



Drum 'n' Bass



Simon Bassline Smith

I'm just back from Summer of Love, a huge European festival that was one of the most amazing events I've been to since I started DJing – there must have been about 20,000 people, all up for a good dance. It was a seriously uplifting atmosphere!

This month's been quite busy gigs-wise; they're a great opportunity to connect with your fans, and it's always exciting to mix a dub that no-one's heard before just to see how the crowd reacts! In the past few weeks, I've played in London, Coventry, Bristol, Portugal and Birmingham. I remember dropping 'Killer DJ' at Fabric... the crowd went mental! 'Killer DJ' is definitely the tune of the moment for me; it's on Breakbeat Kaos as a Junglesound II LP pre-album sampler; and is out now as a limited picture disc.

Aside from a busy DJing schedule, I've been doing the pre-release paperwork for the forthcoming 'Valley of the Kings' EP and post-release business for the recent 'Grand Theft Auto 2/ Smokers Anthem' 12". Sometimes I find the paperwork, gigging and music-making combined can get a bit intense, at which point I'll impulsively scoot off for a few days, just to find a new perspective. I went on a boating holiday recently, which really slowed the tempo down. My family and I spent four days cruising in a barge! The routes we picked were amazingly picturesque – there are definitely some beautiful things to see. My puppy (Paolo) jumped in the water not really understanding what it was, at which point he realized something wasn't quite right and started paddling! It was so funny.

While on the trip, we had several opportunities to stop off and sample some nice food, which reminded me of a visit to Amsterdam; while we were there we visited this amazing Indonesian restaurant called Selecta in which you get first class service and dishes – I mean, you get your own personal chef who cooks up and serves you a seven-course meal! If you've never tried Indonesian food then it's worth taking a city break to the 'Dam and sampling the food there trust me. Take care for now.

Drum 'n' Bass reviews by Don John 'The Bastard'

Adam F 8 Ball / Jungle Sound (TC remix)

BREAKBEAT KAOS

The scene's top d'n'b label brings two neat cuts this month; TC's remix is perfect dancefloor fodder but formulaic, so '8 Ball' takes all the credit. Speaking of which, it's Adam F's best track for years – 'Circles' on steroids!

★★★★★

The White Stripes My Doorbell / Blue Orchid (High Contrast remix)

XL RECORDINGS

Commercially friendly High Contrast does the business on this 'Blue Orchid' remix, cueing up the drop with a haunting veil of ghostly synth pads. The drop is neat, where the pads give way to some bloated, filtered bass and broken hip hop fragments.

★★★★★

Craggz & Parallel Forces Love Insane / Keep Me Real

VALVE

The A-side is kinda cool – trademark, long intro laced with a piano/string

combo and some Bee Gees-esque vocals, which descends into some filthy bass. Nice juxtaposition. The B is equally smile-inducing.

★★★★★

Various Liquid V Club Sessions EP 4

LIQUID V

A moody, mysterious, funky and futuristic EP containing accessible d'n'b, laced with live instruments and vocals. Best of all is the remix of the classic 'Rock Baby' – a gnarly update that pounds the senses with aplomb.

★★★★★

Funky Technicians One World / Legends of Love

LIQ-WEED GANJA

The Liquid bandwagon keeps on chugging, exemplified by the True Playaz Guild's decision to start a label promoting this music. 'One World' is pleasing to the ear but there really isn't enough innovation on this EP.

★★★

Generation Dub Generation Dub EP

GANJA

If an alien came to earth a million years after apocalypse and found this in a time capsule they wouldn't know whether to embrace it or zap it with the shrink ray. Today, people will be faced with a similar brace of emotions upon listening to it...

FOR THE CHAVS: ★★★★★

FOR THE MERE MORTAL: ★

Shy FX & T-Power / Zinc Plastic Soul / Palma

BINGO

'Plastic Soul' is a huge dub-plate that can be summed up as the best Liquid track of 2005. Pencilled for Shy's much-hyped new LP later this year, it actually sounds very similar to a classic MJ track from 'Off The Wall'...

★★★★★

Pendulum Slam / Plastic World

BREAKBEAT KAOS

I don't want this to sound like a Pendulum appreciation page, but

it must be said that 'Slam' is probably the best-produced drum 'n' bass record of all time! Anyone who cusses this is a hater of epic proportions.

★★★★★

The Prodigy Voodoo People (Pendulum remix) / Smack My Bitch Up (Sub Focus remix)

XL RECORDINGS

Pendulum are UNSTOPPABLE!

This is everything we could have hoped for in d'n'b form, capturing all the raw emotion and electric atmosphere of the original. Liam Howlett loves this to death, and so should you.

★★★★★

Shy FX & T-Power Feelings

SOUNDBWOY

Another track from Shy FX & T-Power's forthcoming LP, the pair are clearly in 'anthem mode' this year. Cued by a retro organ hook, this storming little track is plastered with horny fem vox, pokey stabs and all-round good vibes.

★★★★★