

Kate May 99 (5/5/99)

**ARTIST PROFILE**

FOR SEVERAL YEARS NOW, KATE CRAWFORD AND Nicole Skritlys have been creating hard-to-define electronic grooves under the moniker Bifftek. The duo formed in Canberra, and became involved in the Clan Analogue electronic artist network. Their 1996 album, Sub Vocal Theme Park, hinted at a range of influences (acid, techno, disco, lounge, muzak), blended with enthusiasm, taste and poise. Since then, they've moved (Kate to Sydney, Nicole to Melbourne), created a number of compilations and Nicole has released solo work as Artificial. Most recently, Bifftek have released an elegant, stinky single (Bedrock) and an irresistible upbeat cross-cultural kitsch-tinged wonder (Japanese Game Show, from Triple J's recent Mix Up compilation).

Bifftek are living proof that intelligence, humour and groove can co-exist musically, and now that they're on tour with The Beastie Boys, surely global recognition of that fact can't be far away.

Kate and Nicole e-mailed back these responses to selections from a list of questions they were sent:



Bifftek

**AREA 7**

**WED MAY 26**  
The Shamrock Hotel  
Townoomba  
OVER 18

**THURS MAY 27**  
The Edge Nightclub  
Gold Coast  
OVER 18

**FRI MAY 28**  
Upside Bar  
The Arena  
OVER 18

**TIX SB AT THE DOOR**

One of Australia's hottest new acts  
are back in town !!!

**CHECK EM OUT LIVE**

NEW SINGLE  
AREA 7  
BITTER WORDS  
AVAILABLE NOW

AREA 7

ALSO AVAILABLE  
AREA 7  
NO LOGIC

Have you sold out. If so, what's the going rate?  
Nicole: Yes, we have totally sold out, and for a really cheap price... nothing! That's right, we haven't even waited to get rich, and still haven't made a cent from our music, but we've just sold out because it's the thing to do.

Does a higher profile and bigger shows necessarily mean you've got to compromise your ideals and integrity?  
Kate: Absolutely! The Bifftek show now features giant holograms of ourselves airbrushed to look like the Spice Girls, only we represent "Corporate Spice" and "Advertising Campaign Spice".

How are you preparing yourselves for touring with the Beastie Boys?  
Kate: We're drinking two pints of lager and consuming a packet of chips every day just to get in shape. Not to mention listening to all those hip hop records.

Will playing to larger audiences necessitate any changes technically, musically or showbiz-wise?  
Nicole: Yes, we do actually put on a little bit of a "show", we have a Red Cross station and dress up as nurses, we improvise with hospital samples and operate on each other... we like people to feel more hygienic after having experienced our set. Either that or very, very dirty.

Have you collected any exotic remedies for stage fright, just in case?  
Kate: Yes, we find two pints of lager and a packet of chips does the trick every time.

Does this tour presage increased touring activity? And/or another album?  
Kate: You bet. We'll release our next album July/August this year, called New Millennium Models and we hope to tour Japan hopefully before the end of the year.

Are you still living in different cities, and has this had any effect on the music you're making, or the methods and approaches to making it?  
Nicole: Yes, it's difficult but we manage... any money we get from gigs tends to get eaten up by airfares.

one really nice track we are working on at the moment is simply the sound of our two studios when there is nothing happening... we have so much old analogue gear, it all makes its own "his" and "cracks"... and each of our studios has its own "personality"... we're going to record them separately and combine them.

It's going to be a great track!  
In what ways does working collaboratively emphasise different aspects of your creativity than working alone? Does it really affect the nature of the music made?  
Nicole: Yes, there is definitely a particular Bifftek spark that happens when we work together... We like to think we bring out the best in each other creatively.

Your Canberra Clan Analogue site includes a quote from a book about "antipodean isolation" and its effects on architecture. How does this affect the music made here?  
Kate: In the electronic underground, in a really positive way... it encourages an experimentation and freedom that is very, very exciting... we really do have world-class sleep happening here, there are artists here that could set international trends in electronics if they had the support and exposure... it's a shame that mainstream radio and most of the majors just want to support sounds that have been developed "somewhere else", and safely tried and tested overseas.

In our Artificial e-mail exchange, Nicole mentioned Bifftek would be working on a film soundtrack. Is that still happening? What kind of film is it?  
Kate: Yes, we are doing the score to a full length feature film based, shot and produced in Brisbane, called Bored Olives. It's about 20 something... working