

# DJ

**DJ MAG™**

LIVING & BREATHING DANCE MUSIC!  
DJMAG.COM

**BEST OF BRITISH  
AWARDS SPECIAL**  
All the winners profiled

## Patrick Topping

Never misses  
a Trick

**INSIDE:**

ONES TO WATCH IN 2023 / ON THE ROAD WITH SYREETA / MOVING ON UP TO WATERGATE  
DUTCH HOUSE DUO ANOTR KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY & LOTS MORE

No.637 January 2023 £6.95



01



## Album of the Month



Pic: MARIE STAGGAT

## Fred P

### States Of Bliss

Private Society

#### Mindful magic

**FRED P** has some bold ambitions for his latest album, 'States Of Bliss'. It is his third in a year — which is ambitious in itself — and one he describes as “a collection of musical imaginations that truly inspire one to actions of positivity and balance”. Big claims for sure, but if anyone’s music can make us question and better ourselves, it’s the mystic depths and serene spirituality of this famously low-key New Yorker.

Peterkin has been based in Berlin for a decade now. Although it’s a place known for serious techno and bleak winters, the city has done nothing to dilute the sheer beauty and romance of his productions. As a DJ, Fred cuts loose into anything from gospel to tribal to Latin house. And in the studio he has occasionally veered into more crisp tech and outer space techno, such as on 2021’s ‘Reminiscent Era’. But even if the arrangements become more stripped back and the drums more physical, the moods remain resolutely heady.

His two previous albums in the last 12 months (‘Abstract Soul’ and ‘Oasis’) have been

explorations of the deep using broken beat, ambient and house as rhythmic vehicles to transport you in on yourself, as well as out to the farthest corners of the cosmos. ‘States Of Bliss’, though, feels like the most complete of the three. It’s expansive in style, but unified by an emotional narrative that mirrors the ups and downs of everyday life. In the artist’s case, that’s often defined by the rigours of international travel. Hours spent in the grey areas between being awake and being asleep, early morning rises and late night dances. In hotel rooms, on planes, then back home at the studio in Berlin where he now takes care of everything from production to mastering via the final mixdown.

Fans of Fred’s gorgeously ornate work as Black Jazz Consortium will soon warm to the tracks here. ‘In The Flow’ kicks off with the playful feel of a Friday night full of promise and potential. The kick-drums are excited and peppered with lively percussion as a Cassy vocal sample swirls about the mix and a lush synth solo lights up the second half. The slightly darker ‘Art Life (Tribal Dub)’ is

bittersweet — you’re still dancing but you know sunrise is just around the corner and the party will soon end. Fear not, however, because the life-affirming chords of ‘Elevated States’ warm you through like a rush of dopamine, and the restorative jazz-funk of ‘Live Your Way’ reaches out a hand to gently lead you back to the dancefloor where irresistible broken beats await.

Fred’s signature synth work features on every track here, but it comes fully to the fore across the painterly pads of ‘River’, ambient-jungle-jazz of ‘NY’ (which was actually recorded a decade ago), and in the celestial suspense of ‘Awakening Desire’. At times it’s bright and crystalline, cutting through the haze to awaken a different sense. At others it’s smeared, smudged and blurry-edged like a psychedelic dream. Either way, there is both heart and art in what you hear.

Following those roomy and ruminative cuts, ‘High Fusion’ brings back the good times with mellifluous jazz-funk that bubbles with busily plucked bass and expressive keys that Sun-Ra would surely admire. It all adds up to an album that reiterates what we already know about Fred P: he’s a thinker, a dreamer and a fantasist. His fantasy, though, is rooted in the belief that music is a healer. In the case of ‘States Of Bliss,’ he’s not wrong.

**KRISTAN J CARYL**



## Scott Garcia

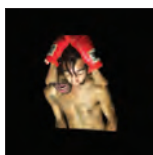
XXV

Loud Music

**Undefinably Killer Garcia**

Here's to 25 years of Scott Garcia, who in 'It's A London Thing' gave us the second ever UK garage tune to break the charts (after Kelly G's remix of 'Never Gonna Let You Go', and just before Roy Davis Jr and Peven Everett's 'Gabriel'). This celebratory album is 30 tracks — two and a half hours — of sumptuous UKG, marking the genre's first quarter-century. Garcia's garage is broad, hard and not limited by the form: forays into grime like the instrumental 'Sovereign' and 'Epic' with frequent sparring partner Sticky hit the same sweet-spot as his better known classics. But then there's the classics themselves: 'Modern Love (Dub)', 'C'mon C'mon (feat. Filo)', 'How Much Gal? (feat. Mr. Bigshot)' and the Bel Biv DeVoe flip 'Poison' — sheer perfection. Special shout for Corrupted Cru's 'We The Girls Want', on which Garcia makes positively phat use of Erik Satie's 'Gymnopédie 1'. Quality.

**SAM DAVIES**



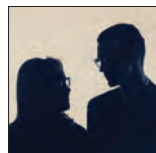
## Velvet Negroni

Bulli

4AD

**Distorted pop**

Velvet Negroni was an African-American kid from Minneapolis adopted and raised by a strict white evangelical Christian family. His first mixtape 'T.C.O.D.', from 2017, was sampled by Kanye West and Kid Cudi on the Kids See Ghosts song 'Feel The Love', his debut album 'Neon Brown' (2019) was a brilliant, sexy, somnambulant mess of dub, R&B and pop, that sounded like a cross between Blood Orange and Vampire Weekend. But then things went sour; he started using drugs again "in a negative manner" and his house burned down, wrecking his equipment. In truth, his second album 'Bulli' is nowhere near as good as its predecessor, nowhere near as catchy, melodic or weird. But there are highlights — like 'The Foreigner', which delights in shadowy guitar as it creeps along in 3/4, and closer 'Sub Tieties', a ricocheting head party with shades of Jai Paul. **SAM DAVIES**



## Tomas Hallonsten

Monolog

Thanatosis Produktion

**Internal affairs**

Tomas Hallonsten spent lockdown playing with himself. So to speak. A serial collaborator on Sweden's jazz and experimental scenes, the trumpeter used enforced isolation to down his horn and pick up a drum machine, improvising over its rhythms with Hammond organ and antique synths to get as close to the feel of a live band jamming as he could, 'Monolog' being the utterly wonderful result. Hallonsten has Jimi Tenor's knack of flirting with kitsch and creating oddball springy funk on the likes of 'Earth' and 'Go Ashram Go', the latter ending with a beautiful piano part worthy of Ryuichi Sakamoto. Most charming of all is his winning way with melodies, best displayed on 'In Clouds (Pt.1)' with its irresistibly hummable vocal refrain: a veritable cherry atop an album as indulgently fun to listen to as it feels like it was to make. **PAUL CLARKE**



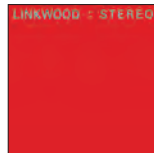
## Kiji Suedo

Riot

Hobbes Music

**Detroit groove glitches**

Kiji Suedo may be a new name to most, but his debut album is set to cause a big stir. The artist, based in Osaka, Japan, makes house and techno indebted to Detroit producers like Theo Parrish and Rick Wilhite, but adds his own somewhat skewed experimental edge, resulting in a singular sound. If opener 'Refuser' has the swung bump and funk of a discombobulated Detroit Beatdown track, then 'Drifter' is closer in style to the early 2000s glitch rhythms of Jan Jelinek or Vladislav Delay. On 'Guardian', the slow 4/4 kicks dissolve into submerged synths, before coming back to the fore, accompanied by mysterious smears of double bass, distant pads and weird effects. 'Riot' is designed more for headphones than the club, but Suedo's assiduous and subtle deconstructions of dance rhythms are a real delight for the ear. **BEN MURPHY**



## Linkwood

Stereo

Athens Of The North

**Low-key electro-funk**

Edinburgh DJ and producer Nick Moore adopted the Linkwood name in the early 2000s, releasing low-profile EPs and albums through Firecracker, Prime Numbers and his own Night Theatre label that have become cult classics. More recently, he's hooked up with Athens Of The North, and leaned further into the boogie and synth-funk influences that were discernible in his earlier work. While 2021's 'Mono' LP fizzed with neon-bright electro energies, follow-up 'Stereo' is fittingly more expansive and expressive. The gorgeous 'Joystick' is all warm analogue bass, crispy, swung drums and wistful drifts of electronic melody, while the pensive, lo-fi 'RunStop' sounds like a lost '80s electro-disco gem. Maybe best of all is 'We Had A Love', with its laconic vocal snippet and swooning synths. Landing somewhere between Morgan Geist and Dâm-Funk, 'Stereo' is a retro-futurist joy. **BEN MURPHY**



## Toh Imago

Refuge

InFiné Music

**Forest bathing and raving**

What does life on the edge of a forest sound like? Probably quite a lot like the second album from French producer Toh Imago, who recorded 'Refuge' on the borders of the Forest of Mormal in northern France, as a way of reconnecting with nature. There's plenty of sonic introspection and woodland field recordings, but 'Refuge' still has some great beats and tough grooves on it, albeit presented in a fairly experimental format. There are also drifts into industrial soundscapes, techno-traversing tracks — like the frenetic 'Cosmos Intra' — and a whole lot of ambient electronica, such as on the luscious 'Komorebi'. Some of the more mechanical moments echo parts of the producer's first album, 'Nord Noir', but while that record offered a more easy-going air and immediate appeal, 'Refuge' goes deeper and requires a little more attention — it provides greater rewards, too. **TRISTAN PARKER**



## Bandler Ching

Coaxial

Sdban Ultra

**Strange summery jazz**

Right as the first Covid winter was rearing its head, a strange record arrived from Belgium. A blend of St. Germain, improvisatory jazz, and Bristolian trip-hop bass weight, Chandler Bing's debut 12-inch was just what the doctor ordered as days got shorter, nights longer, and the pandemic felt endless. Fast forward two years and the quartet returns with 'Coaxial', an LP that keeps the loose, improvisatory structure of their debut, but gets weirder. On 'Awpi!', for example, they add synthpop beats with a broken melody to turn out a strange chugger that Lena Willikens might play. On 'RoodGroen' they channel Low End Theory beat science, while the skeletal synth pulses on 'Delice' give a hint of UK techno menace. But the band's focus remains on vibrant soundscapes made for dreaming of warmer weather. So put on 'You Have Got Me', get out the SAD lamp, and fashion a cocktail. **HENRY IVRY**



## Mahkina

Sagittarius A

Diffuse Reality

**Mexican head therapy**

Mahkina is (slightly) better known as Alex Aguayo, a techno producer from Salamanca, in Mexico. 'Sagittarius A', Aguayo's first album under this guise, sounds much like you'd imagine from the alias, which is a Spanish word — albeit misspelt — for 'machine'. This is unabashed smoke-machine trance, fixed into gridlike 4/4 with robotic precision. If you like that sort of thing, and fair enough if you do, there's lots of B.I.G. moments here fit for beachside sunsets, like 'Dark Matter' and the acidic 'Milla'. But Aguayo really comes into his own when he lets humanity creep in, like on opener 'Event Horizon', which blossoms on the introduction of a dreamy vocal. Best of all is 'Mind Games', which burbles like B12 (in a good way) until a technicolour breakdown that will make your eyes swirl: think Homer Simpson on ayahuasca. **SAM DAVIES**



### Giant Swan

Fantasy Food

KECK

**Nice swan**

As at home playing Berghain as they are supporting The Horrors, Bristol's Giant Swan return with their chunky analogue take on quirky industrial-tinged techno.

Cut-up and digitally mangled vocal tics texture punchy opener 'Sugar & Air' as well as the bumpy 'Abacuses', which arrives from the Super Hans school of "creating a powerful sense of dread". The beatless title track exudes a similar foreboding, sleepless, teeth-grinding ambient. 'Boasting' dives down a wormhole and pops up in a k-hole, circa 2007, wonky minimalism harking back to the heady, hedonistic days of the Berlin-East London afterparty axis. And 'RRR+1' ups the tempo to a speedy 150, a peak-timer that fizzles with white noise, a chopped, monosyllabic utterance serving as its hook. Liquidators of bland business techno, Giant Swan go about it with all the menace of their supersized avian namesake. **JOE ROBERTS**



### Fågelle

Den svenska vreden

Medication Time Records

**Anger management**

'Den svenska vreden' means 'the Swedish rage' in English, yet Fågelle's second album isn't about the frustration of trying to assemble flatpack furniture from IKEA. Indeed, 'Den svenska vreden' is the artist's attempt to challenge the stereotypes surrounding her homeland, particularly the notion that Swedes suppress their feelings rather than letting rip with their emotions. But while you might expect this to sound like an ear-splitting roar of righteous fury, what's often most striking about the album is its sense of fragility, most apparently in the artist's Björk-like vocals, but also in 'Slavar's delicate chiming electronics; 'Ingenting' could almost be a Scandinavian Cocteau Twins. The music does rise from a sigh to scream with the electronic shrieks and distorted rhythms of the title track and 'Jag går när jag är klar', but overall 'Den svenska vreden' feels much more cathartic than chaotic. **PAUL CLARKE**



### The Mole

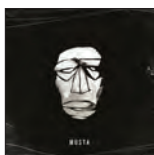
The River Widens

Circus Company

**Water flowing underground**

The reissue of a cassette-only album released in 2021, The Mole's 'The River Widens' shines a light on the Canadian-born producer's ability to blend disparate influences and conjure evocative moods.

Set across 21 tracks, vocal samples woven throughout meditate on the meaning of art and music. Track titles, meanwhile, such as 'Ducklings 2', a sombre Rhodes-led shuffler, 'Ambient Jams 3', chugging along under a cloud of swirling psyche, and 'XMods In The Living Room', bassy, melancholic synthwave, add to the feeling that these vignettes are postcards from a world that's alive and in constant process. The Mole's love of hip-hop is evident on the jazz-meets-bass of 'Jo Barker', and the old-school title meets new-school glitchiness of 'Tricky Dees Dumm Dumm'. And by following the tape's embrace of brevity, this river's waters glisten with an ever-flowing stream of feelings and ideas. **JOE ROBERTS**



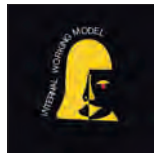
### Musta

Tamburi Parlanti

Goody Music

**Italo-Afro par excellence**

Previously showing out for the likes of Yam Who?'s Midnight Riot imprint and Rome's Samosa Records, Italian producer Musta spent more than a decade living in the Dominican Republic, so this brief but decisive six-track mini album — the title translating as 'talking drum' — has absorbed more than a few of those complex Afro-Caribbean polyrhythms. The production here simply glistens: acres of space, kick-drums with a heavyweight gut punch and layers of hypnotic percussion for days and days, notably on 'Where Is Juanito', a minimal Balearic terrace jam, and the moody 'Timido'. But where Musta truly excels is on the deep, rolling funk of 'Guasa', a sun-soaked, understated party cut, and title track 'Tamburi parlanti', with its looped up Afrobeats accented with blasts of brass. 'Alghero solare', a tribute to his Sardinian homeland, thick with Rhodes chords and synth wigouts, is also an absolute jam. **BEN ARNOLD**



### Liela Moss

Internal Working Model

Bella Union

**Political party**

"If you're going to deconstruct the modern psyche," Liela Moss once said, "you might as well dance to it." It's a sentiment that rings truer than ever on the London-born frontwoman's third solo project, 'Internal Working Model', which has pontificated on the state of the world, mused about the power of nature, and dismantled surveillance capitalism all by track three. Since untethering herself from the Duke Spirit and making mates with some of electro-rock's biggest innovators including Gary Numan, Jehnny Beth and the modular synth (all of whom feature on the record), Moss has been edging towards a more vigorous electronic pulse. 'Vanishing Shadows' finds her silvery vocals decisively leading the way over fractious synth backdrops, while more mellow melters like 'New Day' are fuelled by the force of her questioning insights. This is Moss at her most switched-on. **OLIVIA STOCK**



### Marcel Dettmann

Fear Of Programming

Dekmantel

**Ich bin ein Berliner**

As resident at the world's most underground club that even your gran has heard of — "Is that the one with the industrial techno and sex people I read about in The Telegraph, dear?" — Berghain looms large over Marcel Dettmann's career. And it's in those shadows that most of the German DJ and producer's new album is content to dwell. Tracks like the throbbing 'Tone', pounding 'Renewal Theory' or grinding '(Batteries Not Included)' are clearly tailored to fuel 48-hour raves in sweaty leather, and Dettmann is obviously most at ease operating within those parameters. Some of the ambient tracks are OK, and 'Reverse Dreams' is a decent stab at Barker-style beatless dynamics, but if 'Fear Of Programming' actually was Berghain you'd hope Ryan Elliott would get turned away at the door so he couldn't ruin 'Water' with some utterly atrocious lyrics. **PAUL CLARKE**



### Rian Treanor & Ocen James

Saccades

Nyege Nyege Tapes

**Fiddle frequencies**

Conceived during the same Nyege Nyege residency in Kampala that produced his last album, 'Saccades' sees Rian Treanor collaborate with Acholi fiddle player Ocen James in a union of traditional and electronic sounds. While Treanor mined the hyperactive rhythms of singeli on his 2020 effort, with James he hones in on timbres and sound palettes. James's improvisatory fiddling guides Treanor's approach to texture on tracks like 'The Dead Centre', a repeated string melody expanding kaleidoscopically via phase shifts, chimes and synth. On 'Memory Pressure' Treanor explores the Ugandan tonal system through angular melodies inspired by the a'dungu, an arched harp. Experiments with the contours of sound are fully realised on 'Tiyo Ki', interrupting his rhythmic fury with computer-aided investigations of the fiddle's spectral qualities. **JAMES GUI**



### South Beach Recycling

Obsessive Compulsive Disco

SFSB Recordings

**A sleeper house gem**

From their irreverent choice of moniker to the lack of social networking hype, the South Beach Recycling collective recall a certain early-rave mentality, where anonymous purveyors kept behind the decks to just let the music speak for itself. This attitude extends to their debut album, which they appear reluctant to even say too much about. But it's a quiet confidence that makes sense after hearing 'Obsessive Compulsive Disco', which features some of the richest, most transcendent house music released all year. Starting in funkier terrain, it's not long before they've steered into deeper territory and then, before you know it, things have gotten downright hypnotic. Cuts like 'Total No Recall' entrance effortlessly, and while there's not a lot that will sound unfamiliar to lovers of deep house, together they're channelling what feels like a godlike understanding of the form. Not to be slept on. **ANGUS PATERSON**



## Compilation of the Month



Pic: SAVANA, BALI



### V/A

Aluku Records Various Compilation  
SA Edition Pt. 3.1 (B-Side)

*Aluku Records*

**Future Afro House**

**IT'S BEEN** a big couple of years for South African dance music. Genres like gqom and amapiano have grown from townships into global juggernauts. Afro house has also gained its rightful recognition, with stars like Culoe De Song and Lemon & Herb bringing their hybrid blends of all things deep and traditional to larger international followings.

Documenting this global ascendancy for nearly a decade has been Aluku Records. The label's focus has always been on the underground, bringing together rising stars and established heroes from across the African continent. But if the label has slipped under your radar, their latest release, 'SA Edition Pt. 3.1 (B-Side)', is a good introduction.

House in its broadest sense is key to understanding this record. While there is plenty of traditional Afro house, the compilation touches on the muted shades of deep house, the soul-searching wander of progressive house, plenty of tech-house, and even the occasional throwback to more ambient-adjacent sounds. In fact, some of the best moments are where the

label pushes the genre into conversation with others.

If you took the drums out of EyeRonik's 'Fairy's & Crystals', for example, its lush bird song and wandering synthline wouldn't be out of place on an old Warp record. 'Bantu's Dreams', another album standout, is like a slowed '90s progressive house track with its warbly bassline and skipping drumline. The lethargic deep house shuffle and whimsical guitar line of 'Watsha', on the other hand, is tailor-made for an Ibiza sunrise.

Other highlights from the album build on this hybridity, flirting with contemporary tech-house tropes. Many of the album's tracks fall somewhere between the drama and tension of Innervisions, the bite and growl of DJ Lag and the heavier end of the South African electronic music spectrum. Take Bun Xapa's 'Space Invasion' and Celestial Soul and Knight Warrior's 'Midnight'. Both are centered around a pulsing series of synths that can't quite shake the feeling of unease. On Xapa's contribution, the track climaxes with muffled chanting and sharp drum hits.

While 'Midnight' builds into a champagne-spraying series of arpeggiated chords, the synthline low in the mix seems to forewarn of tomorrow's hangover.

If you are in need of some more vintage flavourings of Afro house, the album has also got you covered. The genre has been fusing complex and syncopated rhythms with emotionally charged melodies for a while now and these feature heavily on the compilation, where the rhythms — on even what might appear as fairly straightforward tracks otherwise — butterfly into complex and intricate patterns. Celso Fabbri's 'Rhythm Section', for example, is built over a straight four-four pattern, but he then layers competing hand-drum lines and a xylophone-like melody. Elsewhere, the drums are even denser. A whirlpool of hand-drums take over 'Hunter's Moon', morphing the track into a frenetic whirlpool of rhythm. Rolling and syncopated tempos threaten to derail the four-four swing of 'Preach' every few bars.

Speaking about the release, label founder Aluku Rebels described a continual frustration with music coming out of Africa as being labeled de facto Afro house. What he wanted to do with this most recent compilation was showcase the diversity of sounds being made in South Africa. 'SA Edition Pt. 3.1 (B-Side)' does just that, paying homage to the genre's legacy while also pushing it forward.

**HENRY IVRY**



## PLUTO Sound INFINITY

PLUTO Sound

**Eastern European electronics**

Take a walk through a corner of the Hungarian club scene with this compilation from Budapest-based label PLUTO Sound, which aims to shine a light on some of the country's most exciting upcoming producers. Things kick off very positively with IDM from oneeyedman referencing the gentler side of Planet Mu, before uplifting house from yorgos, an enjoyably punchy number from 120 dB (co-produced by PLUTO Sound founder Christopher Waver) and a similarly groove-focused outing by FALMI. Alongside a good dose of melodic house (in the very broadest sense) there are also dives into swirling electronica ('Waters Of Cadenza'), nods — big and small — to trance, dabblings with electro... it's a varied offering, as you'd expect any showcase of a country's electronic scene to be. Most importantly, it's all good stuff and pretty much all primed for the dancefloor, in one way or another. **TRISTAN PARKER**



## V/A

COD3 QR 012

Cod3 QR

**Anonymous crate bangers.**

An imprint dedicated to showcasing music that arouses curiosity, Cod3 QR launched in 2018 under the veil of anonymity, before it was revealed last year as the joint project of French auteurs Laurent Garnier and Scan X. The label's identity might no longer be a mystery, though its dedication to open-minded eclecticism continues with 'COD3 QR 012', the 12th instalment of their compilation series that throws together a stylistically disparate collection of club cuts. The conceptual hook is they're all anonymous offerings, with the respective producers not revealed until several months after release. It's a clever conceit, one clearly inspired by the label heads' passionate love of electronic music in all its forms. It's also enhanced by the strength of the selections, which here traverse the spectrum of soulful house, pulsing techno, thumping electro, and leftfield hip-hop. No filler to be found. **ANGUS PATERSON**



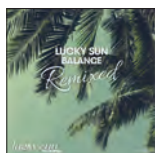
## V/A

5

Chinabot

**Hybridity on display**

Five years ago, London-based sound artist Saphy Vong founded Chinabot to carve space for Asian musicians in experimental and electronic music. The artists celebrated here have roots in Cambodia, Laos, China, Korea, Japan, Bahrain, and more. Finding commonality in their differences, they characterise Chinabot's M.O. of changing the "dialogue surrounding Asian music". Accordingly, no two songs here sound alike; JPN Kasai turns to Ondo folk music for inspiration on '早苗唄 hayanae uta'; Pal Hwang Dan's contribution draws from '80s synthpop for 'Brooch Killer'; Ayankoko summons sluggish, hauntological ambience before chopping, screwing, and drilling on 'Bopen'; Nanzhen Yang stitches a sonic tapestry through field recordings on 'Associative Memory Errors'; QwentyZ throws film trailer symphonic maximalism into an electronic blender in 'Annihilation' — you get the picture. **JAMES GUI**



## Lucky Sun

Balance Remixed

Lucky Sun Recordings

**Out of balance**

London's Tom Lown dropped 'Balance' earlier this year, his second album under his Lucky Sun alias, and it's an effort fashioned with an abundance of love. Stylistically, whatever his brand of Balearic-influenced deep house lacks in distinctiveness, it makes up for with the emotions that evocatively seep through those mellow grooves. Lown knows how to work with a soulful vocal, and also sprinkled an impressive number of summery interludes throughout. 'Balance' felt heartfelt and personal, though alas, has offered limited opportunities for inspiring reworks. 'Balance Remixed' dims the emotions so it can lean into the functional side of things, which isn't the album's strongest point. Check Al Bradley's acid-heavy rework of 'Calling You In', though it's an underwhelming package overall. All the more reason to circle back to the original release. **ANGUS PATERSON**



## V/A

Medusozoa Vol II

Tartelet Records

**Hard of healing**

Tartelet Records reaches across the globe for a melange of ambient deep cuts and downtempo healers on this warming companion to those slow January mornings. Alongside previously unreleased material from Glenn Astro, Zopelar, Max Graef and Uffe, 'Medusozoa Vol II' provides a home to the spacey pads and undulating rhythms of recent signings like ABUNAI and Athlete Whippet. Tied together by deep, cosmic frequencies, the mix gives flight to the imagination, tempting listeners on a journey through its many moods and modes while welcoming deep listening, reflection and procrastination. Cali-Local Space Ghost sets the tone on '4 AM', assimilating the sounds of nature into his otherworldly synth-scapes, before rapping in Italian. Modula's 'Cala Olivera' pitches laid-back cosmic funk. Whatever this new year has in store, Tartelet have done the crate-digging for you. **OLIVIA STOCK**



## V/A

Future Bubbles 6.0

Brownwood Recordings

**Bursting with promise**

The sixth 'Future Bubbles' is probably the most important since the series' first edition in 2017, albeit for different reasons. Now that the Gilles Peterson-helmed Worldwide FM is shuttered, these compilations of new artists continue to fly the flag and provide a platform for fresh talent in the UK's leftfield scene. 'Future Bubbles 6.0' is also possibly the most eclectic to date, running the gamut from Seigfried Komidashi's spiritual jazz trip 'Voyager One, Lost' through the gossamer neo-soul of Victoria Jane's 'Good & Low-Key' to Nowsm's galactic techno 'Rough Of The Felt'. But if you're looking for a breakout star to follow Yazmin Lacey and Kayla Painter from previous instalments, our money's on Plumm: the raw soul of 'To Be A Woman (Live)' is easily the equal of Jill Scott. Her voice also soars over Zefel's astonishing live drum & bass workout 'Crinje', to spectacular effect. **PAUL CLARKE**



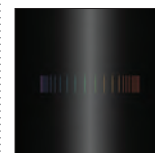
## V/A

Everything Merged Vol 2

3024

**Positive education**

Proving the old adage 'Give someone a fish and you feed them for a day, teach them electronic music production and they can make bangers for life' (or something like that), Martyn unveils another collection from the alumni of his 3024 Mentoring Program. Following on from 2021's 'It Was Always There' compilations of music produced by those the Washington DC-based Dutchman schooled during lockdown, the 'Everything Merged' series has the edge inasmuch as clubs are actually open now, meaning more opportunities to hear this music on the dancefloors it was designed for. Casting the net far and wide — from Baltimore to Barcelona, Manchester to Medellín — 'Everything Merged Vol.2' is as broad in genre as geography. 'Superseed's' roughshod bass, Padoa's chewy house groove 'Krbra' and the Pinch-style tech-dub on Kenji Ko's 'Coaxer' are quite a catch. **PAUL CLARKE**



## Exit Planet Earth

Launch

20/20 Vision

**Squidgy bleepy bleeps**

Electro track titles should be more of a thing. Behold: among the highlights on this 25-track collection of acid-electro-et-cetera is a lovely little dance tune by Sansibar called 'Tamagotchi' and before you've heard it, you know how it sounds — cute, quick, rambunctious, darting about the place like a digital pet. 'Hail The Whale (The Coexisting Mix)' by Extrawelt chugs and rumbles in Drexciyan glee, then in comes a soft, bewitching horn noise that could easily be a distant humpback. There's a fair bit going on here, nearly all of it good and inspired for the most part by the batshit goings on of the 21st Century. That's best captured by Mr Ho Xiaolin on 'No Change To How I Feel', an apocalyptic techno groan underscored by the words: "The whole world's crumbling, and we picked this time to fall... in love." **SAM DAVIES**