

johnb

Mark O'Donnell

johnb

When the nutty professor of drum and bass John B chose to dedicate his life to making music, it was science's loss, music's gain. Let's face it the decision can't have given him too many sleepless nights: either a life observing cells and organisms through a microscope in a laboratory or one entertaining the masses on the cutting-edge of UK drum and bass - DJ / producer / international man of nights on the tiles.

While still studying at Durham University, he combined those exhaustive hours (!) grinding away at a degree with concocting home-made drum and bass. Given a big break by Formation, the prodigy made waves with his debut 'Visions' LP from which he came to the attention of people like Renegade Hardware, Groove, Fabio and Goldie. Suddenly the World was his oyster and being in total control of all aspects of his music became an increasingly attractive option.

After he graduated (check the snazzy snap on his new LP sleeve!), followed the epic three-part 'Catalyst' LP and he has since devised his own labels, with Beta publishing his latest LP. He can identify a clear development from LP 1 & 2 through to Future Reference (3) "the first two LPs were like more collections of tracks that stuck together OK as LPs. I was aware people thought Catalyst was too long but with this LP I approached it as a project (in its own right). With the other LPs I found I had enough tracks to do an LP and did. This one has much more of an identity to it. "The idea behind this album was to go for a certain sound. You know really good albums like Depeche Mode's you can differentiate what phase they were in, if you listen to the tracks. I am trying to go for that now, from now on my albums are targeting certain areas. At the moment I am into working with vocals and more melodic stuff, tuneful stuff (having) got a bit tired with the really extreme stuff. It's more musical, more melodic." The final product being accessible, ultra clean vocal based cuts complete with 'no noise' as a recent Beta advert advocates.

Now all you purists out there might be thinking 'hang on a minute, wheel that back a bit, what was that? Depeche Mode? But John is well in touch with his synthesiser heritage and while a lot of drum and bass headz would find 1980's synth-pop an abomination to the nation John is not arsed at all. "I really love 1980's stuff at the moment" he enthuses, "stuff like Human League. But this LP doesn't really sound

like that because I am not going start making 80's drum and bass." Phew! Thankfully there are no planned studio hook ups with the likes of Martin Kemp or Phil Oakley for this sonic scientist.

After Catalyst John switched from using his ancient Atari ST to a Mac. A step forward you can hear in the fabric of his music: "It's helped me deal with vocals more professionally with lots of multi-tracking. I can deal with multiple vocals like full stereo stuff and not just a vocal sample. As a result there are a lot of things overlapping and things bouncing across the stereo space."

Included on the evolutionary LP is 'Forever' presented in two different forms: one, a heavy dancefloor mix on a similar tip to his "Up All Night" anthem on Metalheadz; two, a smooth trancey 'pop' piece complete with his sister Hannah's haunting vocals. There is a lot of variety contained on the rest of the LP including the filtered disco fever of "Show Me The Way" the staccato bass pace of "Run Out Of Time" a bit slower and laid back at 155bpm. Nathan Prime's vocals feature on "What's On Your Mind". Also you have the Latin spirit of the salsa with "Tequila Slammer" and "Aye Carumba".

"The main theme is the style of the production and the fact that there are a lot of vocals," says John. "All tracks feature vocals with some using song structures more than others. There's a couple of Latin tracks, some more Bukem's style, some more suited to Fabio, a couple of tracks Jumping Jack Frost and Hype have been playing. It crosses a few sub-genres I guess." Following the LP, Beta will be firmly in the public eye and JB will "hopefully get Calibre & London Electricity to do a remix," with re-designs of his own for the 2 Latin tracks.

His other younger baby is Tangent, which is just finding it's feet after its first release. "I am against doing loads of pseudonyms, I want to develop the John B name. I can do this by separating stuff onto different labels and keeping the releases consistent. Beta is dancefloor, more underground; Tangent is more musical like 'going off on a tangent'. As a lot of people feel very strongly about the style of music they like. It makes it easier for people to buy the sort of John B stuff they like." Helping him with material for the labels are "old friends Nu-Tone & Exile."

A bit more adventurous by name and by its very nature is the third jewel in John's crown: Chihuahua Records. "It comes down to separating things onto separate labels again so I can build on it. I love Latin stuff; I did Salsa a couple of years ago and there's the two tracks on the LP". Party vibes for party people? "Latin drum and bass is a really good avenue that no one has really developed yet. Its good fun. It's a good way to break people into drum and bass and it's a new style linked with Marky, though their stuff is a bit more subtle."

Embracing experimentation fuelled by tequila, sunny vibes and fun times, John B is championing the sound of drum and 'bassanova'. And there is common ground in the fusion as he readily admits. "Bossanova is at half the speed of drum and bass - pretty much. The rhythms translate - Latin music is built around percussion, rhythm and partying and that is what drum and bass is about."

We chat 'bout him doing more stuff for Rawkuts (NYC). His desire to experiment with a bigger trance sound to capture some sort of balance between that and underground drum and bass and a recent trip to Swerve provides amusement because he sported an AC-DC T-shirt with some William Shatner (Chips) style shades. Also he wants to get the 12in's flowing. "I am gonna go back and do some underground stuff. I have been holding back on dubplates a lot recently I want to churn out some stuff and blow it up."

Finally, the question I have been holding back for the duration slips out. So John I have seen you in your Hawaii shirts with your hair in its wild style and it sprung to mind that you kind of resemble the porn star look, what do you reckon about that? "Where did you hear that!" John replies incredulously. I mumble something about some crew and me being at a jam where he was (admirably) exuding the pornstar vibe. John laughs, sees the funny side of my comment and says, "I may have a few out-fits that make me look like one. Now people know my character a bit more, I can do crazier things and have a laugh." Drum and bass needs thought-provoking characters like John B just like comedy needs Brass Eyes' Chris Morris. Aficionados of 'more music, more melody, more vocals less noise, this is your bible.

John B

diverse drum'n'bass

John B is a 24 year old graduate of Cell Biology from Durham University, UK, and a classically trained musician, pianist and drummer to boot, who fast found that computers, synthesizers and samplers enabled him to experiment with a wide variety of musical styles and taking his technical skills to new frontiers. Now the tracks coming out of his studio range from totally live jazz grooves to migraine inducing analogue tweaking drum'n'bass tearful dancefloor crushers gaining acclaim the world over. And guess who headlines the fast approaching Adrenalin party? Onion spoke to John...



It's only when you hear a sumptuous Miles Davies-like phrase drop into abrasive hard-hitting beats that you realise John B is the standard bearer for a fusion of technology, jazz and dancefloor energy.

John first picked up on D&B through hearing Fabio and Grooverider on London's Kiss FM, and hasn't been able to leave it alone since. His first demo tape attracted the interest of DJ SS and an encouraging phone call from Goldie. SS was setting up New Identity Recordings at the time and wanted similar material for it.

A few months later and John had produced the sinister epic *Sight Beyond*. The melodic live flute treat of *Ferret's Theorem* took the sound to the other extreme, and *Jazz Session 1* for the New Identity *Jazz & Bass* compilation started the whole, now heavily duplicated live jazz-club sound. John then went on to record *Secrets* for Grooverider's *Prototype Years* Compilation, and other projects for Renegade Hardware and Formation Records.

Right from the outset John has explored all sorts of varied styles of D&B using all sorts of pseudonyms (Juan B for a laugh on the Latin tip), maximising the scope for experimentation. In 98 John released the critically acclaimed album *Visions*, "an all-time classic LP" (UK Wax Magazine) combining an organic jazz influenced live-fet set, with a synthetic collection of more dancefloor oriented, electronic tunes, and he hasn't looked back.

John has started his own label, Beta Recordings, on which his *Catalyst* album is a massively diverse collection of modern breakbeat and D&B which reflects his many influences and musical interests.

In his jazz oriented music John utilises live sax, trumpet and flute sounds, but it's only when you hear a sumptuous Miles Davies-like phrase drop into abrasive hard-hitting beats that you realise John B is the standard bearer for this new brand, a fusion of technology, jazz and dancefloor energy.

"I've always been into experimenting and now I've got my own label I can get that out the way I want," says John who was last in Adelaide to play the millennium. "So I'm trying to become more of an album artist, although I still release on plenty of other compilations. I'm into getting more tunes and musicality into my sounds than the standard beats and basslines. But I love it all... drum'n'bass baby! I still love doing good ol' fashioned mash-up singles. Having a really big single like *Up All Night* out there is great!"

While still at University, John B, and some friends started putting on free parties in the Durham colleges and building up a D&B scene. Now, as Blue Barracuda Promotions, they run a fortnightly D&B club night called Substance. "Because I knew most of the DJs we've had Goldie, Fabio & Grooverider, Hype & Frost, Bryan G, DJ SS, Ed Rush, Shy FX, Kenny Ken, Bailey, Doc Scott. Everybody came basically, even though it's a small, rubbish city [laughs]."

What of the new album? "It's out now, called *Future Reference*, as three vinyls or double CD, and it's charting really well over here, higher than the J Majik and Andy C releases!"

Do you like the diversity within drum'n'bass? "Yeah, that sealed it for me. It can be in so many different styles. You can make a good D&B record that will work in clubs even with loads of jazz samples in there and live trumpet. You can play that next to something with mad reggae samples. It's a level playing field with less major rules about it in terms of the sounds you can put in."

What will Adelaide be treated to? "Lots of great tunes. I'll be cutting a lot of new plates before coming over - I'm basically in the studio until I leave. I'm remixing an old classic by Blame called *Music Takes You*, I've got a new track for Renegade, a remix of *Up All Night*, new Latin tracks, stuff from Calibre, from London Electricity, Delta & Forma and loads more... I'll be getting dubs off everybody!"

***John B (UK) headlines Adrenalin 2 at St Pauls on long weekend Sun Sep 30 as Kevin NRG, K-live, Viper, Honeysmack and Rudeboy join a host of locals in a raving frenzy. Tix on sale now.**

ONION (Australia)
Sept 2001 - Feature

drum&bass

www.beta-recordings.co.uk

john b

Die Nomenklatur von *Bad Company* bei den Shootouts auf ihren ersten Album "Inside The Machine". Hinsichtlich jenes Produzenten trifft nach meiner Ansicht den Nagel auf den Kopf: "The Nutty Professor". Diese Bezeichnung verdient Mister John B. Williams nicht nur auf Grund der Tatsache, dass er über einen Universitätsabschluss verfügt, sondern, weil er in jener Produzentengarde zu klassifizieren ist, welche akribisch an neuen produktionstechnischen, technologischen und musikalischen Errungenschaften doktern. Kaum ein vergleichbarer Produzent hat derart zahlreiche grenzübergreifende Elemente mit Drum & Bass vermischt und somit ein neues bzw. andersartiges Hörerlebnis kreiert.

Das Spektrum seiner musikalischen Einflüsse, welche er in seinen Produktionen verarbeitet, reicht von der Klassik bis zum Jazz, von Depeche Mode über Trance, von HipHop bis zu lateinamerikanischen Klängen. Im Prinzip ist eine hinreichende Auflistung all seiner Einflüsse kaum realisierbar. Ein renommiertes Magazin schrieb einmal zu seinem letzten Album "Catalyst": "Wenn man all die verschiedenen Stile von Drum & Bass sammeln möchte, so ist dieses Album als Grundlage prädestiniert." Dennoch ist es kein Wunder, dass ein renommiertes Magazin aus England John B erst kürzlich "als einen der momentan essentiellsten Produzenten" bezeichnet hat. Diese Feststellung ist keineswegs zu hoch gegriffen, sondern beschreibt lediglich die Realität, denn er gehört unbestritten zu den "Innovativsten" und kreativsten Aktivisten des Drum & Bass Orbits.

In den letzten zwölf Monaten ist John B zu einem vielschichtigen Touristen mutiert, denn die Nachfrage nach seinen DJ-Fähigkeiten ist kontinuierlich gestiegen, so dass er durch Länder wie Australien, Schweden, Thailand, Schweiz, Island und die USA tourte. Während dieser Zeit hat er sein Publikum mit zahl-reichen Dubplates aus seinem Repertoire beglückt. Zu den Tonträgern, die sicherlich nicht nur einmal in den Genuss eines Rewinds gekommen sind, gehören Tracks wie "Up All Night", "Ay Caramba", "When I'm Close 2 U" und viele mehr. Gerade der erstgenannte Tune, der auf Goldies Label Metalheadz erschienen ist, hat einen Sturm der

Begierstung ausgelöst. In der englischen Presse hat er exzellente Kritiken geerntet. Zahlreiche Titel wie "Single des Monats" bzw. das Erreichen der Höchstnote sind die Konsequenz gewesen. Diese Resonanz auf Metalheadz Nummer 41 ist nicht verwunderlich, denn die eingesetzten Elemente von Old School/Hardcore Sounds bis zu erbarungslosen Basslines, welche mit einem treibenden Beat und einem hochgepitchten Vocalsample, das den Endorphinausstoß im Gehirn um ein vielfaches intensiviert, versehen sind, bringen jegliche Partygänger und Raver in Ekstase. Bereits vor dem offiziellen Veröffentlichungstermin hat "Up All Night" zu den relevantesten Tracks eines jeden renommierten D&B-Jays gehört und ist zu einem Klassiker avanciert. Auch für andere berühmte und bekannte Labels wie Fabio's Creative Source, Renegade Hardware, Moving Shadow, Hospital 23, hat er seine unachtnahmlichen Können und Talent ein-drucksvoll unter Beweis gestellt.

Seine weltweite Reputation hat es ihm sogar ermöglicht, prestigevolle Remixaufträge an Land zu ziehen. Beispielsweise hat er den Track "Robob" der US Rock Band Orgy durch einen Remix neu interpretiert und er hat der ersten veröffentlichten Single "Oh No" von der Compilation "Lyricist Lounge 2" auf Rawkus von Mos Def, Pharoahe Monch und Nate Dogg einen Drum & Bass Touch verliehen.

Seit im Jahre 1999 gegründetes Label Beta Recordings steht für John B ein Podium dar, auf welchem er sich nach Belieben seinen musikalischen Visionen widmen kann. Im selben Jahr hat er sein zweites Album "Catalyst" veröffentlicht und hat somit seine musikalischen Interessen und Einflüsse reflektiert. Auch hier haben sich alle Kritiker und Rezensenten mit positiver Resonanz, regelrecht überschaubar, angelehnt. Ist Album Nummer drei gefällig, bei welchem John B die größten Hits seines Vorgängeralbums neu konstruiert hat, in diesem Sommer veröffentlicht er sein aktuelles und viertes Album "Future Reference". Dieses Opus etozet nur so von unterschiedlichen und mannigfaltigen Flavours... Von lateinamerikanischen Einflüssen bis zu Happy Hardcore Klangflächen und einer gelungenen Portion Soul, einer Brise Funk und einer Beigabe von Jazz ist auf dem Meisterwerk alles zu

finden bzw. zu hören. Bei seiner Auflistung der Künstler, die ihn in seiner Arbeit inspirieren und zur Beschreibung neuer Wege an-motivieren, ist die vielfältige Verwendung all jener Musikelemente - "Wunder: Beethoven, Herbie Hancock, Nirvana, Tito Puente, Depeche Mode, Kraftwerk, die Cure u.a."

Zudem hat er zwei neue Sublabels formiert, auf der einen Seite tangent Recordings, um die musikalische Seite von Drum & Bass zu präsentieren, und Chibbaaba, um die lateinamerikanischen Einflüsse in größerem Umfang zur Geltung zu bringen. Hier zeigt sich, dass eines von John's Talenten der unbändige Drang nach Innovationen ist. Er fusioniert nicht nur unterschiedliche Musikstile mit Drum & Bass, was für seine Kreativität spricht, sondern forscht konse-quently nach Möglichkeiten, seine Werke rein qualitativ auf ein höheres Niveau zu heben. Permanent sucht er nach neuen Wegen, um die Qualität seiner Produktionen zu erhöhen. Momentan arbeitet er an der Dolby Surround Technologie, um seine Werke in ungeahnte Sphären zu katapultieren.

John B ist mit vielseitigen Talenten geseg-net worden, die er nach meiner Ansicht noch nicht voll ausgeschöpft hat, denn sein Reifeprozess ist noch lange nicht abgeschlossen. Bemerkbar macht es sich insbesondere bei der Tatsache, dass er bei einigen seiner Produktionen hinsichtlich der Drumssets nicht sehr flexibel und variabel ist. Ab und zu erträgt man sich beim Zuhören, dass die einen oder anderen Drums und auch Sounds irgendwo schon mal bei ihm zu hören waren. Trotz allem will ich seine Musikalität in seiner Weise schmälen. Ganz im Gegenteil, ich habe in den vorigen Zeilen explizit auf seine musikalischen Finessen und Vorzüge hingewiesen.

John B, ein Produzent für alle Musikrichtungen. Ich kann mir kaum vorstellen, dass es den einen oder anderen gibt, der nicht Gefallen an seiner Musik findet. Mit seinen bisherigen Werken hat er viele Nischen besetzt und eindrucksvoll unter Beweis gestellt, dass seine Musik über ein riesiges Repertoire und Spektrum verfügt. In diesem Sinne hoffen wir, dass Mister Juan Tequila B uns weiterhin mit musikalischen Highlights versorgt! Hasta luego!

BREAKBEAT (Germany) - July 2001 - Full page Feature

METALHEADZ

The Metalheadz crew have been finding it hard to find a venue to meet the needs of their legendary 'Sunday Sessions'. The Limelight proved unsuitable, they moved to Propaganda, and after only a couple of weeks it has seen it's demise due to unforeseen circumstances, we will keep you informed as to their club night goings-on. As far as the label goes, the next releases come from the Invaderz (Wintersun/Controls my Mind), Klute (Curly Wurly/Splendour) and long time residents Loxy & Ink are also scheduled to have an as yet unnamed release. You'll also be seeing more of Goldikus in Eastenders... apparently he proved very popular with viewers - the mind boggles. To ease the blow of losing the London regular, Metalheadz have set up a Friday night monthly alongside the scottish D&B instigator DJ Kid, in Edinburgh. This is to be staged at The Honeycomb on Niddry St and the launch is Friday 26th October with Bailey, Flight, Clarky and MC Flux with reggae dancehall and hip hop in the second room. The second night see's **John B**, Marley Marl, DJ Kid and MC Fats with electro and breaks in the second room. This night runs from 10.30-3am and costs a mere £8. Call 07973 142 195 / 07813 836325 for further info on this.



ATM - October 2001 - News Article



> Kosheen – 'Hide U' (Moksha)
An absolutely massive vocal anthem: battered by Fabio and, together with 'Suicide', one of the biggest tracks to date from this dynamite Bristol trio.

> Unknown Artist - 'D&B Vs R&B Vol 1' (white)

> Unknown Artist – 'D&B Vs R&B Vol 1' (white)

> Unknown Artist – 'D&B Vs R&B Vol 1' (white)
An example of just how good bootlegs can be. Little did this outpatient know just how big this smooth vocal groove would grow to become!

> Carlito & Addiction – 'Supergliss' (Defunked)

> Carlito & Addiction – 'Supergrass' (Defunk'd)
A sultry, rolling track from two stalwarts of the style with a consistent delivery, also check their recent jams on Creative Sounds and Hospital.

> John B - "Hold It Down"/"The Way I Feel" (Creative Source)
Two stunning cuts that marked the ever-prolific John B's Creative Source debut, while his forthcoming first release for Metalheadz features the similarly divine sounds of "Take Control".

> London Electricity - 'Wishing Well (Danny Byrd Remix)'

(Hospital)
So much to choose from between the catalogues of these two artists, with this track, from 'Plastic Surgery 2' blending the essence of both. Just check the vocal treatment here.

> Calibre – ‘Mystic’/‘Feelin’ (Creative Source)

> Calibre – 'Mystic 7/Feelin' (Creative Source)
With his debut album due for release on Creative Source later in the year, this uplifting first single from Calibre is just a taste of things to come.

> J Majik – 'Love Is Not A Game' (Infrared/Defected)

A supersonic slice of disco drum & bass, featuring vocals by Kathy Brown, also look out for his remix of Hatiras' "Spaced Invader".

> Marcus Intalex & ST Files – 'Universe' (Metalheadz)

Following on from the success of 'Love & Happiness' on 31 Records and their remix of MJ Cole's 'Sincere', this track finds Marcus Intalex & ST Files at their very best.

> OJ Patife & Fernando Porto – 'Sambassim' (V Recordings)
A spellbinding Latin drum & bass track, and just a flava from the Sambaloco collective's 'Brazil EP' which has proven to be a landmark release for one of the UK's leading drum & bass labels.

> Zinc - 'Casino Royale' (True Playaz)

A sublime slice of rolling, melodic intrigue, popular on both the drum & bass and UK garage scenes, it's featured on the recently released 'Playaz 4 Real' album, which is also home to the exquisite vocal styles of Fellowship's 'Dark Flower Remedy'



LONDON
JOHN B

化学から健康へ……想き才人、シゴンの目インタビュー



"Just last night I had a dream with Geri Halliwell in it." (Laughter) "No, not a sexual kind of dream at all, really. She was sitting on the end of my couch and she said 'John, it's all about the yoga,' admits John B, amid laughter and a brief respite from the demanding life surrounding his musical career.

The thing is though, that John B has no demands he does not place on himself. His productions are at the forefront of modern-day drum and bass, continually pushing the envelope to carry the music to the furthest reaches of its undiscovered potential. With unique style and a care-free regard to contemporary music fads, his music has earned him a knight ship among the royalty of drum and bass. And has consequently married him to an extremely busy schedule.

radio show," John explains, "so he knows quite a lot about the music. He actually knows better than I do sometimes. He'll say, 'Ya heard the new track by Total Science?' and I'll be like, 'No, I haven't.' He's always been into music and stuff and he's a good second opinion when it comes to it. He's very well known, as well. At Metalheadz, Grooverider will come up and shake his hand, Grooverider's also given him shouts out on the radio."

When relaxing, John takes pleasure in what he calls his 'new baby' - the chocolate martini. "It's got to have Bailey's in it," he proclaims, "Some people try to give you vodka with a twist, but it's got to have the Bailey's in it. I had the best one ever not too long ago in Gainesville [Florida] and it had plenty of Bailey's in it, mmh."

I was able to catch up with John for a phone

record is more polarized toward the vocal stuff, there is some harder stuff on there, a Latin thing, but the entire album has an identity rather than it going all over the place like 'Catalysa' did. A lot of material that is on the new album still has hard beats, there's a lot of party dance-floor beats with a bit more of a thoughtful structure, you know.

How has the response been so far?

I haven't really given the tracks out to anybody because I want the tracks to be as fresh when the album is new. Apart from J.J. Frost, Andy C and Bailey, no one really has dubs from the album yet. I'm very conscious of people's reaction when the tracks come out. If it hasn't been heard before, DJs still want to play the record after it's been released. Most releases have really lost their impact after they've been played around for a while on dub plate, the release is not really felt. I feel that with "Up All Night" and the "Oh No" remix, there's enough out there already.

How about the new label, Tangent Records?

Sister label to Beta designed to be a channel for the more jazzier stuff, which is what I love and want to release, but I don't want people to be confused with Beta Recordings. I don't want to start in with different pseudonyms, I'd rather keep my identity with a new label.

What's up with the new mix CD?

Just finished the mix for the Knowledge Magazine cover, I've got a lot of new stuff from other people

and I feel like it's the best mix I've ever done. A lot of DJs tend to focus on their own music for the cover, but I really didn't want to. I mixed it off the Pioneer CD players, because I haven't even had a chance to cut dub plates of all the new stuff I have, so I just played it off the CD mixer.

You mean you'd rather mix CDs than dub plates?

The dub plate thing really isn't that important to me, they're such shit quality. I'm interested in music and production and improving drum and bass and it's production. I don't get caught up in that sort of thing, you know.

Tell me what instruments you record live for your samples.

Really I need to record live when it comes to it, really. I play piano, saxophone, flute, trumpet, and all the drums are sampled and layered up.

Do you record live drum sounds?

No. If there's a break that originated from a live sample, I tend to layer them up a lot. Photek was the first person to record live drums with the "Hidden Camera" EP. If I had a drum kit, I think I'd do it, but there's not enough space around here. I could see you taking samples of each hit, you know. A light snare, medium snare and heavy snare, for example, and just layer them up a bit.



Recently, John B has completed a new album, served releases on several different labels, mixed a CD for the cover of Knowledge magazine and conceptualized a DVD surround-sound album project.

All of this on top of DJing around Europe and America. Consider that he's played out of town so many times that he's pioneered a method of working out with a record box. "When you're traveling around quite a bit, there's not a lot of energy going around," John explains, "You need to deal with about a week without sleep. Now I've started to develop a few exercises that I can do with a record box in my hotel room, crunches and that sort of thing."

When at home in Maidenhead, England, John receives a lot of help keeping up with musical trends from his father. "He's responsible for recording Fabio and Grooverider's Sunday night

interview from his Maidenhead studio. Having finished a new mix CD just 20 minutes before my call, he seemed rather jovial, citing it as "the best mix I've ever done." While the feeling of enjoyment echoed his recent accomplishments, we covered a lot of ground involving both up coming releases and studio technique.

Tell me about the new album, "Future Reference."

I'll give you the structure of it. There will be a double pack sampler available on limited edition vinyl, then the album will feature a triple pack vinyl, followed by remixes from Black Caliber and London Electricity, which will be on a double pack. "Future Reference" will be released on July 23rd and is all drum and bass, no down-tempo tracks will be on the album. All 12 tracks are very structured and they all have female vocals. The



FREEBASS (USA) - July 2001 - Feature - 2 Page Spread



Guest Reviewer:

JOHN B

Proprietor of the Beta and Tangent labels, Maidenhead, England's John B is known as much for developing other artists as he is for his own DJing and original productions. A scene veteran at 24 years old, he has been incredibly prolific and acclaimed by DJs and listeners alike. Check for the blistering pressure of "Up All Night" on Metalheadz as well as his new album for Beta, *Future Reference*. Keep up with John B's current projects through www.beta-recordings.com.

jungle

■ Reviews by Chris Muniz

CARLITO & ADDICTION

JUST WANNA BE

(Creative Source/UK) I've been playing this in just about every set since I cut it a few months ago. It's a great example of a hard-hitting track for the dance floor but still has enough cohesive melody and vocal parts that make musical sense. When they first did this one we used to call it "That Tainted Love One, Ya Knowwww?"; there's a subtle nod to old Mr. Marc Almond and the Soft Cell '80s sound in there. I think it's coming out on Creative Source sometime in the autumn.

HIGH CONTRAST

MERMAID SCARS

(Hospital/UK) I've been playing a bunch of High Contrast's tunes over the last few months. I'm really into his style, a great balance between filtered disco-house-y string cut-ups, but with fat beats and bouncy basslines. This one's quite a bit more atmospheric and harder than normal; more of a Metalheadz-style tune. There are nice hints of vocals and crunchy, heavy beats.

CALIBRE

I GOT WHAT YOU WANT

(Creative Source/UK) Dominick (aka Calibre) has been putting together

some fantastic music over the last 18 months, and I think this is probably his best track yet. It's got a really tasty, understated deep house-y kind of groove, lovely, crisp mix-down and some very simple elements. It's beautifully put together, with a male vocalist singing the phrase of the title. I love it.

CAUSE 4 CONCERN

SOUL

(C4C/UK) These guys' production has always impressed me. They really go deep into the technical side of things and you can tell that a lot of care and effort have gone into their tunes. Cyborg snappy beats and scary devil-doll Daryl Hannah in *Blade Runner* squealies. [Huh? — Ed.]

JOHN B

FUTURE REFERENCE LP

(Beta Recordings/UK) Gotta mention this I guess — I'm a slag. This is my new album, which came out in the UK at the end of July. It's all vocal drum & bass, concentrating more on the musical side of things. There's a couple of new Latin tracks with crazy Spanish vocals, some mad, hard old-school-style tracks and some garage- and R&B-influenced tracks, too.

URB (USA) - Oct 2001 - Feature - 1/2 Page

RENEGADES OF FUNK> Various Artists (Renegade Recordings)

This is a label that has always encouraged versatility from the artists that have crossed their paths, there's real quality on this 3-piece offering. John B's 'I like to get it on' has been a favourite of Fabio's for a while, Marcus & ST Files get down with 'Revolution', Dylan & Ink's 'I can't wait' and a cracking track from Sonic called 'Heat wave' definitely caught my attention. Not only has the label bought together some of the most prolific artists to date but they've also enlisted new talents such as Juju & Hive (from the USA) with the silky smooth 'Penthouse' and Tronik 100's 'Deep love'. On the CD version of the album you get 2 bonus tracks from Total science and X-plorer & Dee Pulse. Definitely one to look out for. (Dubs) 8/10

Breaking Point (UK)
December 2001

REVIEWS: DRUM & BASS



DRUM & BASS FEATURE: JOHN B ON THE '80s

DJ/producer John B (new album *Future Reference* out July 23) is on a mission to rediscover forgotten '80s bands, one album at a time. Armed with the zeal of a Jedi Knight and a booming stereo in his Renault Clio, the big-haired Brit delves through his CD collection for divine inspiration.

"Before I even got into dance music, I liked all the synthesizer pop. In the last two years, I started getting back into that stuff. I'm so into Flock of Seagulls that I listened to the greatest hits album four times in a row on the flight home from Singapore. And I always listen to A-Ha when I'm sunbathing. I listen to so much '80s because it's so different from day-to-day drum 'n' bass. But I don't really think it influences my drum & bass that much aside from the clean production. Maybe some of the synth lines rub off a little bit. If anyone looked over my shoulder at what I was playing, I think I'd get embarrassed. I like pretending I'm cool, but if they saw my A-Ha CD they'd think I'm some sad web designer man who listens to '80s music and has no friends." Vivian Host

XLR8R (USA) - June 2001

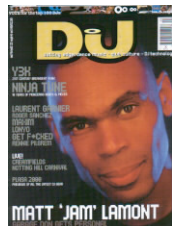
JOHN B. "UP ALL NIGHT" (METALHEADZ 41)

Bei „Up all night“ hat John B. tief im Jungle- und Hardcorearchiv gegraben und sich die zweifellos coolsten Sounds der frühen neunziger Jahre herausgesucht. Auch die Stilmittel erinnern durchaus an frühere Zeiten: dissonante Keyboard-Stabs, und der Verzicht auf Timestretching (sprich: gepitchte Frauen-Vocals, rasende Breakbeats) wurden gepaart mit den aktuellen produktionstechnischen Ansprüchen. Die B-Seite „Take Control“ klingt dann so gar nicht nach Metalheadz, sondern passt eher auf Creative Source und zeigt die musikalische Seite John Bs. Nette female Vocals treffen auf Akustikgitarren, treffen auf ein sophisticated Saxophonsolo, treffen auf sicherlich volle Tanzflächen. Für abwechslungsreiche DJs DAS MUSS des Jahres! **in**

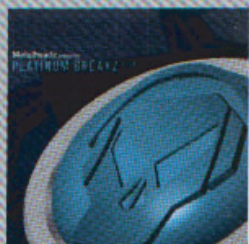
in the box!

John B Up All Night/Take Control Metalheadz

Cor, all the tunes this issue are pumping out the extremes and I'm reacting by either smiling like a fool or looking like a psycho! John B instantly brings the sweet tingles to the top of your back and forearms with a saccharine, slightly pitched-up classic rave style vocal to nutty early 90s reminiscent hardcore stabs. All brought up to date with a looming low, modern raw synth grind bass. Will. Take. Control. Of. Any. Crowd. This 'full cycle' sound exploring the music's roots can do no wrong whatsoever in my book - a searing rush of joy and adrenalin injection of unadulterated energy. Just like it used to be. Cheers for that mate, a record I will savour for the rest of my dayz. ●●●●●



DJ Mag - May 2001



:01



:02



:03



:04

V.A. "PLATINUM BREAKZ 3" (METALHEADZ)

Endlich erscheint die dritte Ausgabe der bis dato sehr erfolgreichen Platinum Breakz Serie. Ich gehöre garantiert nicht zu den wenigen D&B Anhängern, die die Labelpolitik von Metalheadz kontraproduktiv für die Bewegung halten, aber das ewige Warten wird belohnt. Digital & Spirit, John B, Total Science, Doc Scott, Goldie himself u.v.a. beweisen eindrucksvoll in welchen Gefilden sich D&B heute bewegt. Es ist wie eine Reise durch die Welt des Breakbeats, die uns von smoothen Melodien zu wilden und experimentellen Beats und Breaks bis hin zu extrem basslastigen Werken entführt. Herausragend sind 'Solitaire' von Spirit, Goldies atmosphärischem 'Beachdrita' und John B's wunderschönem 'Diversify', aber auch die restlichen Tracks verpflichten definitiv zum Kauf. **gtn**

V.A. "COOKIN' INGREDIENTS - STEP 3" (COOKIN' RECORDS)

Auf zwei Samplern wurden die letzten drei Jahre von LTJ Bukems Good Looking Tochterlabel Cookin

JOHN B "FUTURE REFERENCE LP" (BETA REC)

Dieses Werk gehört unwiderruflich zu den besten Alben des Jahres. John B veröffentlicht mit "Future Reference" sein viertes Album, welches durch die unterschiedlichsten Flavors nur so strotzt. Auf der einen Seite setzt er mit "Ay Caramba" und "Tequila Slammer" für Latino Drum & Bass neue Maßstäbe, die insbesondere durch die Musikalität einen Hochgenuss darstellen. Dagegen zielen Tracks wie "When I'm Close 2 U" oder die Danceversion von "Forever" ganz klar auf den Dancefloor. Aber das ist noch nicht alles. Die weiteren Tunes gehören in die Kategorie: zum Relaxen prädestiniert. Dabei handelt es sich um wunderschöne Vocalstücke. Eindrucksvoll stellt John B sein Repertoire unter Beweis und mit seinem abendfüllenden Opus weiß er zu überzeugen. Ich kann das Album Nr. 4 nur als einen Pflichtkauf deklarieren! **gtn**

J.MAJIK "INFRASTRUCTURE LP" (INFERRED)

Nach J.Majiks letzter LP "Nightvision" war es eine zeitlang ruhig um seine Person. Umso eindrucksvoller

Breakbeat Magazine (Germany) - June 2001



JOHN B
IT'S SO REAL / NO-ONE LIKE YOU
TANGENT

It's John B himself who takes the first release on this, his new label dedicated to the more melodic and vocal styles of drum & bass. 'It's So Real' opens the account and drops something of a garage flava: rolling out sparse skippy beats, a clean staccato bass to make you bubble plus, of course, a wicked vocal blend. 'No-One Like You' then steps out on more fluid, rolling tip. A delicate fusion of keys, sax and guitar, together with deep, driving bass provide the backbone, as an enchanting combination of male and female vocal melts all over this delightfully sumptuous track. A quite brilliant introduction to the new label. Check it. **L**

Knowledge - June 01



JOHN B
FUTURE REFERENCE LP SAMPLER
BETA

Unavailable on the vinyl version of the 'Future Reference' album, this four track EP from John B is essential if you're a fan of his broad-ranging vocal styles. 'Forever' is a monster futuristic cut, with ethereal vocals, dirty Reese and Amen pressure dominating the soundscape on the 'Hard 12" mix'; while more trancey vibes offer a lightly stepping alternative on the 'Extended mix'. The techno-soul of 'Run Out Of Time' is a golden, staccato bassline moment, bringing male vocals into the equation with a style of production that mirrors the 2 step influence of his first release on Tangent. While completing the EP is the lively bongo-funk of 'Show Me The Way', a celebratory vocal tune that brings the disco to drum & bass. Awesome. **L**

Knowledge - June 2001

JOHN B

'It's So Real'
(Tangent)

After an elongated period of DJing, John B finally finds the time to launch the more 'musical' offshoot to his Beta label. Quite unlike his forthcoming rave excursions for Headz, this debut release follows the pattern laid out in the made for Fabio vibes of last years 'Hold It Down' for Creative Source, using vocal samples to gel warm organic instrumentation together. Watch for something from new signings Al Fresco in May. **KM • 7**

WAX - June 2001

John B

It's So Real (Tangent)

The first pair of tracks on Tangent – a new sister label to John B's Beta Recordings – may not be especially innovative but they certainly caress the ears. 'It's So Real' is a pleasant sounding piece of wistful future disco that's also not a million miles from the cute flow of two-step. The fusion raptures are continued on 'No One Like You', a sax-driven stepper reminiscent of 'Colours'-era Adam F.



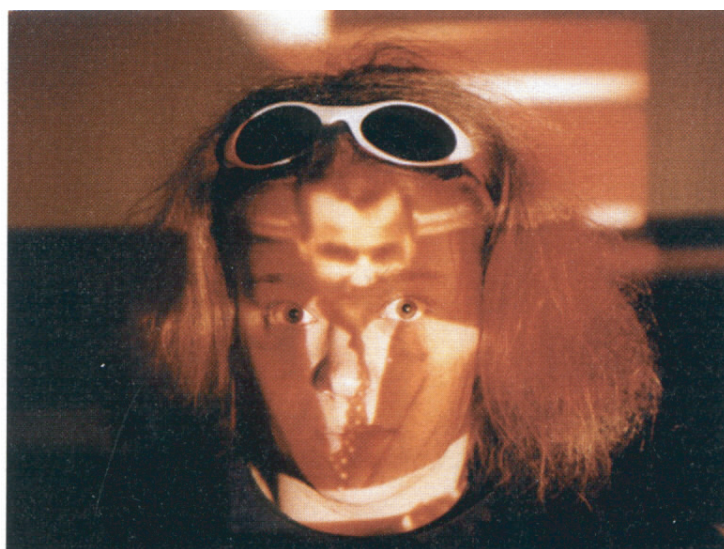
MUZIK - July 2001

JOHN B

THE GATE / MUSIC FOR LOST CITIES
BETA

The beta himself steps forward with a release on his own label; here coming with a pair of tracks that fall in on the more rugged, techno side of the fence, though those melodic edges do shine through courtesy of Mr Versatile. 'The Gate' is an epic number with ethereal vocals, nagging clunk hooks, a blend of supra-rolling beats and some stepping kick-snare bizniz all thrown into the melting pot. The rolling vibe flows onto the flip, where mysterious keys bring the necessary flava amidst a jumping bass and mid range melee. Infectious. **L**

Knowledge - April 2001



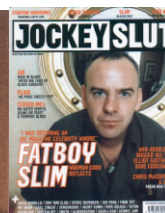
HIT!

JOHN B

UP ALL NIGHT/TAKE CONTROL (Metalheadz)

John B has, against the odds, become one of the essential producers of the moment. Gone is the ridiculous, pseudo-scientific nonsense and the comedy jazz, and in its place is a take on the old school. Like Total Science, inspiration is drawn from drum'n'bass' past (in this case, sampling Outlander's 'The Vamp' on 'Up All Night'), but the results are very different. Both tracks sound like rave ripped on steroids rather than the proto-jungle update preferred by the Totals. And they're very good indeed. Reach for the laser. **CB**

JOCKEY SLUT - July 2001



JOHN B

Hold It Down (Creative Source)

Two glowing cuts from the ever-versatile John B. 'Hold It Down' is a perfectly-judged piece of soulful drum & bass, utilising a clutch of vocal snippets vying for attention over warm beats and the sweetest of melodic glimmers. 'The Way I Feel' is slighter but no less enchanting, a lazy elegy for departed summer days.



MUZIK - November 2000

6 John B - It's So Real - Tangent

John B comes with the first offering on his new label, Tangent. John has set it up to deliver more mature, vocal and musical styles of D&B. 'It's so real' is a slightly Intalex-esque roller with nice female vox and cool percussion. The bassline is kept low key and is a little bouncy, funky FX adds a little flava. Check the flip for something similar with some cool sax.

ATM - August 2001

JOHN B UP ALL NIGHT / TAKE CONTROL METALHEADZ

This is a quite sensational single from John B with both tracks showing a different side of this man's deft production skills and each setting the dancefloor alight. 'Up All Night' opens deceptively, with a sweet vocal and strings but beware, for the grizzly bassline menace soon looms large, as does a brazen rave piano line and thundering beats, and when this one drops, it drops hard - nothing to do but pull it back to the top. Taking a more subtle and sexy approach is 'Take Control', using a wicked blend of vocals, delicate piano crochets, soft guitars, soaring sax and warm pads to create the sumptuous mood, while sharp, clipped beats and punchy bass keep the step in check. Highly recommended. **L**

Knowledge - June 2001

JOHN B FUTURE REFERENCE BETA

After a string of successful releases on Creative Science and Metalheads, alongside many other labels, John B releases his third album on his own label. Following in the same eclectic vein as his previous LP releases, though not quite split in style, which works much better. 'Future Reference' is a fantastic vocal-led album. We move through the dancing heartbeat strains of 'When In Doubt 2 U' (much like 'Up All Night', also found here), and the salsa flavoured 'My Colombia' and 'Tequila Summer' that have dominated global drum & bass soundscapes. Bangfunk like 'Show Me The Way' adds an extra, uplifting angle, while in contrast to the obvious big hitters, check the bright and hypnotic 'not at

'Emotion', the dead, trancey vibe of the original mix of 'Forever' and the smooth garage vibe of 'What's On Your Mind?', all making an equal impact here. Released on CD and triple vinyl, while if you're quick you should be able to pick up the limited edition CD, also featuring a John B mix. Best hurry. **RA**

Knowledge - July 2001

3 v/a - renegades of funk renegade

Renegade comes with a triple pack to cater for those who like their beats smoother than Shaft. Marcus Intalex & ST Files superb 'Revolution' features on here, and is strong enough to warrant a purchase on its own! Silky synths and sexy breaks drive a sensual b-line along nicely, this tune is simply the nuts, and one for those moments with your girl on the dancefloor! Juju, Echo & Hive's contribution 'Penthouse' is a solid roller with cool percussion and some nice touches. Dylan & Ink's 'I Can't Wait' is ridiculously similar to their 'Need You Now' track - comparisons aside, it's an OK track. John B's contribution 'I Like to Get It on' (is John trying to make a statement with his tunes? If so then he's probably lying on his heart shaped bed with satin sheets, staring at himself lying with a couple of beauties via the mirrored ceiling) is a decent, funky workout with sounds sexy enough for your bedroom, but breaks hard enough for the dancefloor. Other tracks on here include Sonic's 'Heatwave' and German outfit Tronik 100's 'Deep Love'. A quality triple pack of smooth grooves.

ATM - Nov 2001

MARCUS

RENEGADES OF FUNK RENEGADE

Renegade feature eight DJ's from Renegade that produced with an impressive collection of drum & bass producers/stems doing their thing in a slightly more melodic, soulful style. The release also adds in some one John B, Tony Science, Morphe, Intalex, Jaz, Echo, Dylan & Ink and new talent, joined in the form of Tronik 100, R-Funk and Dee Myles. The album marks a long overdue and eagerly awaited resurgence in the more soulful drum & bass scene which have made a steady return to prominence within the scene recently. It's as though the scene has been stuck in the mire, either too long and such was the response to the other CD on Renegade a new album seemed the obvious next step for those at the funkier tipside. This isn't a new direction for Renegade as they've always released tracks with funk, jazz and soul vocals and have consistently maintained an affinity with the genre. In order to make it as accessible as possible it's being released on triple vinyl and max CD. Standing tracks are the forthcoming John B's 'I Like to Get It on' and Sonic's 'Heatwave'. **M**

Knowledge - Dec 2001

THREE TO BUY

1. BLUE SONIX 'GOT ME IN ITS SPELL'

(HOUSEWORK)

Blue Sonix's new label explodes its way on to the scene with a housey vibes thumper that's more old skool than my primary class. Its got strings which promise to carry you away somewhere very nice indeed, and its soulful atmospheric are combined with the kind of beats and bass that have caused Fabio to rip roofs off with this all year. If you thought last month's top tune 'Casino Royale' was good, you'd better check this.



2. FUTURE CUT 'OBSESSION' (METALHEADZ)

Manchester's juicy bassline specialists dare to mash up bits of Goldie's exalted 'Inner City Life' and then proceed to combine it with vocals,

ragga lyrics and, naturally, a big, fat, nasty bass. The result? A piece of rippling urban soul that kicks you up the arse... hard. 'Tear Out Your Heart' is in the same vein, doing virtually that.

3. JOHN B 'UP ALL NIGHT' (METALHEADZ)

The proud owner of the most outlandish haircuts in drum 'n' bass comes up with two of his best tracks to date. 'Take Control' is an irresistibly friendly, sexy track. 'Up All Night' starts out with some squeaky back-in-the-day hardcore vocals, quickly joined by a hyperactive combination of hands-the-air keyboards and percussion. Bodies have been seen flinging round to this with lunatic abandon, proving that Goldie's label is most definitely on a roll.

Mixmag - June 2001

JOHN B

'Future Reference LP' (Beta)

Nothing if not prolific, John B turns out his third album for his own label and his fifth in total. Having expressed that he this is his most personally satisfactory within this latest full length, as ever it



makes for a disparate listen. Although occasionally bowing to the powers that scene – most notably in the crazed rave of 'Up All Night' and Altern-8 rave stabs of 'When I'm Close To You' – John has forged a rep on doing his own thing, with this album at its strongest in the knees up Basilica of 'Ay Caramba' and 'Tequila Slammer' or the stunning emotive soul fusion of 'Run Out Of Time' which closes the CD. Let the good times roll. **KM • 7**

M8 - June 2001

JOHN B

Future Reference (Beta)

The Beethoven-alike junglist fulfills his promise

JOHN B is one of those annoyingly precocious people, having graduated with a degree in Molecular Biology, started his own label (Beta Recordings) and produced his fourth album by the age of only 22. And as drum & bass goes through a state of flux, the explosive 'Future Reference' marks him out as a someone who's

going to take the high ground.

Opener 'When I'm Close 2U' harks back to the happy days of '91 hardcore over a slamming beat, while the best tracks ('Forever', 'Emotion') featuring the angelic vocals of John's sister Hannah have tunes to kill for. There's a couple of false starts: the Latino breaks of 'Ay Caramba' and 'Tequila Slammer' are more Ricky Martin than Senor Coconut, and occasionally he mistakes slickness for substance, but this is still an album that should catapult John B into the stratosphere.

Neil Gardner



MUZIK - September 2001



Ffrr ★★★★★

Platinum Breakz 3

Metalheadz back in session

Having decided to drop Goldie as an artist, Ffrr are still content to pick over the best of his label, Metalheadz and showcase the results in this third instalment of the popular *Platinum Breakz* series. First half engages with the raging sound system funk of Spirit [Solitare], through the crisp beats of Digital [Pull Up, B-Boyism], to a vocal-led gem from John B [Diversify]. The second half embraces the chilled soul of Hidden Agenda [The Life, Kramberry Juice] with the minimalist beauty of Special Forces's Freeway. A package as wide-ranging as it is fine. **NMC**

Top Tracks: John B Diversify, Digital B-Boyism, Special Forces Freeway

MINISTRY - May 2001

JOHN B Future Reference LP
Beta/Inertia
Music: ●●●○○○
Production: ●●●●○
Reviewed by: Vinyl-Net

Nothing if not prolific, John B turns out his third album for his own label and fifth in total. Although, occasionally bowing to the powers that scene, most notably in the crazed rave of 'Up all night' and Altern-8 stabs of 'When I'm Close To You' - John has forged a rep on doing his own thing, with this album at its strongest in the knees up Brasilica of 'Ay Caramba' and 'Tequila Slammer' or the stunning emotive soul fusion of 'Run Out Of Time' which closes the CD. Let the good times roll.

Revolver (Australia) - May 01

6 John B remix - Oh No - Rawkuts

John B comes with a couple of mixes of hip-hop anthem 'Oh No!' (Mos Def & Pharoahe Monch ft Nate Dogg). One side is the 'Heavyweight' mix which is a full-on amen affair with old skool rave stabs and a deep, pene-

ATM - May 2001



HIT!

JOHN B

UP ALL NIGHT TAKE CONTROL (Metalheadz)

John B has, against the odds, become one of the essential producers of the moment. Gone is the infectious, raw, street-wise material and the combed jazz, and in its place is a more on the old school, like Total Science, inspiration is down from drum'n'bass, down in a case, with a little Outlander. 'The Vamp' on 'Up All Night', but the results are very different. Both tracks sound like rave rippin' on steroids rather than the production update pioneered by the 'Tuts. And they're very good indeed. Praise for the label, CB

Jockey Slut - July 2001

quickly erupts into a combination of jittery percussion, Reese basslines and nasty stabs, occasionally joined by some nice pieces of melody to lighten the mood. Surprisingly uplifting.

JOHN B 'THE SKY'S THE LIMIT'

REWORK

The inimitable John B creates another eccentric union of styles, putting rippling female vocals and some

majestic chords over 80s synth havoc and coming up with something markedly 21st century. On the B-side, 'Move Your Body' comes on like a Jane Fonda workout video in Blade Runner's Los Angeles.

TOTAL SCIENCE 'BORDERLINE'

OVERHAUL

TS set all old school on us with a percussional, atmospheric track, featuring

MIXMAG - June 2001



John B

9 John B - Up All Night - Metalheadz

Jesus H Christ! What can I say here? Metalheadz are probably the biggest brand name in Drum 'n Bass and these releases go to show why... A slightly better transition period from dubplate to release as well! After 'Stormtroops VIP' (Which had been on promo for over a year before its recent release) and Marcus Intalex's seminal 'Universe' comes the next installments... Mr. B's 'Up All Night' is plain fucking ridiculous. This one's been cared for a few months now by all manner of DJs. The sensual title was in no way could not even begin to prepare you for what was to come next. Stabbing old school keys pave the way for the hard as nails drop and a great big rewind signals that it's time for action! Rip for a classy jazzy number. Also look out for Total Science's awesome 'Jungle Jungle' also released soon on headz.

ATM - July 2001

MUZIK

Vital Release



John B. It's like he just stepped out of a salon

John B

Up All Night
(Metalheadz)

It's rare indeed for a single piece of vinyl to encompass two different styles of drum & bass as brilliantly as John B does here. 'Up All Night' is a furious piece of electronica that combines the pulsating frenzy of early Moby Shadow with the direct, jacking pace of D'n'B & Rhythms Incorporated. Once on the floor, 'Take Control' is the perfect balance between jam-jungle and hard-bass to produce a melodic sound without M2's Cold war produced 'Stabbing'.

★★★★★

Catch this Vital Release on the R.M.U.K. show on Sky Digital 400 and cable, 6-10pm every day except Thursdays

Vital Vinyl

- 1) **Cause 4 Concern** Strange Nature (Timeless)
- 2) **Accidental Heroes** Light Cycles (Formation)
- 3) **Decoder & Substance** Dog Fight EP (BBC)
- 4) **Marcus Intalex** Universe (Metalheadz)
- 5) **John B** No 1 Like You (Tangent)
- 6) **Reprazent** Lucky Pressure (Surv Remix) (Talkin' Loud)
- 7) **artist unknown** Negative No2 (Negative)
- 8) **Pressurise** Focus LP (Aspect)
- 9) **Total Science** Jungle, Jungle (Metalheadz)
- 10) **Digital** Red Mist (Creative Source)

Compiled by Chris at Eastern Bloc,
8/5 Central Buildings, Oldham
Street, Manchester, M1 1JT.
Tel: 0161-220-6432.

MUZIK - July 2001



JOHN B FUTURE REFERENCE

UK drum & bass prodigy uses R&B, house and Latin flavors to soothe genre boredom

(Beta/UK) Hungry for a scene that features more "music" and less "noise," John B cranks up the chimes, whistles and saxophones, emerging from the lab with his most ambitious project to date. While there's still the old-school, mad-running dance-floor numbers, the R&B crossovers and Latin/drum & bass hybrids on *Future Reference* are the tunes sure to attract the most attention.

With an inspiring sense of confidence and skill, John B has created an album that's more freestyle than straight drum & bass. Merging a disparate number of influences, John takes the traditional elements of melodic drum & bass (classical orchestration, jazzy vocals, wobbly bass lines) and twists them with hefty amounts of R&B, merengue and salsa to create something not only catchy but relatively unique within the genre.

Laid-back groovers like "Run Out of Time" are destined for the easy-listening end of the FM dial, while party tunes like "Ay Caramba!" and "Tequila Slammer" are sure to be a hit at house parties and massives alike. Although not nearly as satisfying as the rest of the LP, these Latin-tinged experiments (featuring trumpets, pianos — all the stereotypical elements of "Latin" music including the "ay-yay-ay" Speedy Gonzalez-style exclamations) have the potential to be offensive and annoying, yet John manages to pull them off with inimitable style. While there's no telling how the drum & bass purist will take it, the average partygoer may just find *Future Reference* to be the breath of fresh air they're looking for.

■ **Chris Muniz**



URB (USA) - Sept 2001

JOHN B UP ALL NIGHT/ TAKE CONTROL

Metalheadz



Up All Night creeps into action with a nagging vocal, permeated by a piano riff from a thousand hardcore tracks, then roughly gatecrashed by breakbeats and FX from the rave generation. On the flip, it's comedown time — jittery beats, saxophone, chimes and a clipped vocal. Two tunes, both fantastically, radically different. **NMc**

Ministry - July 2001

JOHN B SKY'S THE LIMIT MOVE YOUR BODY (REMIX) SHOEBOX

Returning to Shoebox, and with a much stronger release than the previous two, John B lays down a pair of right tasty, techno influenced vocal tracks. 'Sky's The Limit' just rolls and rolls with its intoxicating fusion of dreamy vocals, hypnotic synths, filthy bass surges and tuff drums being hard to resist. On the other side the electro-fied remix of 'Move Your Body' approaches more stealthily, treading a cleaner, trancey path into your subconscious. **L**

Knowledge - June 2001

John B

'Future Reference LP Sampler' (BETA)

While the above-mentioned LP was included in last month's issue, the four exclusive tracks and mixes — courtesy of John himself — have only just been made available... so there! Anyway, as with all excursions from the chap in question, expect the unexpected. The epic, almost Sasha & Digweed-meets drum and bass-like vibes of 'Forever' come in the form of both an extended mix of the album's smooth as a baby's bum version as well as the speaker unfriendly '...Hard 12" Mix' while the rest just gets better. Adding a bossanova drum pattern underneath the Robert Owens-style vocals of Nathan Prime, 'Run Out Of Time' gets saucy before the slick, winkle-picking jazz and funk steps of 'Show Me The Way' round off one very pleasant affair. **M7.5/M8**

M8 - September 2001

Vital Vinyl	
1) John B	Up All Night (Metalheadz)
2) Digital	Ras 78 (Function)
3) Various Artists	Clockwork LP (Underfire)
4) artist unknown	Negative 2 (Negative)
5) Swae & Danger	Dangerous (Lockdown)
6) Pharoahe Monch, Mos Def & Nate Dogg	Oh No (John B Smooth Remix) (Rawkus)
7) Reprazent	Lucky Pressure (Suv Remix) (Talkin' Loud)
8) Alex Reese & Utah Jazz	Midas Touch (Fallen Angels)
9) Digital & Spirit	Gateman (Phantom Audio)
10) Q Project	40 Below (Function)
Compiled by Chris at Eastern Bloc, 5/6 Central Buildings, Oldham Street, Manchester, M1 1JT. Tel: 0161-228-6432.	

MUZIK - June 2001

top ten of 2001	
1. Dillinja	Cybotron LP <i>Ffrr</i>
2. Andy C & Shimon	Bodyrock <i>Ram</i>
3. John B	Up All Night <i>Metalheadz</i>
4. Capone	Take It Down Low <i>Hard Leaders</i>
5. Tekken	Hardcore <i>Incident</i>
6. Future Cut	Ghetto Style <i>Renegade Hardware</i>
7. Shy FX	Shake UR Body <i>Ebony</i>
8. Ed Rush & Optical	Mind Creeper <i>Virus</i>
9. High Contrast	Make It Tonight <i>Hospital</i>
10. Aphrodite	Come Down Dubbing <i>Aphrodite</i>

DJ Magazine - Records of the Year 2001

magazine

sales charts

EASTERN BLOC • MANCHESTER • GENERAL • 0161 022806432

1	HALO	'Dirty Soul EP'	(Bluem)
2	FOTER	'Dubwise'	(Earrisistible)
3	JON CUTLER	'Its Yours'	(Chez)
4	THOMAS KROME	'Shokabu 2'	(Corb)
5	JAY J	'Smoke It Up'	(Afterhours)
6	MR. C & TOM PARRIS	'Nice N Nasty'	(Plinkplonk)
7	JOHN B	'Up All Night'	(Metalheadz)
8	PLAYER	'Six'	(Player)
9	JEFF MILLS	'UFO'	(Axis)
10	DJ SNEAK	'Magnetic Illusions'	(Magnetic)

7 Mag - Sales Chart June 2001

Vital Vinyl 2001	
1) Rufige Kru	Stormtrooper VIP (Metalheadz)
2) DJ Zinc	Casino Royale (True Playaz)
3) Nico & Rukkus	Defender (No U-Turn)
4) Teebee Versus Brandy	You Don't Know (white label)
5) Digital	Gateman (Phantom Audio)
6) Stormtroopers	The Mirage EP (Penny Black)
7) Teebee & Future Prophecies	Dimensional Entity (Subtitles)
8) Various Artists	The Brazil EP (V)
9) John B	Control/ Up Night (Metalheadz)
10) Blue Sonix	Got Me In Its Spell (Aquasonic)
Chart compiled, "in no order" by Ned Denny Denny, oh with his eyes so blue	

MUZIK
Records of
the Year 2001

Records of the year

Just in time for Christmas, our critics choose their top 10 CDs released in 2001

POP

Mark Edwards

EELS
EELSOULJACKER
Souljacker
Dreamworks



Souljacker followed a stay by Eels' singer E. below. at a Californian Zen retreat. The result is a freak show of vicious parents, serial killers and a dog-faced boy, balanced by gorgeous string-laden ballads and musings on the human soul. Spiritual inspiration rarely comes with such atomic guitar riffs.

2 SUPER FURRY ANIMALS
Rings Around the World (Sony)
While there are many bands out there who try to sound like the Beach



Boys, the wonderful melodic pop of Rings Around the World proves that the Super Furies (who don't actually sound much like the Beach Boys at all) are Brian Wilson's true heirs.

3 STINA NORDENSTAM
This Is Stina Nordenstam (Independentie)
The cult Swedish artist spent much of the past decade mired in depression. Here, she lightens up, applying her whispered vocals (and those of guest Brett Anderson) to happier songs, behind which Nordenstam and the co-producer, Mitchell Froom, conjure some impossibly pretty moments.

4 JIM WHITE
No Such Place (Luaka Bop)
In which the king of Southern gothic alt-country is produced by the trip-hoppers Morcheeba — and it works. Let's just say that songs like 10 Miles to Go on a 9 Mile Road and Handcuffed to a Fence in Mississippi are as irresistible as their titles.

5 INDIA ARIE
Acoustic Soul (Motown)
Acoustic Soul begins with a tribute to "all who came before", and the influence of classic soul shines through this hugely impressive debut, from the inspirational Strength Courage and Wisdom, through the stripped-down funk of Back to the Middle, to the sexy Brown Skin.

6 Y'ALL Get Scared Now, Ya Hear! (Bright Star)
Gary Lightbody pulled together the cream of Scottish indie rock (including members of Mogwai, Arab Strap and Cosmic Rough Riders) to play his low-key, lo-fi songs, full of just-right melodies and blissful harmonies.

7 NATALIE MERCHANT
Motherland (Elektra)
With a subtle, sympathetic production by T-Bone Burnett, and soulful backing vocals from Mavis Staples, Merchant delivers her best solo set to date, fired with biblical imagery and delivered in her impossibly rich voice.

8 THE HOLMES BROTHERS
Speaking in Tongues (Alligator)
A passionate mix of gospel and R&B, played with the instinctive feel of a band who've been together for 30 years. Their slowed-down version of Love Train should not be missed.

9 DAFT PUNK
Discovery (Virgin)
Once again, the French prove that anything we can do (in dance music), they can do with more groove, wit, invention and heavy-metal guitar solos. Exhilarating stuff.



4 BEN CHRISTOPHERS
Spoonface (V2)
An album of soaring beauty and searing honesty, Spoonface confirmed this Wolverhampton singer's promise. Self-absorbed, confessional, uncompromising, this is as intimate and devastating as songwriting can get.

5 CHRIS T-T
The 253 (Snowstorm)
A postcard from a bucolic outpost that sets this English eccentric's preoccupations — bear, doomed relationships, the state of London transport — to a shambolic musical backdrop. The finest (and maddest) British pop album of the year.

6 KINGS OF CONVENIENCE
Quiet is the New Loud (Source)
This Norwegian duo melded subzero North Sea melancholy with sunny American pop to produce 2001's most durable example of deceptively light music packing a thumping great emotional punch.

7 SIMIAN
Chemistry Is What We Are (Source)
Their promotional activity — ceremonial-style gigs, artwork out of a taxidermist's nightmare — nearly obscured the fact that this British four-piece's debut is a work of pop genius: psychedelic, dreamlike, harmony-drenched, like a night at the circus orchestrated by a particularly twisted ringmaster.

8 THE CHARLATANS
Wonderland (Universal)
Tim Burgess relocated to California and discovered his falsetto and 1970s soul-funk at the same time. The result is this never-say-die band's most exhilarating album for years, with at least one song, A Man Needs to Be Told, already a bona fide classic.

9 BEACHWOOD SPARKS
Once We Were Trees (Hough Trade)
In a crowded market, this Californian band edged ahead to make the year's best update of drowsy, dreamy West Coast pop, including an audacious reading of Sade's By Your Side.

10 JOHN B
Future Reference (Beta)
Appropriately, for a cellular-biology graduate, this drum'n'bass maverick spots a mad-professor hairstyle. For his latest experiment, John B heats slamming beats, salsa and house over the Bunsen burner, with explosive results. Brilliant.

10 MATTHEW JAY
Draw (Food)
This year's best contender in the (now fashionable again) "sensitive singer-songwriter" category, Jay would fit neatly into the New Acoustic Movement if he wasn't so good at smart, Ray Davies-style pop.



Dan Cairns

ROOTS MANUVA
Run Come Save Me
Big Dada

The Stockwell scamp didn't so much push the Brit hip-hop envelope as rip it up and reassemble the pieces as crazy paving. The result is musically anarchic and lyrically unique: can you name another hip-hop album that namechecks pints of bitter and cheese on toast? The son of a preacher, Rodney Smith, above, is writing his own urban sermon, and the congregation can't get enough.

2 LINN
Stranger on Earth (Atlantic)
This American chanteuse dug deep into the archives to produce an intoxicating mix of Cotton Club jazz, slick R&B grooves and assertive lyrics that blew every other soul diva clean out of the water. Speakeasy listening with a modern twist, and a stunning debut.

3 LOW
Things We Lost in the Fire (Tugboat)
Containing the most angelic and ghostly vocal harmonies of the year, the Minnesotan trio's latest album finessed their hushed, barely breathing guitar music to the point where it became impossible to imagine slow-fi getting any more beautiful or haunting.

