detroit techno scene was starting. Most of the techno records we made went to the European market. Detroit techno was embraced much more in Europe than locally and they wanted it on vinyl to spin in the clubs. The local artists liked the fact that they could press their records right here in Detroit and have them shipped overseas. That helped us when many other pressing plants were searching for work.

Celebrity Interview Question – Patrick Russell.
A long time staple of the Detroit community, Patrick Russell is currently enjoying widespread international acclaim – with tours, a string of new remixes, releases and a residency at NY's infamous Bunker nightclub.

PR: What's the absolute strangest request you've ever had in regards to a pressing?

MA: Strangest request was probably someone wanted us to mix blood in the vinyl as we pressed their record. We declined.

PR: What's the best sounding record that you've ever had leave your plant?

MA: Best sounding record is too subjective for me to comment.

PR: What's the largest pressing you've ever done?

MA: The top 5 largest pressings we have done have all been Detroit dance records. I can't say who was number one.

RT: The Detroit techno renaissance and its artists certainly played their part to keep the plant up and running from the 80s to present day, and you've had the major responsibility of making everyone sound good. I know for a fact during my time at record labels there were certain months of the year where pressing a record was just next to impossible. Has the mainstream success of electronic music over the last few years helped, hurt or had no effect on ARP's steady stream of business? What's the current cycle time to get a record pressed these days?

MA: Turn times have definitely increased over the last 10 years. For us the Movement festival has always been the biggest deadline since the DEMF was started by Carl Craig. The next deadline is the end of July. European distribution basically shuts down in August as much of Europe is on holiday. Very little is shipped overseas in August. We also have a rush to get records out by the

Interview by Rob Theakston // Photo Vince Patricola

beginning of December so they can be in stores before Christmas. I don't think the success of mainstream electronic music has affected us as we have always pressed underground Detroit music. It seems that that the rock music has had a much larger impact on turn times. Rock bands and labels have turned to vinyl as a physical format. It seems millennials have embraced vinyl. 10 years ago we would turn a project in four weeks. Now turn time can extend 3-4 months.

RT: It would be bad form not to mention Ron Murphy, as his company (NSC) and yours seem to have been the perfect marriage for electronic music producers in Detroit throughout the decades. Give us a sense of your working relationship with Ron and how the two of you influenced one another, if at all.

MA: Much of the electronic music we pressed was cut by Ron Murphy at NSC. Many people actually thought that Archer Record Pressing and NSC were partners. Local artists would be able to sit with Ron Murphy as he cut the record and then would stop by Archer and watch their records come off the press. People loved the fact that this all happened locally. Fans of Detroit electronic music from around the world would want to have Ron cut their record and us to press it to get that "Detroit" sound. We still smile when we do a repress and see NSC etched on an old stamper.

Celebrity Interview Question – Molly Smith
Molly is the Production Manager Ghostly International / Spectral Sound where she's been overseeing vinyl manufacturing for both labels for the last five years. Before that Molly was a DJ and General Manager at WNYU where for a while, she was Tim Sweeney's boss!

MS: Back in December, Jack White's Third Man pressing plant unleashed a handful of new presses, which is the first time that has happened in the last 30 or so years. If other plants follow suit, how do you think the new machinery will affect production demand? Do you think quality will suffer at all?

MA: I don't believe new machinery will affect demand, but it will help with turn times. I'm sure the quality will be very good once the bugs are worked out. The new machines Third Man has purchased are based on an old design of a Finebilt record press that was very reliable.

MS: A lot of plants rely on upping their capacity by buying up old machines from long-since abandoned plants. Are you on the hunt for more machinery?

MA: Most of the old machinery has been found and any press that is capable of making records is making records. We are not looking at expansion. We think one of the reasons we have been able to stay in business over 50 years is that we are the right size to survive the ups and downs of this business.

RT: Are there any secrets about vinyl production that people would be surprised to know? Does heavier vinyl really sound any better than regular vinyl?

MA: Every record presses differently. Things such as the way the record is cut, the length of the record and the content of the music can effect that. It's not like a digital recording. Pressing a record is part science and part art. Record weight has little to do with sound quality. Good mastering, plating and pressing is more important.

Home. It has a different meaning and place for all of us. A large part of what home is, for Vincent, is in music. It's house dancing in a crusty, old Detroit warehouse with powder sprinkled, aged wooden floors in the throes of a deep selector. It's running his own sound company (he's an extreme audiophile and cares about the sound quality of his events). It's putting on proper events for dancers. It's behind the turntables mixing. It's in the studio making music. It's always on his mind.

"I'm a house head", he said emphatically with his arm raised in a testifying high. It didn't matter that the ten people inside Cutter's during our mid week burger lunch looked at us a little strangely for a second. It was a really good moment. Not only did strangers get a small dose of his enthusiasm, I got another peek of how deep it goes.

A larger view comes in form of a 12" Halliburton released in 2015 called "Send It Out to the Universe" on his Algorithm label (Algo 001). The genre of "deep house" is, many times, thrown around so cheesily in the media, but this release is dairy free. It is so much of the truth of what it is supposed to be. It's a slower 4/4 beat laced with deep Chicago and Detroit inspired chords and hooks. The house heads can get with it and dancers won't get bored.

His music is composed with versatility in mind, designed to mix well in most DJ sets and to fit in daily life routines. "You can play it at 8pm at the beginning of a set, peak at 2am, or at 5am. You can exercise to it. You can do your house or school work to it. It should all fit. "

Versatility comes from diversity and Halliburton's tastes are obviously not only limited to house music. He cites the fact that listening to "lots and lots of jazz" early on helped him get started musically, especially George Benson and Chuck Mangione. WJZZ (legendary jazz radio station) and Mojo's Midnight Funk Association radio program accelerated his learning. There was lots of disco, house and electro for break dancing and loving Mantronix.

While attending school at University of Detroit in the early nineties he met Thaddeus Reed, the "catalyst" that got him where he is today. "I was playing the piano in the ballroom (on campus) there one day and he came over. We started talking and sharing tracks that we liked." This was around the time A Guy Called Gerald's "Blow Your House Down" and "Voodoo Ray" came out. "I gave him tracks that I liked. He went into another world when he started dancing. I was dumbfounded. Music made him do moves like no one I had ever seen before. At the time people would break dance or jit, but this was different. It was a house style that I found out came out of Buffalo. I was hooked."

Through Reed, Halliburton met John "Billebob" Williams who introduced him to Detroit techno and the underground scene. Halliburton's first underground style party was a stone's throw away from where we were having lunch that day in Eastern Market. "I remember we had to go up to the second floor and it was the first party I went to that went all night." Reed taught him the basics of house dance. "House dance has a basic set of moves that you do. You pick up what you are comfortable with and interpret. The cats from Buffalo dance different than the cats in New York. Detroit has a different way. The style is spreading. It goes a lot of different directions."

The music makes him do it. It comes from years of dancing and listening. "Chords get me like a muthafucka. Bass lines get me. Hooks get me… I might build a synthesizer loop or chord progression then build a bass line behind it. I can run with that. My foot is usually 4/4 and the snare might come behind it. Add a high hat maybe. Some congas. If there is something that God tells you to put in there do it if it makes you boogie… it has to entertain."

Be sure to check out his previous releases on Reggie Dokes' Psychostasia label (PSY-003 in 2002), Kenny Dixon Junior's Mahogani Music label (MM27 in 2011) and Rick Wilhite's Vibes – New and Rare Music Compilation (Part A) on Rush Hour Recordings (RH-111 in 2010). Halliburton, Scott Ferguson and singer Marvin Belton worked together on many of the early tracks on the Ferrispark label. A fan favorite is a track called "Condenser" (FPR-003, RM1x Files EP in 2002), a super slick, straight forward and simple floor filler that bangs.

Ferguson and Halliburton spent a lot of time together working on music. "Scott helped me get to where I am today with production. He had his lab up and running in the old house in Highland Park. Watching the progression of Ferrispark from the beginning inspired me." He was also inspired by David Whiteside of Dow Recordings. "I would hang out with him at his place. I was in the beginning stages and had a few grooveboxes and synths I was playing with. He helped me understand midi and learn other studio techniques."

Equipped with more studio knowledge, Halliburton and Belton along with James Thomas work on tracks under the name Joy of Sound. The Image Fades Away EP came out on Mahogani Music in 2011 and Our Mission was released in 2013 on Ferrispark (FPR-017).

With the first release out on his label Algorithm under his belt, he's going strong and making lots of new music. Look for more on Joy of Sound next year and some individual songs. The new track he gave DEQ is called "Movin' On Baby", which was inspired by Marc

Kinchen. “I was watching an interview with MK. I started going through my (MK) collection, organizing the records and I came across the track “Boy” and it got stuck in my head. It came from there.”

In addition to new music, he works on another vision. Helping the youth to hold dance centered events in unique spaces. “The powers that be want these (dance centered) events to be in a bar. Conditioned to leave at 2am... I want to do things in different spaces around Detroit again. Teach them how to do it. Push the dance culture forward more toward underground music.” Halliburton’s home. Our home.

A Little Bit Goes A Long Way

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DELANO SMITH

KR: I had the pleasure of meeting you at Transmat maybe some fifteen years ago via Derrick May. After you left Derrick told me that you where the original DJ. What inspired you to get into DJing and producing? I'm sure at the time you started it was a rare sight to see a DJ with two turntables or was that not true in Detroit? Was Ken Collier the only one?

DS: First off, I'm not the original anything LOL! I'm just the original me. I just happened to be around when Ken Collier introduced mixing to the straight scene in Detroit and was able to learn how to beatmatch as a youngster prior to the inception of house and techno. That's all. It's hard to say if Ken was the first one but he did make mixing popular in Detroit… actually he and Duane Bradley of Todd's Nightclub on Detroit's east side. Ken inspired me, along with countless others, to become a DJ. Derrick May, Mike Slade and Norm Talley were my inspiration to start producing music.

KR: How would you get records when you first started? Was it record pools locally or a lot of trips to Chicago?

DS: I was a member of Dance Detroit record pool early on before I went on hiatus for a few years. After that I shopped at the stores like everybody else. I never took many trips to Chicago to buy records. There were good stores here in Detroit.

KR: How has that changed from now? Is it more a digital files these days or is vinyl still a major player?

DS: Shopping for vinyl nowadays is a lot different as there aren't many vinyl shops in Detroit that sell new records. So now I buy primarily from the online shops unless I'm traveling. When traveling I try to get in the stores as much as I can. DJ camaraderie in the stores is truly missing from the DJ culture in Detroit now. I buy digital too. Whatever sounds good and what I like. I don't get mixed up in the vinyl vs. digital thing.

KR: Detroiters seem to pride themselves on finding the deep cut on the most out there, far removed album. Is this somehow burned into a Detroiter's consciousness via Mojo's airwaves or something more inherent?

DS: Yes. Mojo had a lot to do with it I think, but it had a lot to do with trying to stretch what you already had. I never did buy an album for just one song.

KR: Is this something that plays into your performances today? Trying to find an obscure rare track?

DS: Always! It's a daily thing.

KR: Can you talk about how you balance the gigging, the traveling, the airplane, the studio and family time?

DS: A lot of times people don't realize how difficult this life can be because they only see the glitz and glamour of it. There is never enough time and it can be exhausting if you don't rest properly. I try to take a month or two off in the beginning of the year and again at the end of the summer just to finish some production and enjoy my family and home. It's a constant waiting game when traveling and it can wear on your patience. I try to remain in good spirits when I meet the folks that come out to support me. People don't realize the stress that constant travel can bring.

KR: It is refreshing to see a guy that started out before anyone I know in this music succeed and be known by people all around the globe. We all know music and the industry has high hurdles. How did you overcome them? It seems your career blossomed around 2012. I was wondering was there a catalyst, a magic pill, a mantra or just plain old hard work?

DS: It was plain old hard work and turning out decent DJ performances I think. Things really took off after The Odyssey album so I was kind of prepared. I had a few successful EPs prior to my first album so the traveling I was doing prior prepared me.

KR: I have to ask. Do you ever have a Charivari moment when touring? "Bread and cheese and fine white wine". Does it put a smile on your face?

DS: All the time!

KR: I think one of the most progressive things of the Detroit scene is the sense that you have to try your best because you never know who is listening or watching. Critique by peers is integral, friendly competition. Sadly I think it is bit lacking these days, too many pats on the back without critique. Direct Drive versus Deep Space, was the competition fierce? Do you feel it is important to have competition and critique?

DS: Absolutely! Constantly giving praise for mediocrity is part of the problem with parts of the music and scene nowadays. Generally I don't comment or critique an artist's musical taste or style – everything is not for everybody. Everyone thinks that what they're doing is the best. As for the competition you mentioned, I was not there nor was I a member of Direct Drive at that time. At the time of

that event the founding members of Direct Drive had all but disbanded and I'll just leave it at that.

KR: Speaking on the studio, a lot of artists tend to approach it one of two ways. Either having a set concept in your mind and attacking that concept or two or just sitting down at the equipment and experimenting to see what happens. Are these ways you work?

DS: I generally have an idea and direction I want to go in from the start. If I'm thinking of an interesting bassline, I'll start that first and work and build around it. Rarely do I go in with no direction. There's a concept to my projects I like to think.

KR: I notice a lot in your music as well as your performances that you seem focused on creating a vibe, an enveloping air of groove. Sonic pleasure comes from folding into your music to say the least. It's music for the long haul as opposed to the whizbang, tricknology, A.D.D. state of current music. Do you think this plays into the fact that a lot of young millennials are drawn to your music as a way to escape the instant gratification society we live in now?

DS: Absolutely! The tricks and constant EQing is a U.S. thing. Constantly trying to get some kind of reaction from the crowd is not building any suspense or excitement in your performance I don't think. It's not educating. We must constantly educate while we entertain. The attention span of some in the states is limited however, IMO, they want what they want NOW.

KR: Also when listening to your music, I can't help but notice dub and disco play roles in your sound. There are funk and soul vibes as well. What draws you to these structures?

DS: Hey, I like what I like! But, if you notice, that's the kind of stuff I do on Sushitech. I think it sounds more modern than traditional techno. It's kind of my spin on it. I like to draw more of a distinction to my sound.

KR: Let's talk on what's happening right now with Delano Smith. What are your upcoming works and events? What can we look forward to?

DS: I'm currently working on my next Mixmode release and trying to stay healthy while touring. It's been very consistent and I'm grateful.

KR: As a main player at some of the largest festivals in the world, I'd like your take on Movement Festival?

DS: It's one of the best and professionally organized in the world. It makes me proud that the guys at Paxahau pay attention to detail and quality. They may miss a few times with the bookings (i.e.: Snoop Dog), but hey, they can't be right all the time.

KR: The Charivari Festival is something dear to your heart. Tell us about this up and coming festival in Detroit.

DS: Yes, very dear to my heart. Sadly we recently lost one of the festivals founders and close friend of mine Steve Dunbar. I think this year will be the best one yet and I hate that he's not here to reap the rewards of his hard work. We're working very hard to make it a very good festival for Detroit artists.

KR: We just lost one of the greats, some words on Prince?

DS: I grew up with Prince. His death was the hardest on everyone I think. The greatest that ever lived!

KR: What are some of your current favorite artists out there right now?

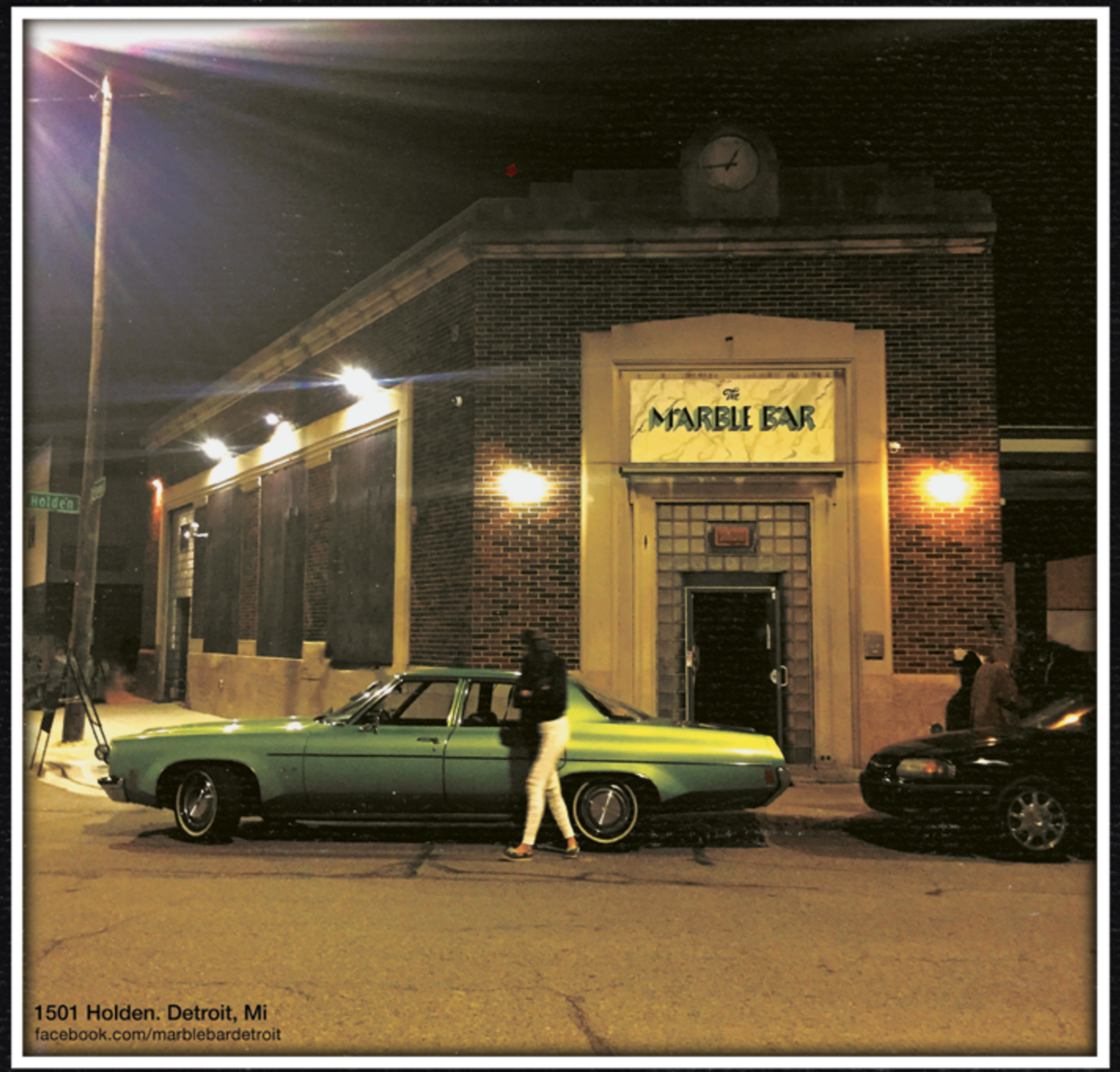
DS: I listen to so many different styles and genres, it's really hard to say. Right now I'm digging a lot of 60's stuff when riding in my car. I try to take a break from house and techno from time to time as of late. It can burn you out if you're not careful.

KR: The word on the street is that if you get picked up for a gig in a nice car you often ask to drive. Are you a car guy? When overseas, is it hard driving on the other side of the road?

DS: HAHA!! That happened maybe twice when the driver has a car I like, but I never drive though. Yeah, big car guy! You see a lot of cars in Europe that you don't see here.

KR: Doberman or Rottweiler? (I know tough question)

DS: Come on now Kev! I have both, but I will say that this is my first Doberman and it's by far the most intelligent dog I have ever owned. I freakin' love that guy!



ERNO THE INFERNO

It may be surprising to learn that Ernie Guerra heard the album that got him cued into electronic music at an Urban Outfitters, but that just goes to show how truly tuned in and open minded he remains, regardless of the surroundings. The record was “Let Us Never Speak of it Again” by Out Hud, an indie rock band that shares members with post-punk dance outfit !!!. It was 2005 and Guerra was a relatively new resident of Detroit at the time. He plays it for me while we sit and talk in the living room of his Midtown apartment; multiple times throughout the interview he interjects how good it is, still as enthralled with the music as ever. “I had never heard anything like this,” he enthuses.

Before Out Hud made its way onto his radar, Guerra was heavily into the sounds of punk and ska. “The reason why I liked punk and ska and all that shit was because I thought that the musicianship was different than what you would hear on the radio. Everything on the radio is very orchestrated. It's there for a reason. It's made in a manner that is extremely easily digestible. Where you can totally tell what is coming up next. It's like, nothing unpredictable at all,” he tells me. “I was intrigued by people making music on their own.”

Growing up in Westland, Guerra's dad was the drummer in a local band. “I've always been interested in music, but I didn't know how to make it,” he says. “We always had a drum set in the basement. So I learned. And he never taught me, that's the thing. He always made me learn on my own. So when it came to music I just started learning everything on my own, basically.” He also had three older sisters and was the third youngest out of 25 first cousins. Since all those cousins lived in Southwest Detroit, he spent a lot of time in the city as a kid. “I remember hearing Junior Mafia's "Get Money" [for] the first time down there. Biggie. Tupac. All that shit. Something you wouldn't necessarily experience out in the 'burbs. They had a pretty big influence on me,” he reflects of his older relatives' collective effect. They also introduced him to much of the '80s music he plays, including Rick James, Stevie B and Debbie Deb.

In high school Guerra got into film and video and had access to a vocational center so good that President Clinton came to tour it his freshman year; two of his teachers had been on Michael Moore's staff for the filming of *Roger and Me*. It was there that he learned how to edit video on a VHS console, long before the introduction of software like Final Cut. “When you're mixing like that there's no timeline where you can see minute markers and stuff like that. You're editing basically off your senses. It's basically like live mixing. It's a totally different feel.” It came in handy later when he learned to mix records. “That helped me with DJing because I also started DJing before Serato and all that was easily accessible, and before you could see timelines. I learned off of records and using my senses,” he outlines.

The DJing came largely thanks to Joe Vargas, who Guerra lived with for a while. “Joe was crucial because he was the one that taught me how to DJ and helped me out with theory and stuff like that,” he offers. “I also read a book. It was How to DJ Right. It kind of put things in perspective as far as beat matching and how to think about it.” He and Vargas, along with Steven Robert, started producing parties together under the Tour Detroit banner in 2008. “In the first two years the idea was to throw parties in a different non-traditional venue each month of the season—April to September. The idea was to not throw a party in the same location in the same season. With the nature of how Detroit has been changing over the years it was necessary for us to move into traditional venues to keep the parties going,” he offers.

Also in 2008 was his first DJ gig for Paxahau, who booked him to open for DJ Mehdi at the Magic Stick. Then for the 2009 and 2010 editions of Movement he served as the Merchandise Coordinator. He began working in their talent department in December of 2012, after playing the festival for the first time that May. In that same span of time he started up Slow Jams with Eastside Jon; it is now the longest-running weekly event in the city, seeing a different guest throw down an all-vinyl mix every Monday night at Woodbridge Pub. All of these roles complement one another in a city that requires collaboration and decries complacency. “As a resident of the city you can't be complacent,” he recognizes. “You can't do it in the music at all because then you don't get booked to play. You have to constantly be putting forth an effort, including others, collaborating with others. That's the most important thing I feel like. It's a large scene relative to a lot of other places but it's definitely the type of community that you have to have the respect of your peers if you want to succeed.”

That being said, Detroit isn't always the easiest place to call home, as most anyone who does can attest. “I feel like Detroit is a challenge to live here at times. It challenges you with cold ass winters—It's not easy, but you stay here because everything else is rewarding. Well, I stay here because everything else is rewarding.” He finds the people especially exceptional. “I've met a fuck ton of interesting ass people. Crazy people that I never thought I would have met. There's a sense of comfort that comes from living here. Something that not even my family could help me out with, even with them being from here. It's a different kind of family. So they've helped me grow and learn also, all my peers and people that I look up to that play music and stuff like that. Constantly giving me ideas and making me think about what I'm doing and [how I'm] progressing. Challenging me.”

It's fitting that Guerra was given the DJ alias Erno the Inferno—recently shortened simply to ERNO—as his intertwined passions for Detroit and for music seem to ignite his existence, ever fueled by his innate curiosity. However his inner embers more closely resemble the slow, deliberate smoldering of a bonfire than the rapid flames that can consume and destroy entire city blocks. Having lived in Detroit for a decade now, Guerra has certainly seen the city and the music scene evolve, and himself along with it. “It's not like any other city in the world,” he states. “There are so many unexplainable things about this place. It's a true testament of how unpredictable life can be...Here there's never a sure thing that something's going to work. Nothing works the way it should here. But that's how life is, too. Sometimes it doesn't, so you've just got to always be on your toes. Which I like. I feel like it helps me when it comes to dealing with the rest of the world.”

Interview by Reisa Shanaman // Photo by David Shanaman

#getmessyanddanceallnight

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SIDE A

Delano – “Moving”
Music written and produced by Delano Smith

Mike Clark feat. Bill Beaver – “I See the Light”
Music written and produced by Mike Clark & Thabo
Additional keys by Phil Hale. Vocals by Bill Beaver

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SIDE B

Vincent Halliburton – “Moving On Baby”
Music written and produced by Vincent Halliburton

Mind Captive – “Drummer Dreaming”
Music written and produced by Mind Captive

Bob Claus (DJ REC) – “Space Race Theme”
Music written and produced by Bob Claus

Mark Flash - “Black Substance”
Music written and produced by Mark Flash