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IN DAYS OF YORE...

Andy Vaz' BACKGROUND is over the past 10 years the more leftfield-orientated answer to Cologne's Techno mainstream. A Minimal Techno label that has been always true to its cultural background like the featured artists from all over the globe – remarkable and individual sound designers and innovators. The label's name literally emphasises the label's focus. With Alessandro Vaccaro (Persistencebit), Andy Vaz has launched the new label YORE that has experienced already an amazing kickoff with its first three releases. Again the meaning of the label's name, here in the context of 'In days of yore...', makes it clear: YORE glances at the good old times of House and Techno. Less futuristic, rather reminiscent. The alternative to the overwhelming flood of so-called minimal sound with the label's intention to 'bring back the soulfulness and deepness that this music so desperately needs...'

In other words Yore turns to the past and away from the present... After 20 years of Techno I don't see much innovation. We face a real boom of 'Minimal' labels but I don't really understand the motivation or musical language behind most of these labels. Mostly they sound very similar. The artists often lack their own trademark or style. YORE isn't per se an old-school label although the first three releases seem to give such a strong impression. Timelessness and the artist's own style is by far more important to me than the term 'old-school'. I think so far we succeeded in achieving that. You should be able to tell who's sound you're listening to. Like you can tell that the label's first release is beyond doubt Todd Sines aka Xtrak. The stuff is almost 13 years old but nevertheless fresh and up-to-date. That same timeless feel you got with Rick Wade and Terrence Dixon. Wade sounds like Wade and Dixon incomparably futuristic. We don't want arbitrary music. There's enough of that in today's 'minimal' scene. But I don't mean to criticise today's electronic music in general. Of course there are loads of great artists and labels. No doubt. YORE emerged from the positive motivation to offer another sound alternative, that interests especially me very much. I always look for what I'm into at the moment. That concerns all my label activities. 2007 it's raw and classic House and techno. Actually I always had that affinity. With BACKGROUND I've already fed on old-school records and always followed what Detroit was up to. In the last 10 years I bought more Detroit House records than I've ever listened to Clicks'n'Cuts sound. So basically nothing new.

You've actually proven a similar motivation with BACKGROUND Records. Yet the focus was more Minimal Techno... True! BACKGROUND has from the very beginning focused on Minimal Techno and always been forward-turned over the past 10 years. Long time before the term 'minimal' has become a pseudonym or even a genre with its many subgenres. For BACKGROUND the independent personality of an artist has always been significant combined with the effort to create a global blueprint for Minimal Techno: different artists with different urbane and cultural backgrounds dealing with minimalistic sound design and new music technology together on one label. Artists from all over the globe – Detroit, Canada, Mexico, South Africa, Australia and many more – met on BACKGROUND to interpret musically their origins and socialisation. Now the time has come however, that my interest lies more in classic House and Techno again. As I mentioned before, that doesn't go against my musical socialisation with electronic music. From the very beginning I've constantly followed the classic House and Techno trends from Detroit and Chicago, not only in the last few years. So besides modern Clicks'n'Cuts sound, I was always hooked on Trax, Mr. Fingers, Adonis and that kind of stuff. The one doesn't exclude the other. I mean, how?! Without early House and Techno?! There wouldn't be such thing as Minimal Techno! VAZBIT for instance shows very well what I'm into at the moment. Since VAZBIT is a sublabel only for my productions, you can tell what I'm hooked on: my music sounds more classic and is even more House than ever before. Besides I've just started to produce semi-analogue again and upgrade my studio. In fact with the intention to produce hopefully soon an album without any digital software. That's my focus right now. So my work with YORE goes hand in hand with my work as a producer.

Regarding the first three releases, YORE seems to focus mainly on 'old-school' production. Sort of refusing digital software as far as possible to bring that 'soulfulness' of classic old-school sound as authentic as possible on vinyl... Not at all! Even if I'm starting to produce mainly analogue, it doesn't mean it's a significant maxim for the label. I don't care how someone produces, if he/she is well-known or not or if the tracks are old or new. What counts is if the artist has something significant to say and if the record will last over the years. YORE stands for old-school – no doubt. But let's not overrate that. We want timeless music. That's that!

You've previously released the 'Humanization EP' which is catalogued as YORE004. But what about YORE003? And what comes next? YORE003 is the Terrence Dixon album 'Tain Of Thought' that will be released in September after the summer break. So we decided to release another EP before the album. Coming up next another EP by Rick Wade and then the first Xtrak album!

How did the collaborations with artists from overseas come about? I mean, YORE saw literally the 'Return Of Xtrak' aka Todd Sines with a killer first release. Then Deep House vet Rick Wade and soon Detroit Minimalist Terrence Dixon... I worked already in the mid-90ies with all the artists on my different labels. Terrence Dixon marked the beginning of BACKGROUND with the first release followed by Todd Sines and Rick Wade did the first record on ATC [A TOUCH OF CLASS – sublabel of BACKGROUND].

It seems that YORE has been reanimating so far, rather than reinterpret... I don't know. Probably as well as. But we will see as the label develops more. Still young and I can't really tell so far. It's important to say though that YORE doesn't count exclusively on old and famous acts. It might seem like that at the moment but we will explicitly look for newcomers. Definitely! We're not intending to reanimate legends. We wanna create a wide basis for classic House and Techno.

Tell us a little bit about your own approach to music writing and production. It's true, your latest records sound pretty analogue... Currently I'm hooked on analogue drum machines. Synchronising the RZ1, TB-606, MFB-502 in order to create grooves that my computer hasn't spat out so far. The same with my TB-303 which makes a lot of fun and besides it's used in my live sets. Basically I wanna have fun producing music which is definitely guaranteed with analogue machines. I think you can tell with my records.

In 'One For Charity' on your 'Humanization EP' it says 'Style is the answer to everything...'. What's style to you? That's a difficult one. I think, I won't be able to answer this question without repeating myself over and over. But I'd say the artists distinctive trademark is the artists style. Rick Wade-style, Todd Sines-style, Terrence Dixon-style, Andy Vaz-style. Yeah!

Andy Vaz' 'Humanization' EP previously released and Terrence Dixon's 'Train Of Thought' LP due in September – both on YORE.

By Peyman Farahani

LINKS & BACKGROUND

> www.yore-records.com

YORE RECORD LABEL