

Unedited Carl Craig Jukebox

- ▣ [Issue #291 \(May 08\) | In Writing](#)
- ▣ **By:** Philip Sherburne | **Featuring:** Carl Craig
- ▣ [Printable version](#)



Photograph by Kai von Rabenau

Read the unedited transcript from Carl Craig's Jukebox interview

Carl Craig Jukebox recorded on January 31, 2008 in Berlin, Germany

Carl Craig may be known as one of Detroit Techno's "second wave" of producers, but probably no other Motor City artist has remained as relevant for as long, in quite as expansive a context. Born in Detroit in 1969, Craig was first exposed to Detroit techno in the late 80s via a cousin that ran the lighting for Jeff Mills. After early collaborations with his "first wave" mentor Derrick May, Craig struck out on his own in the early 90s. Recording as 69, BFC, Psyche, Paperclip People, Tres Demented and under his own name — as well as a slew of other aliases and collaborations — Craig developed an instantly recognizable (and oft imitated, if rarely matched) style, at once lush and economical, bursting and streamlined.

While known principally as a Techno artist, Craig's musical journey hasn't stopped there. The 1992 track "Bug in the Bassbin," recorded by his Innerzone Orchestra, is widely credited as sparking a revolution in breakbeat-based music, while his Detroit Experiment brought together artists from Detroit's jazz and hiphop scenes; more recently Craig recorded with Wendell Harrison, Phil Ranelin, Wendell Harrison and other members of Detroit's fabled jazz label Tribe for an upcoming Techno-jazz fusion project. He also had a hand in Urban Tribe's *The Collapse of Modern Culture*, a groundbreaking downtempo collaboration between Sherard Ingram, Kenny Dixon, Jr. and Anthony "Shake" Shakir, and his one-off projects range from participating in Ricardo Villalobos' improvising laptop collective Narod Niki to performing on

industrial designer Harry Bertolia's sound sculptures.

In the last few years, Craig has redoubled his presence with a stream of remixes that have become nearly ubiquitous in House and Techno clubs across the world. Many of these — for artists like Theo Parrish, Delia Gonzales & Gavin Russom and Rhythm & Sound — are collected on Sessions, a mixed double CD released by K7 in January. His remix of Junior Boys' "Like a Child" was even nominated for a Grammy award. (It lost out to the Italian pop-dance producer Benny Benassi's remix of Public Enemy's "Bring the Noise".)

The Jukebox took place in K7's Berlin offices on the eve of Craig's trip to LA for the Grammy awards ceremony.

Throbbing Gristle

"Walkabout"

FROM 20 JAZZ FUNK GREATS (INDUSTRIAL RECORDS), 1979

[The song plays for several minutes.]

You referenced one of their titles on a 1991 69 record.

This is Throbbing Gristle?

Yeah.

Which song?

"Walkabout," taken from Optimo's mix CD. Was that an explicit reference when you made "Four Jazz Funk Classics"?

Yeah, it was, definitely. I knew of Chris and Cosey from when I started clubbing.

How old were you then?

Like 18. I had an opportunity to go to clubs earlier, so I got to see Jeff Mills play when I was like 15, I was going to clubs watching Jeff play because my cousin was doing lighting for his parties. But when I started clubbing was around 18, and I'd go to goth clubs where they were playing industrial and "Ballroom Blitz" and all that kinda shit. So I knew a bit of Chris and Cosey from there, and SPK and, um, of course Front 242 and that kind of stuff that was happening at the time. I had a very unique opportunity when I first went to London in '89, because when I got off the plane I went with Derrick to play as Rithim is Rithim, to open up for Inner City at the Town and Country club there. I had already befriended Tara Gregory in Detroit, and she was doing makeup for Mark Moore from S-Express. So pretty much right when I got off the plane, I went to a dinner with her and Mark was there and Baby Ford was there and all these guys that you were — because with S-Express, "Lollipop" was a big tune in Detroit, and of course Ford Tracks was huge in Detroit. So that was fantastic. Those guys were on Rhythm King, so I went with Mark over to Rhythm King, and because Mark had carte blanche to have anything he wanted, they let me go into the vaults at Mute, because Mute had the warehouse next door. So they said, "Take whatever you want," and I'm like, "Ok!" And I'm going through and I'm picking stuff out and I see 20 Jazz Funk Greats and I go, "This looks kind of interesting, so let me try some other Throbbing Gristle stuff." So I was just grabbing Throbbing Gristle. The cover was a funny, '60s kind of thing, but I knew it was Mute, I knew what was going on over there so I figured that it might have been just a funny cover. So I took it back, and "Hot on the Heels of Love," I was like, "What the fuck is this? This is amazing!" So I was just converted. I'm one of those guys that, especially coming from Detroit, you can fall in love with one or two tracks from an artist, but if they don't have anything else that you fall in love with, that's it — Ok, I know that artist for this song. And Throbbing Gristle was interesting because some of their stuff had, like, fucking modern noise in it — it was just a record of modern noise. Ok... You know, it's cool that they're experimenting, and it gave me a lot of opportunity to think outside of what I was doing. But at the same time I always came back to that 20 Jazz Funk Greats and, you know, when it was time to make the 69 thing I definitely referenced that.

Kikrokos

"Life's a Jungle"

FROM RON'S EDITS #1 (WHITE LABEL) 1978/2004

[Before the second bar ends:] I don't know who made the original of this, I only know the edit. No, I do! I think I do have a copy of this, but — of the original — but this is a Ron Hardy edit.

I forget what the original is as well, I only have the Hardy edit.

Right, because it's like a serious disco tune but it only breaks down at this part for like a minute and a half or two minutes or something, and it's really a cheesy disco record.

I bought this at Hardwax and it was titled as Ron's Edits, but it's rumored on Discogs.com to be not actually Ron Hardy, but a tribute to him.

It's possibly a guy from Amsterdam that did it, because there's somebody that transcribed Ron Hardy edits and re-did them. Every cut that he made, the guy recreated the cut, exactly how he did it, but with a cleaner version of the record. So he took the vinyl, put it in the computer and cut everything as Ron Hardy did it. So it's very possible that this is his thing, but — there's so many bootlegs flying around that you never know. But with Discogs... Anybody could put information up there, it's like Wikipedia.

Did you ever see Ron Hardy?

Yeah, I went to the Music Box [in Chicago] a couple of times. I mean that whole experience was quite phenomenal, because when I was 13 or so, around the time when "Buffalo Girls" came out and before "Beatbox" came out — I relate everything to musical time — my sister had a boyfriend that was from Hammond, Indiana, which is right on the border with Illinois. And he had these tapes from WBMX. He let me borrow a couple of them, and it was the most amazing shit that I had ever heard in my life. It was like, "Holy crap, this is — I mean, what the fuck is this?" I was already into Yazoo with "Situation," I think that was '82, and all the stuff that was big Detroit records at the time, right before George Kranz' "Din Daa Daa," close to that time. So I had already had an idea of what was going on there, from the radio, but when some friends of mine told me about Ron Hardy, it was like, "Ok, yeah, Chicago, I'll be able to check out WBMX." BMX was still on at the time so we got there, I listened to BMX, fantastic. And then we went to the Box, and the energy was really awesome. I don't remember him as being very wild when he played. I got to meet him, and I think I met Frankie Knuckles at the same time because he came down to the club or whatever. But the energy and the music and what he was doing, you know, really you could hear what Derrick does as a DJ from Ron Hardy. You can really get that impression of how DJs in Chicago play, because he was such a visionary in how he played. I think he had to have been a little crazy.

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What was he using?

Turntables; and everybody had tape decks. So Mike Dunn, when he played the Warehouse and I saw him, he was playing a lot of shit off of reel. I'm sure Frankie Knuckles was playing off of tape as well. Yeah, I remember there was a tape deck in there, and I think he was playing vinyl mostly. But the only way to play his edits, because he was known for his edits as well, was to play them from tape.

The technology seems so ill-suited to DJing, these days.

Yeah, but I used to carry a tape deck with me when I first started playing. It was a Fostex 20, I think — it was what all those guys, Derrick and Kevin and Juan, they were recording all their shit to Fostex 20, and I found one in a pawnshop. A lot of my early shit I was doing with that. I was making these songs, and as I was able to travel as a DJ more, I would just grab the tape deck and take it with me. And I fucked up the spindle for it trying to carry it with me, so that's what stopped me from taking it. It was cool to do. You can't really mix with it, but it was a really cool situation. If it wasn't for those tape decks, I wouldn't edit like I do now.

You learned to edit on tape?

I learned to edit on tape. I learned from Derrick how to, just, splice.

How painstaking was that?

I mean it could be very easy, if you know what you're doing. The issue is how to keep track of what's where. So once you cut something out, if you want to use it later, you have to mark it. So for instance if you're doing something in a computer program and you cut a piece here and a piece there, you can save them to the clipboard or you can cut and paste them into another document, or you can just put it in a playlist if you want. But I cut it like I cut tape, I don't put things in playlists. But you had to know where that fucking tape was, and we're talking, 1200 feet is what a typical tape is. I think a 10-inch reel is 1200 feet, or a seven-inch reel is 1200 feet and a 10-inch reel is 1500 feet. So if you've got, like, 15 minutes of mix, and you're doing 30 inches per second, you're only gonna get 15, 20 minutes on the tape. So you cut it, you're trying to make 30 minutes out of 15 minutes of music, it's just like — you've got, like, five different mixes on there, and there's a piece here that you like, and there's a fuckup so you've gotta find another piece that you like, and you might want to turn it around and change things... It's much easier if you're with a record and you want to repeat something, so you play a part you want to repeat, you push play and you wind it back and play it again... But when you're cutting up shit that's at like three minutes, and you want something that's at 10 minutes, we're talking probably 700 feet of tape that's going past to find what you really want. That's some crazy shit. But I think that the greatest way to learn is to learn in an old way. I don't think that people who don't learn to master vinyl first can be really great mastering engineers, because you don't know the trials and tribulations that you have to go through in order to really master a record the way it should be. Because with vinyl, if the phasing's fucked up, it's not gonna cut, or it'll skip at certain points, you know, or things will get really stupid with it. Where with digital you don't have any of those issues. You can put shit out of phase for, you know, years, and still cut the CD.

Brian Eno & David Byrne
"Number 8 Mix"

FROM MY LIFE IN THE BUSH OF GHOSTS (REISSUE) (2006)

Is this Eno and Hassell?

Eno and Byrne.

Is this from Bush of Ghosts?

Yeah, it's one of the bonus tracks from the reissue. This is another one I chose because of the titling coincidence.

More Songs About Food and Revolutionary Art.

What was the Talking Heads influence for you?

I'm trying to remember if that was the first time I saw the Talking Heads... I believe when I first came across the Talking Heads it was on Saturday Night Live, because I used to stay up and watch it as a kid, so when I first came across the B-52s they did "Planet Claire" on Saturday Night Live. When I first came across Devo they did "Satisfaction"...

Just like Benny Benassi!

Yeah right. I gotta hear that track. King Crimson, they did "Elephant Talk" on there, and I think I saw the Talking Heads there, and that interested me in what they were doing. This day I was going to the record store, I'm at the mall going through records and I see the cover of that and it's like, "Yeah, I know this group's name, and I really like this cover," so either I had five dollars to buy it or I asked my parents to get it for me. I really loved the album. I think I really loved the stiffness of "Take Me to the River." It's like, really quirky music that they were doing. So I was quite impressed and just kept doing it as kids do, you know, listening to shit over and over again. They had a track — I did see them on Saturday Night Live, because there's a track on that album that they played on Saturday Night Live that was great, and I can't remember what that track is. It was the shit, actually. So for years I had always gone back to it, and when it came around that time I was still going through my record collection for inspiration, it's like, yeah, this album. And I'm really into architecture, so the concept of, you know, the music of buildings and food really touches with me. At the time, my ex-wife's father was an art lecturer and writer and painter and stuff, and he wrote the liner notes and the inside information. And his thing is always being quite out, out of the norm. Some of what I had been learning about revolutions in art I was learning from them. So they really influenced where my head was at at the time.

Why did you retitle it The Album Formerly Known As a few years back?

No, that was Landcruising. I renamed that because I mixed it over again and I didn't feel that it should be called Landcruising 2006 or some shit like that. The Album Formerly Known As is a reference to one of my heroes. You know what.

I'm assuming Prince.

Right. And you know, I like coming up with titles that are little inside jokes, so The Album Formerly Known As was just kind of there.

Junior Boys

"Last Exit (Fennesz Remix)"

FROM BIRTHDAY/LAST EXIT (KIN) 2003

[After 30 seconds or so.] **It's a remix of somebody you've remixed as well.**

Is it a remix of the Junior Boys?

Yeah, it's a Fennesz remix from the first EP.

Oh, right.

Obviously the Junior Boys remix has been a big deal; it was nominated for a Grammy. How did you approach the mix? I remember that when I first heard it the vocals and the music almost didn't seem to work together, almost in

**different keys, but the more I heard it, the more sense it started to make.
What was your strategy, going into it?**

To make a hot mix. That's the bottom line. I mean, for what you heard that would be potentially out of tune, the vocals and the music, were things I took directly from them, so the arpeggiator line is their line, and the sample that I play I think I sampled from something from them. So it was all source material. When I work I just feel shit out. Sometimes when I'm feeling it out it doesn't work and sometimes it does work, and sometimes if it is out of tune it's kinda cool if it's out of tune, and sometimes if it's perfectly in tune it sucks. My goal at the end of it was just to make a good product out of it and make it where it wasn't kind of typical — it does have my voice, you can tell it's my style and stuff. But like with the vocals, I manipulated the vocals so that it's almost a Max Headroom technique, so that they repeat and do these little subtle things, not as drastic as putting his voice through some eight-bit thing. Inevitably, my focus at the end of it is to make a hot-ass mix, you know. Anybody's mix that I do, inevitably, is just that it's hot. Doesn't matter, you know, that I'm reading Hunter S. Thompson at the time and I want to make something that sounds druggy, or I'm listening to Jean Michel Jarre and I want to make something like that, just, you know, it is what it is, and I try to do it, and if it comes out not working then I throw it away and try something else.

Your remixes all seem to have a particularly epic style, but also a real sense of restraint, like with the Gavin and Delia remix where there are many minutes before the kick drum ever drops.

I like finding that amount of drama that goes into the mix. It doesn't go necessarily into how I compose it; it goes into how I mix it. So the process is more what comes in that final two-track stereo mix than in how I edit it together. So like with the Delia and Gavin thing, the drama is in the filter changes and the resonance changes, it just kind of goes like you're going up in a roller coaster, and then you get to that point and you go down and it's like that big Moog sound kind of impacts, like, bam! You're doing down. And then you build up again where you're getting even higher. And when the strings hit, it's like, "I didn't realize that strings were even going to come into this shit, I thought it was just going to be an acid track!" Then when the improvised piano, it's just like, "Holy shit, it just came out of nowhere!" And I like that, that I fed all the elements, you're kind of spoon-feeding it. But it's still enough energy that it's really taking the interest level higher and potentially, I would hope that it would inspire goosebumps. [Laughs]

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Were you surprised by the Grammy nomination?

Yeah.

It's your first?

Yeah. I had heard that it was in the running, and that was just like, "Holy shit, it's in the running, that's great!: And then when I saw that it got nominated, you know, that's fantastic. I have a one-out-of-five chance, so... a four-in-five chance of losing. [Laughs.] But whatever it is, it's still a really nice honor.

Does the world of the Grammys feel like a world apart to you?

Yeah, I mean the Grammys are like halfway across the world. I mean, we've got 5000 miles between this, the world I know — the European club scene and everything. The American scene has become so pop-orientated and hip-hop rooted, that best remixes, after Frankie Knuckles won I think they had like Puffy remixes as best remix...

Well, he did invent the remix.

He. Invented. The remix! Yeah. Yeah. I always pay attention to the Grammys and my wife and I watch it and laugh, you know. I remember when ODB took over the mike and said "Wu-Tang's for the children," which is funny as hell. So it was always like this entertaining thing, but to get nominated, it really made me think, like - especially because last year I met Quincy Jones, and that was a big deal for me. That made me remember, and then the Grammy thing, in one of my first interviews I said that I wanted to be like Quincy Jones. To be nominated and to meet Quincy Jones in the same year is just like... [Laughs]

How did you meet him?

We were in Montreux at the festival there, and I know the guy who owns the festival so I asked if it was possible that I could meet him, so he led me back to a sitting area where Quincy was.

Was he aware of your work?

Of course not. His thing, you know, he's always that hip cat. I read an article that he's really a go-to guy in Hollywood to get movies made. He was like, "Yeah, I'm working on a new album, we're gonna have Snoop Doggy Dogg on there"... It made me realize his world too, because his world is — you know, you namedrop as much as you can to hype up people to be interested in your product. "Yeah, it's gonna be the best thing since" — whatever — "when I worked with Sinatra! It's gonna be better than when I worked with Michael Jackson!" I'm like [rolling eyes], "Wow, that's great."

Harry Bertoia

"#1025 Unfolding"

FROM UNFOLDING (P.S.F.) 1993

[After about 10 seconds of an high-pitched, indistinct whine] Bertoia.

That was quick! You worked with his sculptures. What did you use?

Any of them that they had in the local Detroit area. Cranbrook University had an exhibition of Bertoia sculptures, and there are I guess quite a lot in the Detroit area.

He was based there.

He went to Cranbrook and he actually went to Cass Tech high school, so I guess he was maybe not born in the Detroit area but he did go to high school and university there. Rumor has it that he did a lot of the pieces that Charles and Ray Eames get credit for. I don't know how true that is, but they were his professors and mentors, I guess. I don't know if he started making those sculptures when he was at Cranbrook or after he went to Pennsylvania, but there's — we have like Ford executives, the Ford family, all these people that have a boatload of fucking cash, that you would never believe that we had that kind of money in the Detroit area. But capitalism began in Detroit, as Umar Bin Hassan told me, from the Last Poets. He's like, "Capitalism started in Detroit! It started with Henry Ford!"

So Cranbrook has kept a relationship over time with the families of anybody who donates money to the school, or who potentially has some type of connection of that sort, and they were able to bring in maybe about 50 sculptures. I don't know if you've ever seen a Bertoia sculpture. They come in various sizes — the Sonambient ones — and he has these tabletop ones that are in wood, and there are tines that come out, they're like rods. And on the top of the rods there's a thicker piece that goes around it, and they stand like a bell tree, and you just rub your hand across it and it makes this sound. Those are small ones, but then he has these ones that are as tall as the ceiling that look the same or might be in a cluster of rods that just stand real tall. I had to play them with white gloves to make sure I didn't get any oils on them. You just kind of, with the ones that stand up straight, you just kind of twist them and they move in various directions and make these sounds. After I played, there were these old Detroit-money people that were coming up, "I'm so happy to see this happen because the only time these get touched is when the maid is cleaning them." It's that kind of thing — it's just there in the foyer, in the middle of where their spiral staircase is coming down, like Gone With the Wind. It was really quite funny and exciting and amazing. And then the Bertoia records I think are amazing. I was into the records before I played the sculptures. From what I understand he had his barn, and he had it fitted with a microphone that came from the ceiling, and when he built a new piece, he'd record it. So you can get these collections with everything in them.

Did you record your performance?

I did the day after. The idea was to take the recording and add some other shit onto it. But I have never gone back to it. I really need to.

Terry Riley

"You're Nogood"

FROM YOU'RE NOGOOD (ORGAN OF CORTI) 2000

[Two full minutes of slowly ascending drones] If you didn't play Throbbing Gristle already I would have said this was Throbbing Gristle.

It's earlier. It'll either be recognizable or not in a second, when it kicks in. It's a really long intro.

[R&B song finally starts] I don't know this.

It's Terry Riley, "You're Nogood," a tape piece from '67. He took a recording from a sort of sub-Motown group and made a 20-minute edit of it. I wondered if there was any direct influence from classical minimalism on your own work.

Yeah, Steve Reich, but that was later. And Terry Riley, honestly, I don't know his stuff. There's aspects of musique concrete that I really love and that were influential. I mean, I like when there's those kind of weird oscillatory things that happen, I like when there's a revolution that's happening with trying out new ideas and equipment, because at the time of course it was just like, the idea of tape looping, I'm sure people were doing it, but maybe in more of a novelty way. The way that they used modular synths or whatever was to make weird sounds to use for advertisements, or whatever. Versus using it musically or for sound manipulation. But Steve Reich has definitely been somebody that I had my ear to more, and Holger Czukay. I knew the Can stuff before I knew his individual stuff, but like that boat-woman song. It's great.

I had originally heard it on a compilation called Ohm, this American multi-disc set that DJ Spooky gave me. That's when I first discovered a lot of that stuff. Earlier, as a kid, if I came across something that seemed interesting I would try to grab it or try to hear it. But for instance, Switched On Bach, I loved the cover but I never touched it — I never heard it, you know, myself putting on the record, until much later, until after I'd heard the Clockwork Orange soundtrack. Sometimes I'd stumble across something and it just kind of went past me and I'd have to find it later. That's what I love about music anyway, and films and books, you don't have to know it when it was made. You can always discover it later; it's gonna be there. Even better now with many of the reissues, you can find almost anything.

His Name Is Alive

"Happy Blues (Reclouse Remix)"

FROM WRITE MY NAME IN THE GROOVE (4AD) 2001

This Reclouse?

Yeah, he's remixing His Name Is Alive. I was emailing Warn Defever a few days ago asking for a copy of the MP3 because I wanted to play it for you, and he said he'd love to work with you.

He still lives in Livonia?

I don't know, really. So the Reclouse creation myth of him giving you a demo cassette wrapped inside a sandwich from the deli where he worked — is it true?

It's all true.

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Have you been deluged with creative demo deliveries since then?

Everything pales in comparison, to tell you the truth. Man, I think the only way that someone could give me a demo that would be more creative is if they parachuted into my backyard or went through the roof of my house or something.

Careful what you say.

They gotta find me first! No, but that was an amazing experience. My ex-wife and I were rolling from the deli, and we ordered two sandwiches and she's looking through and she's like, "We ordered two sandwiches, right? There's three in here!" Pulls it out, it's got "Demo tape on rye" written on top of the cellophane wrapper, and it was like, "Wow, I gotta listen to this." There's no other option. When you meet somebody that has the inventiveness to do that — I don't know if he'd thought of it the night before or saw me walk in and decided to do it. He probably had the tape already because he knew I was coming in. Anybody who had that inventiveness had to have the imagination to make some good beats.

What was on the tape, did it find its way to the record eventually?

Yeah, one of the tracks was on there, one of them from the first record is on the demo.

Are you in touch with him?

He lives down in New Zealand, and he's got some new material coming up and he asked me to do some mixes. His last album I thought he had some really good stuff on there. I felt that if he would have had a good agency behind him, any time there was a frat-boy scene, they would be playing his track in the back. It's this kind of ska-ish, saxophone kinda thing, I really thought that it could have worked, but unfortunately there wasn't that possibility. But music lives. So it's very possible that that'll be paying for his retirement.

Phil Ranelin

"Vibes from the Tribe"

FROM VIBES FROM THE TRIBE (REISSUE) (HEFTY) 1976/2001

Outerzone. Outerzone Orchestra, Francisco Mora, right? Or not? Sounds just like something Francisco did. Sun Ra?

Detroit...

Is this Marcus?

With Phil Ranelin.

Oh, Phil's thing, all right.

It's "Vibes from the Tribe."

Oh, it's the beginning of "Vibes from the Tribe"! Oh God, I'm so embarrassed. I should have known that one!

You played with them, right?

Yeah. Great guys. [The beat kicks in] Ok, if I would have heard this...

This comes off the re-issue, which has an extended edit of the title track.

I know Prefuse did a mix.

Were you aware of them growing up?

I'm sure that I heard it on jazz radio when I was a kid, but I really didn't come to know their stuff until I was an adult. With "Space Odyssey," I'm sure that was being played when I was a kid, parts of it, because it's kind of long. "Vibes from the Tribe," I wouldn't doubt that it was being played too. But I didn't get acquainted for real with their stuff until the Soul Jazz compilations. I gotta give a lot of credit to those guys over there because they brought a lot of shit to light that a lot of people wouldn't know about. When we were doing The Detroit Experiment, I pulled out "Space Odyssey" and was like, "We gotta do this, we've got Marcus here, we've gotta do this track." It was one of the best tracks I've been involved with and one of the best experiences. I'd been bugging Marcus about doing a Tribe thing for a long time. I had asked him to come out with me to Paris, to do a Paris Live session we were doing at the Pompidou Center. He was on, then he was off. He said he couldn't do it because he had to play — somebody that donates money to his causes was having a wedding for his son, or something, so he had to play that. He said, "I'm sure Wendell will do it." I'm not the hugest fan of the saxophone, or I wasn't until I met Wendell [Harrison]. I wasn't a huge fan of the saxophone — I always thought that it was, you know, always cheesy, that kind of '60s lounge music thing. People have this thing about the saxophone talking to them. Like, "I hear the saxophone and I feel like someone is whispering my ear." People get horny when they hear the sax! It's like, oh God. Get that shit out of here!

Anyway, I wasn't quite sure, but Marcus said Wendell, so let me peep it. So I meet Wendell, and Wendell is really energetic, he's great, and we do these little rehearsals and stuff. Sounds good, he takes out his clarinet, he brings his flute. Wow, this is great. We do the set, and it was amazing! It was unbelievable. And I said, "Wendell, you know, I've been on Marcus for a little while because I want to do a Tribe project." And he's like, "Oh yeah? Let's do it!" And I didn't realize it was Marcus and Wendell, it was their label, they started the label. And it was like, [snaps] having Wendell and saying, "Wendell, let's do something," and he was like, "Yeah, let's do it!" Didn't even have to think twice about it. Because I had known Marcus for three years up to that time, or four years, and all those four years of me talking to Marcus, you know, within a couple of days, I had a Tribe project in the works.

So you've done those Tribe recordings, or they're upcoming?

They're upcoming. We did recordings in January last year and the release will be this year.

And how do you work with live instrumentalists? Are you working as a bandleader? An arranger? Are you sitting back and letting things happen?

I sit back and listen to what they do, and I make suggestions, and sometimes I go and kind of conduct a little bit. There's some tracks that I conduct the dynamics in the room, in comparison to when I have it all on tape. Sometimes, especially with their compositions, they cut their teeth in the '70s, so their compositions can still have that flavor, in a sense. And in some ways it's like, Let's see how we can update it a little bit. Let's see what we can do where I don't have to think about it in the studio to make it sound updated or a little different, let's just nip it in the bud right now. So on some pieces, like "Vibes from the Tribe," we did a new version and it was great. Or "New Day," we did a version of "New Day" and it was like, Oh yeah, this is the shit. It just fits right into the pocket, it's timeless in that situation. And on some other tune, it needs a little more love to be able to bring it into a position that I think that someone who's new to listening to jazz music will say, "Ok, what the fuck is that?"

Electrifying Mojo "Mothership Landing"

SOUND EFFECT FROM 107.5 WGPR (DETROITRADIOFLASHBACKS.NET) FALL 1982

[A squeal of oscillators commences] **I know it sounds like I'm playing you a lot of drones, but it's all for a reason — this one's sort of a trick question. This isn't a song, but a sound effect.**

[Craig shrugs]

It's the Electrifying Mojo's mothership landing.

Oh, really! Well, he was talking most of the time...

The voice would have been a dead giveaway! Were you a card-carrying member?

No, I never had an MFA card. I had enough of him for free. [Laughs] Mojo used to be my lullaby. He was the guy reading the story to me when I was a kid, because I used to have a radio on next to my bed, 10 o'clock, you know, eight years old or whatever, and it was on! I wanted to hear the beginning of Mojo, I had to hear the beginning of Mojo, which was probably late, a late time for someone that's eight years old, ten years old, whatever. But I was like, "I gotta hear Mojo." I think I had heard so much about him anyway and, you know, he was playing the John Williams theme from Star Wars as an intro, then he'd go into maybe playing "Mothership Connection" or "Do You Feel Like We Do," that Peter Frampton track was a big record for us in Detroit. That was hot, 1978 I think when that came out, he was playing that, and he was playing funk shit... When I first heard Kraftwerk was Mojo's show. "Pocket Calculator" was the first time, and I was like [whispering] "What the fuck is this?" That was '81, so I would have to have been 12. Damn, that's some shit right there. Almost anything that became a real influence on me, I either heard it first from Mojo or I heard it mostly on Mojo's show. For instance with Prince, I heard him through my brother, or like the rock stuff that I grew up with, usually I heard from my brother, like Zeppelin. Or even with Peter Frampton. But with Kraftwerk, with "Din Daa Daa" by George Kranz, with Falco, all that European shit. Yazoo — maybe Yazoo I heard somewhere else. But "Planet Rock," all that electronic shit. The first time I heard "Charivari," the first time I heard "Alleys of Your Mind," the first time I heard "Cosmic Cars," first time I heard "Clear," you know, it was all on his show.

Unedited Carl Craig Jukebox

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As you've gotten older and travelled more, do you think that the popularity of some of those songs was unique to Detroit?

From what I understand, "Trans Europe Express" was a big dance tune, it was kind of like a post-disco thing that a lot of urbanites in the U.S. got into, so whether it was in Detroit or New York or Chicago, that was the track. I don't know if there was anything on Robots that did, but definitely "Numbers," that was a breakdance record. Black, white, Hispanic, it didn't matter — if you wanted to breakdance, you knew "Numbers." They even had it on that movie Breakin', "Numbers" — Boogaloo Shrimp, he was dancing with the broom, you know, doing heartbeats and everything. No, it wasn't very specific to Detroit, I think they had the biggest influence on Detroit, but if you heard "Planet Rock," that was "Trans Europe Express" with "Numbers." And that was a year after "Numbers" came out originally, after Computer World came out, so of course after that, when Tour De France came out, it was just like, Oh, Kraftwerk, that shit is incredible!

Hearing "Planet Rock" for the first time, was there something thrilling about hearing aspects of both tunes at once? These days mashups are old hat.

I didn't know "Trans Europe Express" until after the fact. It was WLBS when I first started hearing "Trans Europe Express" so that was '83, probably, and that record came out in '77 or so. I didn't even know, I just knew that it was "Planet Rock," and it was like, "What the fuck is this? It's 'Planet Rock'! Hell no, this shit ain't 'Planet Rock', that's the shit!" No, but what they did was quite revolutionary, because they did something that was typical in the music industry, which was to take a hot record and reinvent it in some way or another, but it was more revolutionary because it opened up the idea for sampling to become prevalent, for people to rap over records that were other people's records, whether it was like Run-DMC rapping over Bob James or what it came to later, what we now know as hip-hop sampling.

Cabaret Voltaire "Crackdown"

FROM LIVE AT THE HACIENDA '83/'86 (Cherry Red) 2002

Cabaret Voltaire.

Again, I chose this in part because you share a title.

"The Crackdown," right? Yeah, Cabaret Voltaire was incredible. Actually "Sensoria" was the one that I really liked. That was actually a hot record in Detroit, when I was about 17 or 18 years old. For the underground crowd, "Sensoria" was the shit. Then there was the soundtrack that they did called Johnny Yesno. That was a great one too. I had found out about Cabaret Voltaire when I was living in Detroit, with "Sensoria," and then that one really stupid album that they had. You know, "White car black house," or some shit like that. It was like, "What the fuck is this shit? This ain't no Sensoria!" But they were bad, they were bad as hell.

I remember seeing them for the first time on Night Flight, a cable video show when I was a kid.

We didn't have Night Flight, we had MV3, which of course was MTV, but the free version. It came on, like, channel 50, those kind of stations. They would show European videos, but it was like four o'clock in the afternoon. Cabaret Voltaire, at the

time the stuff that I was into was them, Severed Heads, a bit of Skinny Puppy around that time, Revolting Cocks, I used to love the Revolting Cocks.

Was the goth/industrial stuff a spillover from Chicago?

Yeah, definitely, Wax Trax was the king of all that stuff. They had the vision to license that Belgian shit, Luke Van Acker and Front 242 and all that stuff. When I started making tracks with Derrick, I wanted to make tracks for Wax Trax. That was like, Derrick was my guy, but the label that I was looking at at that time was Wax Trax. I actually went down to Chicago and took a demo down there and stuff. I should have realized that they weren't into black music, by me walking in. They could have just stamped "No" on my forehead. Everybody's got piercings in their face and shit, and wearing fucking thigh-high Doc Martens platforms. I'm walking in there like, "Oh shit, this is cool, man! This is great!"

And someone at TVT is kicking themselves right now.

Ah, who cares. They do their thing, I do my thing.

Robert Hood

"Side Effect"

FROM HOODMUSIC 3 (MUSIC MAN) 2007

Rob Hood?

Yeah.

I knew it was somebody from the UR camp. Jeff and Rob and Mike were doing a lot of that kind of sound — I think Rob's thing at the time, like the "Gyroscope" record, the "Punisher" record sort of, and then when he went on and did the Hardwax stuff, the early Axis stuff sounded like that to me. I knew it was something of that sort but there's so many phonies out here that it's hard to really tell sometimes. A punchy 909 with some type of... It's just kinda hard these days.

Detroit invented minimal techno, and now there's almost a split between Detroit sensibilities and a newer, European strain. What is minimal techno in 2008?

Honestly... [Laughs] Honestly, if you want to look at what Rob Hood is doing minimally, which is really fantastic — but something like "Acid Trax" was minimal, it's the same thing, you know. But then you can go back even further, I'm sure, and find something else. I think that minimal as we know now is probably Basic Channel, directly derivative of them. Which was of course influenced by Detroit. But for how I hear minimal records, everybody that's doing these cookie-cutter records, they sound like Basic Channel records.

Do you think Minus sounds like Basic Channel?

Minus? I think anything that's got that boom-chik-boom-chik with some filtery things on it is definitely a derivative of that, even if it's just a voice [warbles] like Minus does. That Marc Houle track...

"Why are the vocals pitched down so low..." You've heard that track, right?

No. It just says that throughout the whole song? Holy smokes. Was it a big record?

Yeah, for a minute.

Holy smokes! No, I haven't heard that one. Ok. Wow. Yeah, but, you know, even when Basic Channel started doing their thing it was a mix of what they did as Quadrant and what Jeff was doing with the arpeggiated bass lines. But they just really changed the game. But with Rob and what he does, he's got this movement that happens in his music that is quite phenomenal. A track that I like is "And Then We Made Our Escape," I think it's about a month old or something. It has this kind of thing that moves, you know. And when he has this hi-hat come in, it's like, ok, and then he has this ride, and it really pulls everything out, really opens everything up.

He really has a properly minimal approach in that he's using very few elements. Even for instance Lazy Fat People, who you put out — they're

lumped in with the new-school European minimal sound. Do you consider them in debt to Basic Channel?

Sure, yeah. If you've heard some of Ripperton's remixes, he has some of that sound.

A Number of Names

"Sharevari"

FROM SHAREVARI/SKITSO (QUALITY RECORDS) 1982

[Before the second handclap] "Sharevari."

Did you go to the Charivari parties in Detroit in the '80s?

No, I was too young. I grew up right down the street from Paul Leslie, whose voice is on there, and Sterling, I don't know Sterling's last name, who was a part of the group as well. His voice is on "Skitso," which was the flipside of "Sharevari," the major release that they had on Quality. One thing that's really special about that song, to me, which I think is really important in making a record, is that you can hear the handclap and say, "That's fucking 'Sharevari.'" The same with hearing a James Brown record. That's what makes that track really timeless to me, is that it's got that characteristic that makes it "Sharevari." It's not just the music being played, but the sound that the record is. They didn't have that sound on anything else that they did afterwards, which is very little.

But no, I didn't go to a Charivari party. Derrick probably went, my brother probably went — my brother's older than me — but when they were doing those parties I was probably 13 or something.

By the time you started clubbing had that GQ thing run itself out?

Yeah, the preps and all that had run itself out. I mentioned earlier that I had gone to these clubs where Jeff played; I went to clubs where my cousin did the lighting. He didn't do any of the Charivari stuff, or Preps, or GQ or some of the other ones that they had. I didn't get a chance to experience that. But from what I understand, what was going on, "Sharevari" was influenced definitely by Giorgio Moroder, you know, "The Chase" and "I Feel Love" and stuff because those were hot records. And those records influenced a lot of what happened with Italian disco. Italian disco was really strong in Chicago and Detroit.

They called it "progressive" at the time, right?

We called it "progressive," yeah. So Alexander Robotnick and Klein & MBO, all that kind of stuff. It was huge in Detroit. I got a taste of it from radio mix shows and from listening to Jeff play. But even around that time, Jeff was still playing a little bit more, like, early rap stuff. But yeah, he was playing "Capricorn," which is a huge Detroit and Chicago record — loud-ass 808 drums, crazy shit.

I've been re-reading Dan Sicko's Techno Rebels, so that scene's been on my mind.

I haven't talked to Dan in years!

3MB Feat. Magic Juan Atkins

"4th Quarter"

FROM 3MB FEAT. MAGIC JUAN ATKINS (TRESOR) 1993

You got me on this one. I don't know.

It's 3MB featuring Juan Atkins. Moritz and Fehlmann and Atkins, from 1993.

What's the title?

"4th Quarter."

I think this is one I didn't like. The stuff they did together that I liked is "Jazz Is the Teacher," and then they did another track that... I can't remember what it's called. [Sings riff.] I think it only had a number.

What's your memory of the original Detroit/Berlin connection, and how that came about?

The first that I knew of the whole thing is when I met Mark Ernestus in Detroit. I don't know what the hell he was over there for — maybe to buy records or to meet with Mike and Jeff, but that was the first time that I knew that there was a Berlin/Detroit connection was when that happened, in 1990, I think. And then I came over maybe like at the beginning of 1991 — I think I played somewhere, maybe Tresor or something, I'm not sure. Then it just started becoming this really huge link between Berlin and Detroit. I think it was mainly fueled through Mark and Hardwax and Tresor. Mark is one of my dearest friends, I love him.

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Petre Inspirescu

"Sakadat"

FROM SAKADAT/COLESTEROL (VINYLCLUB) 2007

Who is this, Ricardo [Villalobos]?

No, you're close though.

Lucien [Luciano]?

No. Somebody from the east. Petre Inspirescu.

I don't know him.

There's a new scene coming up in Romania, with Petre, Raresh and Rhadoo.

Yeah, I've heard about Romania doing that style.

Obviously there's been a lot of hype around them, in part because I think people need new places to colonize, they need a new story. But I'm curious about the localism of scenes, and to what extent local scenes are still important, or made irrelevant by the Internet and everybody flying all over the place.

Local scenes are way important! I come from a local scene.

Or maybe not important, but even possible.

Of course, but they've got to be possible. Local scenes are only possible based on the clubs or the parties that people can throw. I think it's great that, like in Belgrade, they throw wonderful parties, it's amazing. In Romania I didn't have a good party, but maybe next time it will be a good one. It's nice to pioneer these new places, but in some of the old places, especially in the U.S., we definitely need that kind of thing to happen at various cities in the U.S., because it's just a bitch that everybody else in the world gets it, and we're so far stuck up our own asses.

Why is that, that America still struggles, even a city like New York?

We go by standards that are based on a country that's as large as Europe, and by people who don't know any better. Our standards are based on religion, and I think the standards over here have other origins, but they're completely over the religion thing in Europe because they've had so many bad experiences over time, in the history of it. And our history is so young and we don't know any fucking better, and we let people living in the backwoods of the United States that are Bible bashers tell us what is right and what's not right. I think America should be divided — it could still be the United States of America, but it could be divided into cultures like the far East, the East Coast, then the South East which includes part of the South, like Atlanta, and the Midwest, and base cultures on that. So instead of having states that are, each state has its own shit, have a country, basically, but the country would be a region. Then it would morph everything into that region. You could still have things that nationally work, because of course within the cultures here, a lot of people look to what happens in the English press. New scenes can pop up and it's interesting. I really feel that there needs to be a reduction of our culture, in some cases within the

United States. It gives the possibility for somebody here, like Luciano or Ricardo to go to Romania and say, "There's something great happening in Romania, let's show you what's going on." Where here in the U.S., it's like, there's something great, how much money you got, and we'll show the rest of the world how great that shit is. It really sucks. It sucks for being able to promote products throughout the U.S. to your own people. It sucks that radio is determined by some fools in New York. It sucks that... all of it. You know, I'm not being unpatriotic, and I'm not saying anything that should lead up to misunderstanding my intentions. But I think that it just doesn't really give our culture an opportunity to grow.

And you put in the effort — you and Gamall do the Demon Days parties across the country.

Sure, yeah. I would love to see Detroit be a pinnacle of the whole shit, I would love for Detroit to be a new city, you know, New Detroit, like in Robocop. To be like a new city with a new attitude, with new ideas, that can be the starting point and the go-to point for everything creative in the United States. But that shit ain't happening. So we just gotta spread the word however we can, and if it's a club for 100 people, that's great, we spread the word to 100 people. If it's a club for 1000 people, even better.

Herbie Hancock

"Nobu"

FROM DEDICATION

[One bar of music plays] Ah, Herbie Hancock. "Nobu," of course.

And also the source for a fairly big dance-club hit right now.

Is that a big record right now, the Radio Slave?

Yeah, though it's not officially credited to Herbie Hancock, it's called "Dedication" in homage. You've done edits, legit edits, so to speak. What are the ethics of edits when you're not explicitly crediting the source?

Everybody's bootlegging everything nowadays. There are no rules from what I can see. Like in the UK, doing edits like this makes a name for you. A lot of guys start out making edits, mashups. But I think that unfortunately in the UK it got to be so much that it gave a lot of people license to take the whole song and recut bootlegs and shit. "Ok, I can't get this record, I'm gonna cut it again." They did that with "Intergalactic Beats", it was done with the remix I did of Theo [Parrish's "Falling Up"]. It got bootlegged pretty badly. To introduce people to music and to give DJs another angle, I think it's great for re-edits and stuff. But it's unfortunate that it's become this license for blatant bootlegging. Of course, the bootlegging on vinyl and the bootlegging on the Internet is almost the same shit, but with vinyl you actually have to pay money to bootleg.

And you stand to make money as well.

You stand to make money, but you have to pay, at least. On the Internet it's just, 'Here, I made a mix'.

Ricardo Villalobos was telling me that his Beck remix was bootlegged in 11 different versions before it came out officially, and one of them was made off a rip from one of his DJ sets; you could hear the mix in and mix out at the beginning and end of the record.

Anything's possible these days. People even go on YouTube and start cutting it from the headphone outs, putting it on disk and sending it to a mastering lab, you know?

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Narod Niki
"Untitled"

FROM POST OFFICE 2 (TELEGRAPH) 2004

Speaking of live recordings, this was recorded live.

Henrik Schwarz.

There's more than one person... It's Narod Niki.

Oh, it's Narod Niki!

It's the hidden track at the end of the Post Office compilation on Telegraph.

What set is this?

The first one, at MUTEK, from back in 2003 or 2004.

I was only involved in the one at Montreux. It was fantastic. The idea of putting six or eight guys together with laptops, and to actually make it happen at something like Montreux, is a big feat. It was interesting to see how the crowd responded, it was interesting to see how they just kind of kept the mood pretty up. What I tried to offer was something that was maybe an alternative to it being like, beats and everything else. So I'd make sequences up as we were going on, or play strings, or whatever, on a laptop and a controller. I don't even think I had effects, I tried to keep it as simple as I could. It was like another world for me. It's definitely something that I can see is possible for others to take that idea and go further.

How long did you play for?

I think three hours? It was a long time.

Horsepower Productions
"Gorgon Sound"

FROM GORGON SOUND/TRIPLE 7 (TEMPA) 2000

I don't know this one.

It's Horsepower Productions, from the Tempa label — the first wave of Dubstep. I chose it in part because although it's mostly dub based, I can hear something Detroitish in their harmonic sensibilities. Do you follow Dubstep?

Not actively, no. I had this really intense conversation with a guy at Rush Hour records in Amsterdam, a guy that was shopping there. He was almost, he was trying to force me to like Dubstep. You know, to just — to just tell him that I thought it was amazing. I was like, "I don't even know!" I know what Dubstep is but I don't know much of the music. He's like, "Ok, listen to this!" And the track that he played was a really boring dub reggae-ish record. Dub is great for three minutes each track. But 10 minutes, it's like, what the fuck is this? I like music. I don't care if it's Techno or House or dub reggae or Trance... Ok, I do kinda there. But if it's a good track, that's what I'm interested in. I don't care what style it is. If fucking Britney Spears makes a track that's good, I'm gonna like it.

If you win this Grammy you'll be remixing her stuff. Well, if she makes any more music, which is another question.

Mmm, maybe. If she got a hundred grand! [Laughs]

I saw Skream last night, and it reminded me of the power of a good DJ, simply because I don't know the genre inside and out, and he made sense of it, made it sound really fresh and varied. When you don't know a genre, you need a DJ to act as a guide. It's a cliché, but Skream really told a story.

I haven't heard him play before. And what Diplo does is considered what?

Diplo is sort of related to the next track, so I'll play it anyway.

I played with him before, and he plays really electro-y, like old-school electro. At least that set was. I know that stuff that he did for M.I.A.

**Ghislain Poirier
"Blazin' feat. Face-T (Modeselektor Remix)"
FROM INTERNET RELEASE (BIG DADA) 2008**

These are Germans remixing a guy from Montreal.

Who is it?

Modeselektor remixing Ghislain Poirier.

Ok.

This seems to be a new mode of post-Techno, sort of what Diplo is doing: an omnivorous free-for-all, everyone putting their beats up online and remixing everybody else.

[Virtual silence from Craig]

Let's see what else I have here, it'd be nice to play some kind of closing cut.

Play some Santana or something.

I don't have any Santana.

What?!

I'll go out on this...

**Root 70
"Destination Unknown"
FROM HEAPS DUB (NONPLACE) 2007**

Who's this?

It's Root 70, a German jazz quartet doing cover versions of Burnt Friedman. Then he took their sessions and re-edited them, in a kind of round-robin. I chose it mainly for the trombones, thinking of the Rhythm & Sound remixes. Tell me about how you did yours?

Yeah, it was coming close to the time to finish it, and I needed to finish it, and I had let Kenny Larkin use my studio because he's recording an album for my label. He lives in LA so he was only in Detroit for a short time, and I was like, "Ok, Kenny, I really need to use the studio." I had already done some pre-production for it so I went into the studio and knocked it out real quick. It was one of the quickest mixes that I had done in a long time. With the quickness comes spontaneity. But again, I don't read a book and think that I'm gonna make a track that sounds like it, it's just what I got from the inspiration. It was like me making Techno reggae, or me making Techno dub or some sort. That's how I interpreted it, and that's what it became. It was a great time to do it, and Mark and Moritz, I love those guys, they're really great friends. It was a good collaboration, definitely. I'm glad that they asked me to do it because that

mix would probably never have gone to anything else. It's one of those things, right place at the right time.

Are you going to see Moritz tomorrow?

I have to leave tomorrow [to the Grammys ceremony].

I think that's all I've got – thanks so much for your time.

Ok! Now I'll plug my iPod in and test you.

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