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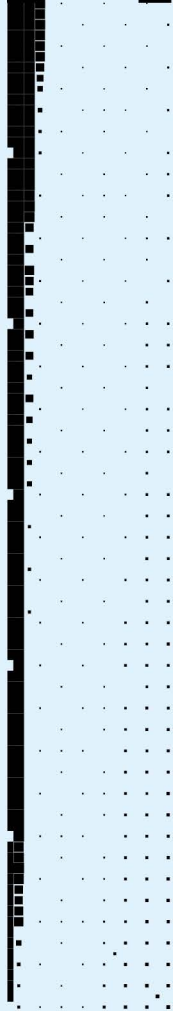
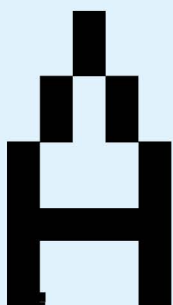
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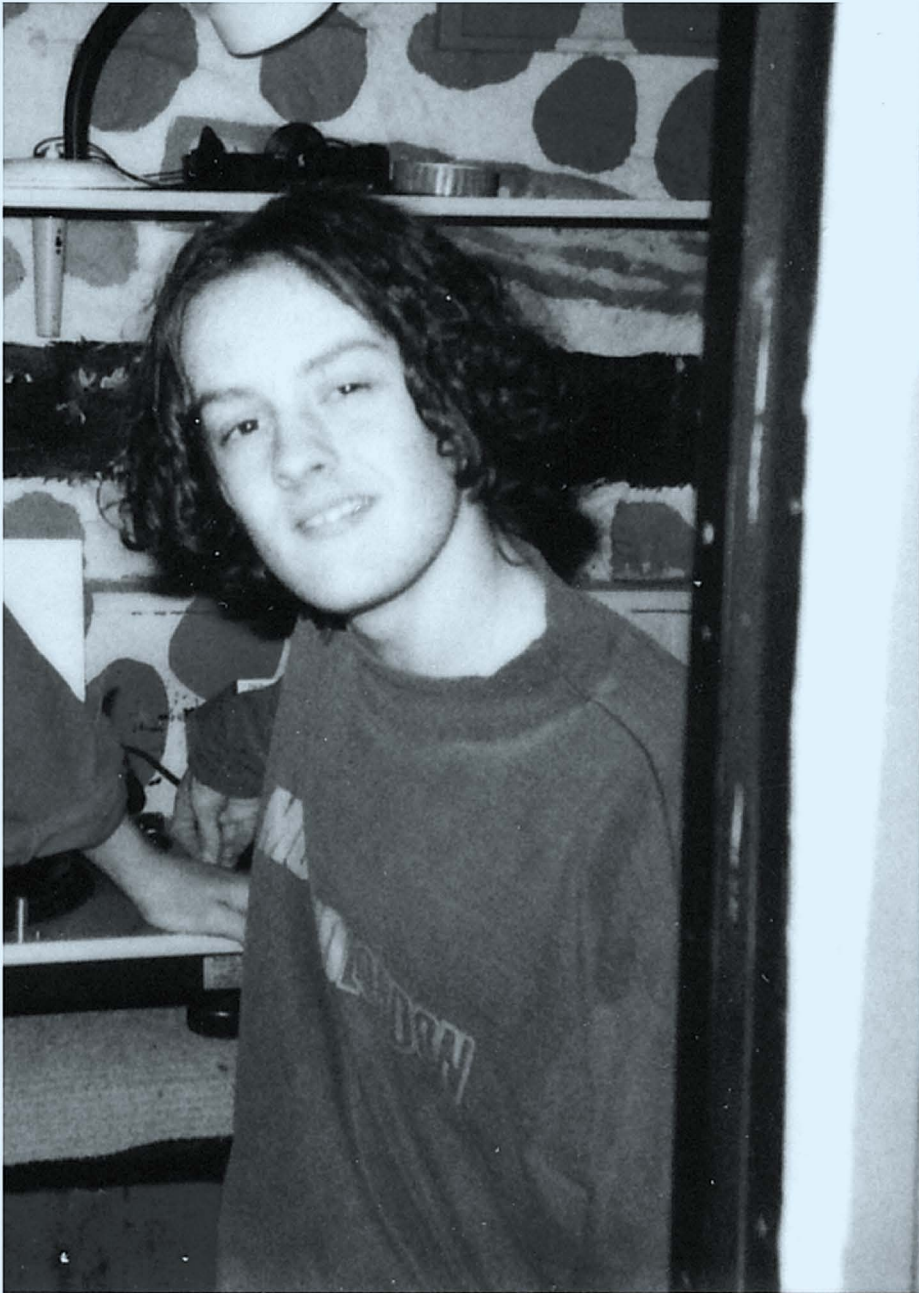
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A CONVERSATION WITH DJ GUY



Guy Evans aka DJ Guy - circa 1990

## A (LITTLE) INTRODUCTION

As rave culture reared its head and brought about a grass roots revolution across the UK, Guy Evans was quick to catch the bug in his native Wales. Proactively engaging with the scene in Cardiff, Guy played a significant role in DJing and promoting across the spectrum from early acid, house and techno through to emergent hardcore, breakbeat and jungle. Meanwhile his fascination with the production side of the electronic music explosion manifested in a home-spun set up and work in a local studio. However busy he was with these various endeavours, he never reached recognition outside of his home town, seemingly consigned to the legions of enthusiasts who went undetected from those heady early years.

The first time we ever caught wind of Guy's work, it was through Bake's All Caps label, who released a three track single entitled 20 [1996] in early 2014. When researching about him, we discovered a Bandcamp archive of gargantuan proportions, all derived from reams of tape Guy had recorded his experiments onto throughout the 90s and beyond. There's a certain spine-tingling sensation that comes over you when you discover music of true magic quality. The word 'ethereal' gets bandied around a lot these days, but in the rough, tape-hiss heavy banks of tracks on this simple online platform, all the hope, mystery and blind experimentation of the nascent electronica scene could be felt by the bucketload.

Discovering this treasure trove moved us to reaching out to Guy, intrigued by his story and how these wonderful recordings came to be. So we started a heavy e-mail correspondence, in which he told us his story, humble to a fault but brimming with the bright-eyed enthusiasm you could hear in his music, somewhat incredulous that after all this time there was a genuine interest in music he had been storing in shoe boxes for the best part of 20 years.

To a casual Discogs browser it would look like Guy's career has just begun, but this is the culmination of decades of dedication to the craft - his DJ skills are the stuff of legend in Cardiff, and we've since spoken to countless producers who credit his work at Grassroots Studios as changing their lives.

*The O/A Team.*



# O/A

28/08/2015  
15:00 GMT

Between Organic Analogue's favourite reporter and friend Oliver Warwick [O/A] and Guy Evans [DJ Guy]



Guy's tape archive

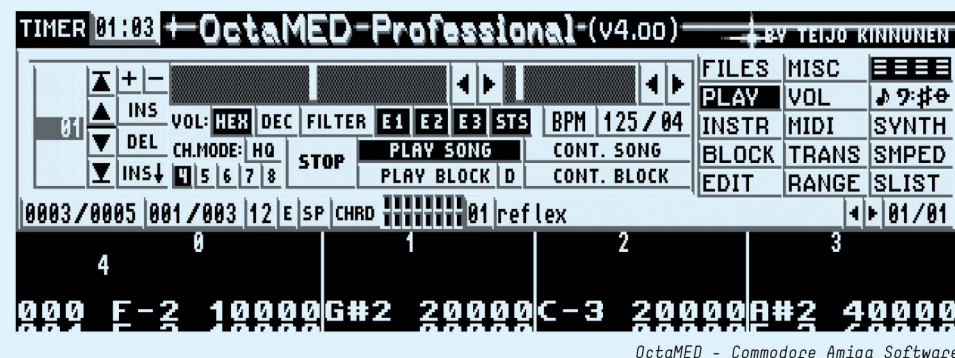
The tracks on the cassette are a snapshot of the jungle-oriented music DJ Guy was making in the 90s. Between rudimentary bedroom set ups and opportunities to get into a proper studio, these tracks were committed to tape in one take and subsequently rediscovered in amongst spools and spools of other jams, experiments and ideas that are only now seeing the light of day. O/A pressed Guy for some background information about the tracks, and the atmosphere in which they were made. A detailed track-by-track equipment list follows after the conversation.

[O/A]: I guess you must find it tricky keeping up with all of your tracks - there are so many in the archives right?

[DJ Guy]: Yeah it's slightly mind boggling for me... when I first decided to archive them I thought I might have 40-50 tracks, but it's probably over 250+

[O/A] Did it feel like hearing them all for the first time again?

[DJ Guy]: Yeah pretty much, it really was like going through a photo album, so many memories came flooding back, remembering what hardware I was using, which bits of synths, drum machines I had borrowed from friends etc... but yeah they did sound sort of fresh again, I suppose. Plus trying to remaster them myself sort of showed



the tracks in a new light again too (boosting treble etc.. really helped on many of the recordings).

When I made the tracks I hardly thought too much about what I was doing... that might sound strange to some people, but I tend to work best when I just make the music and not 'think about how I'm gonna make the music'... lol. Plus I was borrowing equipment from friends and work, and I'd just make a track, make another one, and another and not think too much about it.

They were all recorded live in one take. I used Octamed (Amiga tracker software) on many of my tracks and I knew it inside out, it was such a powerful program at the time, similar in many regards to Ableton Live now (with independent clips of tracks which can be edited on the fly)

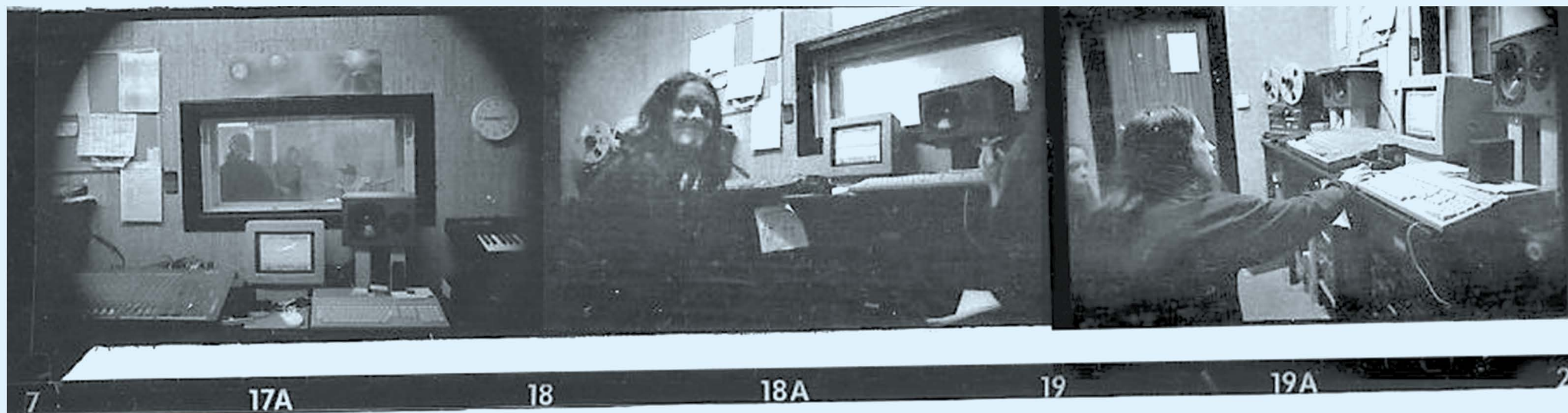
[O/A] Does it feel strange to you that these straight-to-tape jams are now coming full circle and being released on tape?

[DJ Guy]: Yes I do find it strange, but also really great (because this was the format the tracks were recorded onto).

[O/A] Do you think something gets lost in the creative process when you're not working to a one-take tape?

[DJ Guy]: Yeah I think it's easy to over think music making sometimes, I mean about capturing a groove and a natural feel for a track. Sometimes with too much post production/editing etc... this natural feel can get disjointed too much. Plus again when you are recording in one take, it's kind of like improvisation, your brain is whizzing at 200 miles an hour constantly analysing what your hearing/creating and deciding on the next best route to take the track... I briefly studied improvisation in university and at the time I thought it would be completely foreign to me but I made a lot of connections with DJing and music making in the past.





**[O/A]:** Could you maybe describe some of the situations you were in when you recorded these jungle tracks?

**[DJ Guy]:** I was sharing a flat while making some of the tracks, with 3 good friends (2 of which are music producers too) One of my friends Info Cifon from Cardiff lent me the Novation rack mount unit and a Korg X3R Rack unit as well as some other bits. My other flat mate at the time The Hidden Persuader also had a big interest in Electro/Techno music at the time. I guess my influences with Rave, Breakbeat stuff (as well as my interest in Detroit Techno) just sort of mixed everything together.

**[O/A]:** How regularly were you making tracks in those days?

**[DJ Guy]:** it was constant, all day every day... I'd work in Grassroots from 10 to 5 (3 days a week) and would be helping other local

producers make all types of music while I was there, plus I'd use the studio if people didn't turn up for their studio bookings, plus I'd be DJing regularly, and would be making music at home, and listening to music constantly too, buying records etc...

**[O/A]:** I'm intrigued about the notion of how jungle spread and reached you in Cardiff at a time when music and information didn't travel as easily as it does now. Did breakbeat / hardcore / rave catch on early in Wales?

**[DJ Guy]** Nowadays it might seem a bit strange for a techno/electronic producer being interested in jungle music, but back in the 90's there was a much stronger blending of styles in most music I think. I got into clubbing via sort of Detroit techno, early 90's rave, house, techno stuff, and a lot of the

house, techno producer of that time were people who grew up listening to 80's hip hop (same as myself). So I see jungle (or breakbeats) quite a normal thing when it comes to making music. Plus the rave scene in Cardiff was huge in 1991-1992. I used to get tapes from London from pirate radios, plus friends who were living in London, and would go out to gigs in Easton Community Centre in Bristol quite regularly ('95) and would regularly see people like Krust, Suv, Roni Size and Die there. But yeah Cardiff was pretty much at the forefront of the whole rave scene at the time. I feel very lucky to have started DJing in Cardiff in 1990.

**[O/A]:** Just to go into the style of the tracks on this tape... the breaks themselves sound very unique in their processing, how did you go about sampling, chopping and processing those drums?

**[DJ Guy]:** I'd chop up the breaks quite a lot, and do realtime editing on the fly (with Octamed) by reversing bits of the audio wave files on the fly, changing pitch of loops down an octave in realtime again. But the main element of the sound was created by playing the breaks through an Alesis Quadraverb effects unit. Many of the tracks have phase/flange effects on the drums which give it quite a unique sound.

I must mention one of my biggest influences at the time (1994/95) the excellent album by A Guy Called Gerald called 'Black Secret Technology'. His tracks on that album had a similar style, quite unique sounding breaks due to the effects processing. That really is a great album.





[O/A]: do you think you can pinpoint what attracted you to using that kind of processing?

[DJ Guy]: I basically borrowed the effects unit from Grassroots studio and it's was just a case of "...I wonder what happens if I do this, or that..." etc, and I just happened to have the tape recording at the time. I had never used such a high quality effects unit before, so just hearing 24bit reverbs and delays was pretty overwhelming, It just seemed right to push the effects unit to the limit to see what it could do.

I didn't worry to much about comparing my stuff to others. I didn't really think my music

was very good, I guess I was just messing about seeing what my lo-fi studio could do... I think that's why I never released any of this stuff at the time. If I had compared it to others I would have just thought it didn't have the same high production standards. But in hindsight I think it gives the tracks a certain beauty now.

[O/A]: In that sense, it must be interesting to see to positive reception these tracks have now. Is it good creative therapy to be able to look on these tracks with some pride now?

[DJ Guy]: It's really weird, as I have very little confidence judging

my own music. In one regard I'm happy with everything I've made, but I have very little confidence wondering if any one else will like these tracks. So it has been really nice getting good feedback recently, such as with the Crisis Urbana tape release, and my All Caps, Cejero and Nord releases. It's slightly reassuring that people are enjoying this music i made back then.

[O/A]: I find there's an interesting conflux with your music, where there are some tropes that are derived from dance music, and yet they have a more trippy, headphone-friendly appeal to them. Did you ever imagine these tracks being danced to or was that not particularly in your mind as you made them?

[DJ Guy]: It's hard to say really. Obviously I come from a clubbing background, so that sort of seeped into the music I was making, but most of the tracks [recorded at home at least] were all created wearing headphones... so I guess they do have that sort of feel. The Grassroots tracks are slightly different, I used much higher quality equipment and had good monitor speakers in a sound proofed studio. It's easy when making music on headphones to get transported to another world completely... It's such an immersive environment, I guess that shows in some of the tracks...

[O/A]: Are all those jungle tracks

home / headphone productions then? "Revival" sounds like it might not be?

[DJ Guy]: I think I made that track at Grassroots, although I did end up buying an Emu ESI Sampler at home later [1997/1998] so it kind of allowed me to make slightly higher quality produced music at home. maybe 3-4 of the tracks on the tape were recorded at Grassroots.



More tapes from Guy's archive

*Due to space issues, we couldn't publish the whole interview. We hope that this excerpt is enough to give you an idea of Guy's background.*

*Guy's story is proof that, once in a while, the most honest and heartfelt of creative expressions can find a place in an over-populated scene when you least expect it, overturning every notion of slick PR campaigns and career strategies. For once, the truly deserving got what they deserved, and now we're lucky enough to hear the results.*



## TRACK-BY-TRACK TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

### COSMIC OCEAN (1995)

Intro from a National Geographic Flexidisc (which i still have :) Quite melodic sequences from the Casio CZ1000, all other breakbeats, chords and bass from Amiga running Octamed software, all played through an Alesis Quadraverb to give it a dusty/phasey/underwater modulation type reverb effect.

### COMPUTER CONTROL (1995)

Early Jungle experiments; influenced by a lot of the jungle stuff I was hearing at the time, stuff like Luke Vibert (Plug EP's) and A Guy Called Gerald 'Black Secret Technology' (2x12), lots of other influences too such as the Detroit style chord pads and the weird 'Computer Control' vocoder voice at the end, feedbacking into infinity... All pretty much improvised live, and recorded in one take. No re-editing at all, what you hear is pretty much what accidentally happened. Octamed was a super powerful sequencer at the time, lots of patterns and loops which could be interchanged at light speed, with individual patterns having their tempo halved at times.

### STEPPA PHASE (1995)

Influenced by people like Depth Charge (J Saul Kane), hip hop breaks etc.. All played through an Alesis Quadraverb with 2 ms - 10 ms delay time to get that weird flange effect.

### REVIVAL (1999)

This was my attempt to pay homage to the hardcore rave scene of 1990 - 1991. Influenced by people like 2 Bad Mice, Rebel MC, Moving Shadow label, old hardcore tracks. Loads of breaks, and a vocal sample from Jacob Miller 'Tenement Yard', taken from the 1978 'Rockers' Film (soundtrack on vinyl). This was recorded at Grassroots Studio in Cardiff, where I worked/taught/engineered. I did another follow up track called 'Revival 2'

similar to this one. (Not included on the tape though).

### QUADRASONIC (1995)

Influenced again by people like A Guy Called Gerald - 'Black Secret Technology' (2x12 LP). And his earlier 28 Gun Bad Boy LP. Chord sample from Bladerunner. Mashed up breaks and chord samples, all made in Octamed on the Amiga, and played through the Quadraverb. Again improvised live, recorded in one take, start to finish, no edits....lovely breakdown in the middle with phase/flange effect on the chords.

### GRB 990123 (1997)

Recorded at Grassroots studios, Cardiff, basically testing out the Studio Quad effects unit which had infinite delay feedback, which could be pitched up and down (which you hear on the reggae vocal samples).

### PLANETESIMAL (1995)

Nice sort of Detroit style chords, all created at home on the Amiga and Quadraverb. Nice bits of sequences getting slowed down to half speed, really shows off what Octamed could do at the time.

### THE HELIOSPHERE (1994)

Created at home using Octamed, a Korg X3R sound module, a Novation bass station rack (with aux filter input) and a Yamaha R100 effects unit. Bubbling rippling electro style sample starts off the track.

### PDM X BREAK (1997)

This Is my homage to an excellent track from the Beat Street soundtrack, Arthur Bakers 'Battle Cry'. Recorded at Grassroots studios in Cardiff.

### BLACK & WHITE (1995)

Early jungle track I made in 1995. Nice melodic chords with other melodic lead sequence in the middle using the Novation Bass station rack unit. Influenced by Goldie 'Inner city life'.



The  
**Pyramid Club**  
at  
Channel View Leisure Centre  
Grangetown Cardiff 9pm - 3am  
**Saturday 29th February**  
A Nite Of Pure Fantasy  
DJs  
**TOP BUZZ**  
**D.D. HASSAN**  
**SPEX** (The Techno Kid) **GUY** (People's Choice)  
Live on Stage  
**ROZALLA**  
(Faith, Everybody's Free + Others)  
**ATTRACTIONS**  
Lasers Roboscans Sunflowers  
Pumped Up by 24K TurboSound  
Chill Out Area Huge Dance Floor  
£8 Tickets On the door £12  
**Ticket Agents**  
Cardiff: Loony Tunes (0222) 664337  
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Over 18s R.O.A.R.  
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Flyer circa 1992, by Greg Evans



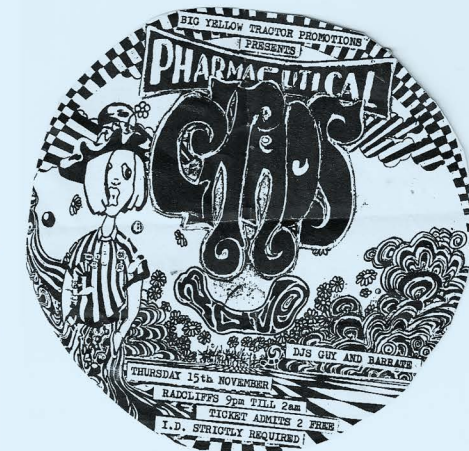
Guy's DJing at a house party



Guy at High Contrast club



Studio gear



Flyer circa 1990, by Greg Evans



Studio gear

"Special thanks to Nate & Bene at O/A, Oliver Warwick, Dan at BeatChef Mastering, Matt Colton at Alchemy and everyone who has supported my music over the past few years. Thank you"

Guy Evans



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