

# INTERVIEW

"I'm just glad I love DJing so much. I'd do anything to get behind the decks and play music. That's what keeps me sane." The first words that spilled out of HMC's mouth were probably the most important. Quite an unassuming in person, behind the turntables he's evangelical.

It's a busy time for HMC, forcing him to postpone his plans to head back overseas. Next month sees *Phreakin'* released on CD, a slew of Dirty House releases, his new label Data is forthcoming, and his current offering is a mixed CD for Reachin' Records, the fifth instalment in the *DJs Down Under* series.

"It's very different to the Centrals one that I did. The Submerge one - which I was going to say was more a part of me than this one, but they are both very much a part of what I do."

I suggested to Cam that there are some people who sign themselves purely with one facet of his DJ persona, there have always been people who consider that only liking house or only 'king' techno somehow lends to music at party.

"I love all forms of music, especially techno, which to me is number one. And house. There's a lot of good quality house out there. A lot of DJs around town and across Australia - they're all playing crap! I know some people who consider themselves to be musically adventurous, yet will close their ears to say, a vocal house track simply because it is a vocal house track - the notion that a song can't be both beautiful and 'underground' seems ridiculous to me - yet sadly commercial bastardisations have led to house being a dirty word in some quarters. I found that Cam experiences the same frustrations. "It's similar to what happened to disco back in the late '70s. Disco became a dirty word because of soundtracks like *Saturday Night Fever* and disgusting tracks like *Dorn To Be Alive*. And that's what's happening to house now. But there is quality stuff there - people have just got to hear it. Take note of it. I love disco music. Real disco music."

I asked how long he felt he could sustain

his career.

"There's a lot of music in here that wants to come out. And DJing, I'll be doing that forever. If it comes to the point where no-one wants to hear anymore, I don't care. If I can still maybe do it at home by myself then I'll be happy. I don't care about what people think. It's me, I want to make me happy."

HMC's mixing ability is legendary. For Cam though, it's just something he does. "It's a natural thing. I still only own one turntable. It's just so natural for me to mix records together. Like I said, I don't know how to do anything else. That's where all my focus is, on mixing records. I do it in my head. I'm mixing two records at home. I just do it in my head."

With no dry run that must lead to a more instinctive style?

"It's probably made me, like you said, more instinctive. Like I said, it's a natural thing, it's just what I do. With DJs who have their turntables and have had them from the beginning of their career - I think there's two types of DJs, the textbook DJ and the DJ who's an artist. And I'd like to think - well I know which category I fall in. Yeah, I think that explains it all."

Is your production as instinctive as your DJing?

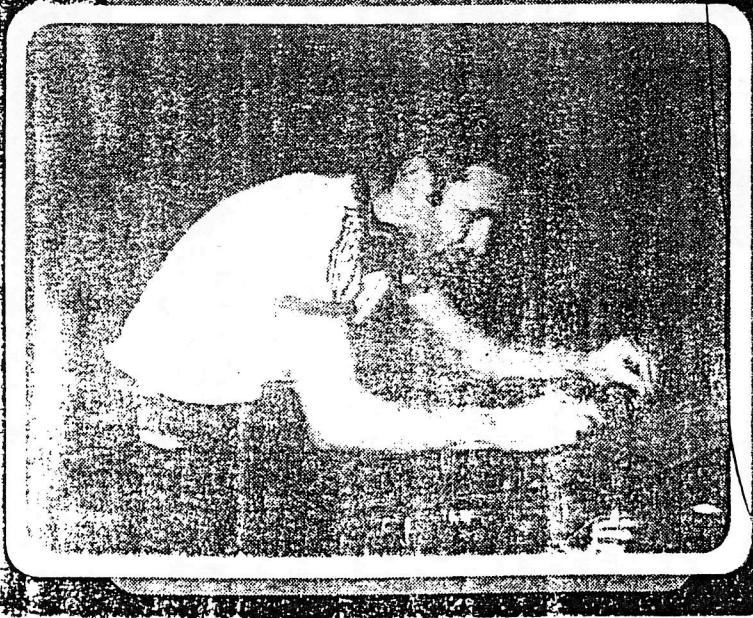
"Same thing. I could never sort of plan, 'ok, I'm going to make this sort of music'. All the tracks I've done so far have all just happened. There was nothing planned about it whatsoever. *Phreakin'* and *LSD* are classic examples of that. *Phreakin'* was really an accident. I think that's why it was so successful. It was just something that came together one night in the studio on my own. Something that just poured out. It took me less than an hour to record. It was a very spontaneous thing."

Even HMC's have personal heroes. "I like to listen to Angelo play. If it wasn't for him I don't think I'd be where I am now. When I was working at Rio, Angelo was the DJ there. I guess I just watched him a lot, watched how he observed the crowd. I think I owe a lot to Angelo. He's a good friend. He's a legend in my eyes. He is the master."

words: Matt Pearce  
DJs Down Under present DJ HMC Vol 5 is in all good record stores through Reachin' Records.



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# B(i)ftek

Nicole Skeltys and Kate Crawford together comprise techno outfit B(i)ftek, a duo who have achieved impressive inroads in recent times with their album *Sub-Vocal Theme Park* and now a track on the new *Trance Pacific Express* compilation - which sets them aside such Australian luminaries as FSOM, Voiteck, Anzula, Bob Boo, Mace & Nutcase, Severed Heads and Vinidian.

Apart from the obvious factor that B(i)ftek are an anomaly in contemporary underground techno - both members are female - they've also demonstrated a penchant for high production values and imaginative programming that sets their music apart from many of their peers.

As a result over the past couple of years B(i)ftek have garnered for themselves an enviable reputation up north, no more so than in Sydney's and Brisbane's underground circuit. "I'm a bit surprised about Brisbane," says Nicole, "but Sydney was really the place we've worked in over the last few years. I think much of that success came about because we've had really good coverage of our album 'Sub-Vocal Theme Park', through major media outlets like the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Rolling Stone*; we also had a couple of live-to-air on JJJ including New Year's Eve, when they did a big profile on us. We also appeared on *Recovery*..." Here Nicole makes choking sounds, but then recovers herself and laughs out loud. "We'll hook up with anybody who'll give us coverage!"

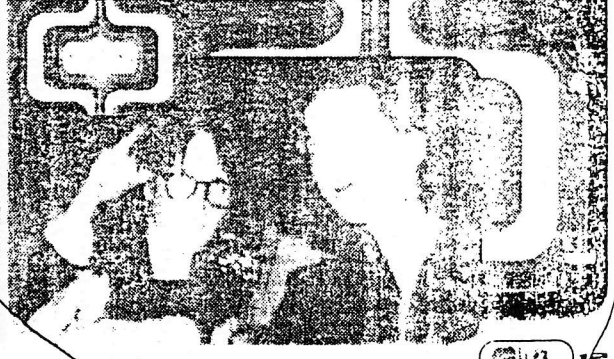
*Sub-Vocal Theme Park* was B(i)ftek's debut album and it was this release that really lifted the duo's profile both in Australia and overseas. "It got us a lot of exposure and through that a few things came about," agrees Nicole. "Eventually we licensed the album for its European release through Nephilim in Germany. I guess we were in the right place at the right time, but I should blow my own horn here because it was a pretty good album! Since then we've been hearing how well it's done - apparently one of the guys from Black Dog listed one of the tracks as one of his top 10 favourites, and it was listed in a US DJ's Top 10."

The duo's success can also be measured by their recent contributions, not only for *Trance Pacific Express*. "MDS are putting out this thing called *Elements*; it's a compilation but there are only a handful of Australian acts on it, including us - the rest are people like Orbital, Red Snapper, Autechre and Andrea Parker. They're using it as a bit of a sampler of the best of electronica, so we're pretty chuffed to get on that."

These days residing in Melbourne, Nicole also moonlights under her more recent production incarnation, Artificial - but rather than pursuing a strictly saccharine approach, Artificial's soundscape is a very real and inventive one as Nicole explains. "I've been concentrating on a couple of different genres - one I call 'electro-lounge'; another is 'elevator-acid'." She openly laughs at the implications. "I've been obsessed with muzak for quite some time; I love it and there are an enormous amount of possibilities that you can do with it - or at least I find there are. I'm also trying to do slightly quirky funny stuff, which I call 'detective funk', and the inspirations here have been from cop shows and spy movies and things like that."

Artificial's output has already started to attract its own kudos. As well as a track on the new *Zeitgeist 3* compilation through Melbourne's IF? Records, international interest has begun to generate. "I'll be releasing some vinyl through New York label Oxygen in October," advises Nicole. "They've already released people like Small Fish With Spine, Mantronix, Coldcut and FSOL..."

words: Andrez  
B(i)ftek's track *Intercom* features on the *Trance Pacific Express* compilation through MDS, while Artificial's *Authority Over The Fish* appears on the new IF? Records compilation *Zeitgeist 3*, through Shock. Look out for an appearance on MDS' forthcoming *Elements* compilation.



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