



Scooby Doo: B(i)tek's Nicole Skeltys, left, and Kate Crawford, aka Daphne and Velma

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prolific, under their B(i)tek moniker and their solo alter egos — Clone, which is Crawford, and Artificial, which is Skeltys, the mastermind behind the vinyl-only *Stoner Classic* series.

In 1996 B(i)tek released their first album, *Sub Vocal Theme Park*, which was financed by the feminist cyberzine *Geek Girl* and picked up by the German label Nephilim.

This has been followed by numerous tracks from the infamous *Bedrock*, an S & M breakbeat number (that, ironically, was used in the teen college flick *Drive Me Crazy*) — to *We Think You're Dirty*, released in November last year.

And their sound and relationship continues to evolve. "People always ask us, 'When are you going to get married?' — and we might one day, but only just so we could get all the presents," says Skeltys.

Despite their busy schedule they maintain day jobs, which they refer to as their "research positions at NASA".

Although Skeltys and Crawford believe electronic artists can be self-supporting, "it's not exactly a luxurious lifestyle", explains Skeltys. "Most people I know who are doing this are supplementing their income, in some way, either working in record shops, or doing other stuff that's not exactly legal!"

Hence the B(i)tek girls prefer to keep their jobs (which, let's make it clear, are legal). Jobs that keep them in rent, equipment and what Crawford describes as "at the cutting edge of space travel research".

More to the point, the two of them are unwilling to alter their musical style to increase their wealth.

"We are not going to compromise on continuing to develop an innovative sound," says Skeltys. "We are not going to write tracks that are guaranteed radio friendly or have those big beat I-can't-believe-it's-not-rock techno sounds, which might pull in more cash and appeal to the mainstream."

The aversion to selling out is central to the B(i)tekian philosophy.

It's a philosophy that rejects girl bands, boy bands, and especially Jennifer Lopez.

"We're about reclaiming some edge for chicks. We don't have to be smiley-smiley, mike-stand fondling, Jennifer Lopez lookalikes in bikinis," says Crawford casually.

"We can write music that's not all about our boyfriends or our heartbreaks, but delves into different waters — the emotion you can't name and sounds you can't identify. Life isn't easily categorised, and nor are we."

*Wired for Sound* is released today and 2020 on May 15. Stay wired for a national tour.

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