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Interviewer: Paul

Born in Poland, involved with choral music in his early childhood, raised in Canada where he started making film scores while attending to sound designing and electronic music composition classes. Spent most of his time in Canada, first in Windsor then in Vancouver. These places had in fact an enormous impact on his music making. As on one hand being close to the sound of Motor City - Detroit – Techno – Electro – Minimal and on the other right in the middle of- West Coast – breaks, ambient, dub, electronica.

When returned back to Europe in the late 90's, Peter was strongly exposed to the so called nu skool sound coming from Brighton, Edinburgh and later Scandinavia. All of these influences fused together make up for Echoplex's sound as well as sound of his others projects such as Niteworks, DP to name the few.

Could you tell us who hides behind the name Echoplex?

Producer, dj and label owner of Soleil records, Soundlite records and Deaf recordings.

How did you start to make music?

I have been always involved with music in one way or other but started to actually compose and produce tracks while attending to high school. It was then when I gained access to a fully analog based studio. I gave up my teenage weekends and devoted myself to exploring limitless possibilities of analog gear abuse, consequently composing while using mono and polyphonic synthesizers and making first steps towards production of my own tracks.

When did you realize that you want to release your records?

It was when first listening to great records that were inspiring me at that time I said to myself that it would be great to hold my own record one day.

You have been active on the electronic music circuit for over 12 years now. Do you still feel you're improving and exploring the boundries of electronic music or do you feel like it's difficult to create new things over the years?

It has been actually way over 12 years but who is counting...I can't really tell if I had actually improved or not over the years as these are the tasks of the listeners which with proper attention given are able to judge it for themselves. I can only say that constant improvement is part of my nature. "Searchin" , "Goin" Is part of me. I feel that this is a natural way for an artist or producer to follow his creative path in order to search unknown fields and to discover new and inspiring directions.

As to creating new things, meaning new genres then someone have already said a line that would sum up this very clearly " there is always someone out there saying that everything has been already discovered, and then out of the blue skies comes a person which is not saying anything just simply discovers something new".

When speaking of your own labels - Soleil records, and its sub division Soundlite records then what do you think is the main thought behind both of these labels?

The goal of the Soleil label is to bring out the sounds that are meant mostly for the dance floor, baring in mind a home listener, but mostly aiming towards dancer and seeking, absorbing, sharing and releasing of energy. The live performances play a vital role in enhancing and putting this idea into practice. I have created Soleil live episodes series, which work kinda like a flashback letting us relive those memorable moments once again. Another reason of launching Soleil was to feature and showcase works of my friends, producers. New Soleil 10 – Warsaw Admixture 3 is all about that, fresh blood Ben Browning and Komplex joined by old cats known in the game.

On the contrary Soundlite brings back the Echoplex sound from the 90's, minimal, classic, mellow drive. Music that I'm mostly recognized by, sounds that I have originally created and mastered during my long term relation with analog synthesizers and drum machines. Soundlite will also serve like a home for rare, timeless pieces which for various reasons are no longer accessible or were never released in such form that they will be featured in. The tracks featured on Soundlite were mostly made during 92-98 and still sound fresh.

Echoplex is considered as one of the so called 3rd and final wave of Detroit techno artists. What is meant by this?

See, I came into the picture at its final stage, the so-called 3rd wave. Along with some other figures and players that are out of the game already. Nowadays hardly anyone makes Detroit techno. It ain't like it used to be. The name itself is over exposed, overdone. Kids these days working on their tracks, calling them Detroit techno have no clue whatsoever what the word means. People think that Detroit techno was born in Germany and its originator is...never mind..

This is something unpleasant to me personally knowing the roots, its origins and creators. It was few years back when Detroit techno started being famous for just its name. Kids spinning vinyl and affiliating themselves with Detroit but not even knowing what lays behind these words. Cause of all of this I feel like the Detroit spirit had died, the music stayed, it lasted I mean just listen to May, Atkins, Larkin (especially Dark Comedy), Mills, Hood, Saunderson, Baxter, Mad Mike, Pullen these guys making tracks back in a day felt it with every heart beat you know what I'm sayin. Now all of this is gone. The spirit remains only in a metaphysical way. It stays within the hearts of its creators. The name techno back then was a TRUE artistic statement and a revolution of its kind, inspiring, motivating and spreading the vibe.

Now "TECHNO" being far too much commercialized in every sense of the word and over hyped brings out to mind negative connotations. Its original pureness and simplicity is exchanged with banging nonsense of over done drums with layered loops and over sampled sounds. I can't say personally that what I make is techno but having appreciation for its grand fathers I can definitely say that I'm all about bringing that spirit back, educating, sharing knowledge and passing on the Detroit message – "be true to yourself and others will follow".

Do you find music making as a hobby, job ?

It first started as a hobby, then while taking it to a much more professional level I started to feel like its becoming part of me and part of my life. I do not consider making music as a job as I don't have to stay in the office from 8-5.

How important for you, as a producer, is rhythm and how important is melody?

These musical elements are both important. One is connected with the other of course depending on what sort of genre we are talking about but in general rhythm stimulates and triggers melodic value which fills the gap and creates a mood that needs to be in every track to give it more character.

How come you use some many pads and strings in your works?

Well, it must be cause of the fact that in my early childhood I was highly involved in Gregorian choir and choral music hence I have a tendency to implement those so-called classic string sounds into my tracks and thus bring those early life influences into my electronic music.

What do you need to do in order to make a track like your No entrance? or Blindfold the skies? Could you describe us the process of making them?

All it takes is some imagination and musical knowledge really. The idea of a track appears in my mind, then throughout electronic means I'm able to transmit this musical concept and put it into life. Give a specific color that represents a mood. I don't think hard of making a track is rather natural and instant process. It just mirrors the exact state of mind that I'm at the time of making the track. Where it comes to the actual technical process of making a cut, tune or musical composition then I usually start with a simple element (kick drum, chord, bass, pad, string). Then

instead of layering many audio tracks on top of it I try to make it as characteristic as I can, that means taking much care about effects, equalization, compression of a single sound. While looking for another timbre of the sound I add another element maybe a doubled version of the same sound.

That's how I actually made the LL 09 - constitution of sound ep. On the whole record I used only 3 instruments - 2 Akai samplers + Roland drum machine. I shifted the positioning of a one of the samples thus making a delay groove then the same sample was triggered by an external clock device coming from a drum machine. So I had 3 different kick drums and 3 chord progression of the same sample going at once, overlaying each other and creating an almost random pattern. Giving more un defined structural sequence and making a solid loop is one of the many techniques that I like to practice during the production.. As far as No entrance, well this track was a bit more complex – First I had a loop of a Roland polyphonic synth + Roland drum machine sampled on Akai then re sampled in a 8bit sampler then re sampled again onto a digital sampler while adding compression and Re 201 Chorus Space Echo, widening the sound and then finally running back to the board and making a final mix. To add more of a live mix to it, I had run few other elements on top like filtered drums thru analog inputs triggered by another drum machine.

Just the clap itself was modified dozen of times and at its final stage cut into series of loops. The 909 ride sound was sampled as well there was a realtime ride on top filtered in and out to build up more tension. Actually to give more beef I was equing an empty channel (noise) therefore giving more value to the sound itself. Blindfold the skies was sort of a fluke, I had a loop going on a Akai S950 and then in the middle of the mix I pressed the wrong button it was in fact load disk button, this strange peaking noise appeared that I liked so much and repeat it twice to make a original effect and sound. Music process is so unpredictable is all about jamming and having fun with it. . Like you see you could go millions other ways. if I were to tell you how I make each track this interview would take far more pages then previously planned.

I wonder if all of the music appearing continuesly on your releases is the fresh thing, I mean, when you plan to release a record do you sit down and produce new tracks for the release, or am I wrong?

All the previously released as well as new coming Soleil releases were made far back in the 90's. I feel like that music has passed its test of time and could be easily released now or in 10 years time. Of course I make new cuts keeping in mind the upcoming years but in most cases all the ongoing releases are based on much older recordings.

If you were able to release all the music at once then how many LPS would the techno world hear?

I suppose more less over 200 records. That's just considering the so called electronic dance music.

Do you think are you ever going to leave techno making?

I don't think I will ever stop making techno, I'm sure on the other hand that the techno that I will make in the near future will evolve into a whole different direction and become a totally new concept that I'm not capable of describing at this time.

Do you think are you ever going to stop performing techno?

I might, I don't necessarily feel that I would be willing to perform techno tracks and jumping on the stage for kids when being at the age of 50, It would be indeed a bit awkward. I would rather prefer to free up some spaces for new coming producers and keep on working in my studio.

Can you live off techno-making/performing?

Unless you are making so called sell out techno, commercial useless tracks that get over played and everyone forgets about them after one season then sure. But when it comes to actually living off releasing tracks considered a bit more underground then I don't think one is able to live off it that easily. It's another story when it comes to performing. Most of the dj's not necessarily

producers can easily live off their performances where in one hour a dj can earn more then 3 - 4 months worth of sales of an average techno 12inch

Do you consider techno a product?

If it sells then it must be a product, but seriously I do think that the idea of techno was to be considered a product but a global statement where freedom of expression and emotional content collides with technology to make a mixture that will be felt by others. Of course this definition of Techno sounds very idealistic as it rarely exists in today's reality but with this idea I have started techno making in the first place.

How could you promote yourself, considering that publicity creates idols what would you need to do to become widely recognizable, for instance to appear on the top 100 dj list.?

I feel like in order to be widely recognized one doesn't need to make good records, but need to invest lots of capital into self-promotion, marketing and pr. I noticed the phenomenon behind names of Cox, Tiesto etc. Such dj's are none better then other producers or djs, in some cases even worse but they get to play at big events, get radio play time, interviews and reviews in all the hip magazines and charge astronomical fees for their performances which not even in 10% resemble the amount of work that they put into their djing or production.

And how is it possible that you are still not there?? What motivates you to keep on?

For starters I don't ask astronomical fees and do not work with any advertising or marketing companies that would create a huge hype around my name. I basically keep on releasing music that I strongly believe in. Therefore the recognition process is far longer then of the others but I'm actually lucky as I already played in most of places around the world, I have record labels where I could present my music and quite a bit of followers of my music. All of this motivates me to stay.

What is project Deaf and how much do you feel for it?

We are launching this one as we speak. Its first 2 releases are ready to go. New design and twisted look will be appropriate. The music is nothing but experimental electronic noise that would be the hardest to categorized so far. Most of which is in the vein of Vogel, Tarrida, Landstrum, Alfa, experimental noise as well as mostly Warp records influenced electro breakbeat . The idea of creating a project D was mostly motivated by rising demand for my experimental productions.

Not many people know that I'm behind all of the productions of Digital Princezz. I have created the LL 09 tracks - takin a back seat or climbin up the skies on Pacou's label for those who don't know click this <http://www.ll-store.de>

I did also produce numerous releases on labels like Mosquito, Semi Automatic, Mutter and licenced to Tresor. I have many tracks done in a similar way using only analog gear, all recorded during long sessions and in a very mad state of mind.. Tracks were created by forms of Live jams and mostly twisting knobs, sliders and switches. I had a need to put all the negative energy that was inside of me during that period of time and make something positive come out of it. Apart from those releases in plans are also LPS of my older projects Les Autres Circuites, ADSR and Vocodic Sfera.

What about the other project you're working on, BSJ?

This is a very exciting down tempo project, something completely fresh, its actual name will soon be revealed. What I can say at this stage is that it's a project involving two vocalists, trumpet, trombone , bass players as well as various acoustic and analog instruments. The actual name of the label, that this will be featured on stays for the time being unknown as we are currently negotiating a deal. Furthermore BSJ project is something I have been always dreaming about - a true band project with a full on live performance and live musicians now I'm trying to make this dream a reality.

If it's a new venture of yours then are you trying to reach a totally different audience than your regular techno listener?

I consider techno music not an ideal home music type. It's place is in a warehouse, club, outdoor, beach, open air space etc. Therefore I think with a non techno project I would be able to reach a different listener. With BSJ my aim is to reach an audience which understands, appreciates electronic music in its various forms and genres. By saying that I mean a person who is actually going to the store to purchase a cd and support the artist.

Do you have a feeling that you would be able to make something new, something that has never been created before, if yes in what direction you would love to go?

I don't express a need to create a new style, what I want to actually do is to build up on my ideas gathered through years of work with techno and sound in general. I would like to go in a full on band direction. There are many sides to this project, the artistic vision, outlook and whole performance is going to be carefully planned and detailed.

Considering that you are releasing material under different disguises like Echoplex, Niteworks (with Damon Wild), Del Sud, Vocodic Sfera, Les Autres Circuities and DP. Why do you have so many of them?

I have created many disguises as it would be unfair for the listener to hear for example Echoplex doing ambient or downtempo. Don't you think that this would create some kind of mixed feeling??, Also If I was to reveal how many different shapes and moods of electronic music I'm involved in, it would be hard to believe that one is able to make such diverse sounds. I'm making lots of different kinds of tracks as all of them are very special to me in their own way. Hence I'm also naming each project in varied way.

Each name has a story to tell, sometimes based on a real story that wasn't necessarily pleasurable but the story made me who I'm now and hence should be told to others as it might trigger certain unknown emotions and states of mind that could possibly help them to go through life and inspire to act, create and put all the negative into positive. I try to call the projects with appropriate names to arrange them accordingly to the sound that they represent

Can you tell us something about Niteworks with Damon?

Niteworks was an idea of mine that I have presented to Damon back in the early 2002 and we have both cooperated on it since. It's an electronic blend of various tastes and climatic syncopating, random sequences with a mixture of Damon's acid, Chicago and minimal sounds and my atmospheric sound scapes, Detroit grooves, hard beats, ambient structures, recorded during live jams at 3 different locations – NYC-PARIS-WARSAW

So then do you think Echoplex is the last one, the final chapter in your story..?

Knowing that life is so unpredictable I cant fully acknowledge the fact that Echoplex is the last chapter of my story. I feel like is part of myself introduction. I have much more to offer to this world. I feel like Its just one of the many musical characters of myself.

Besides making music do you also dj?

Yes, I grew up while playing 45 rpm's 8 and 10 inches records, since that time I felt like playing records is a vital role in my life. Nowadays I discover more ways of using turntables, records to create and tell an interesting story. I feel like since my teenage life my appreciation for a record has rose.

Does your deejaying reflect on the skills gained through studio and recording experiences?

Very much so, it goes back and forth. I take studio experiences onto a stage where body movements and right atmosphere can take those experiences much further and deeper and later the collected feedback goes back into the studio.

So do you feel that performance is an integral part of your creative process?

Definitely Live performances thought me of how people react to certain sounds. I feel that this knowledge is a great tool to be used in my following studio sessions. Its just like coming back late night from a great event, fully inspired and ready to create. This past summer had a great time when playing at the Wax Sessions in Barcelona. I wished I was in my studio day after as I was so full of energy, ready to explode and ready to create something wicked.

Having played all around world in NYC, Minneapolis, Chicago, Philadelphia, Barcelona Berlin, Oslo, Paris, Naples, Nijmegen, Amsterdam, Osaka, Tokyo, Istanbul to name the few. Do you see a difference in the crowd or parties in the USA, Europe and Asia?

The main differences are based upon cultural diversities of each of the regions and the history of each of the places. I can tell you for instance about varied crowd reactions and their musical preferences. For example while playing in eastern Europe, the people expect and want to hear hard, dark and intense sounds whereas in Asia they expect to hear deep and mellow sounds and when in USA they seek more raw, acidic and straight up sounds, where in Spain they want to be bombarded with off techno extravaganza and looped dj tools. This of course varies on locations and clubs but it's a general observation that I thought was interesting, how this varies from place to place.

Give us few names of djs, producers that somehow you are in touch with and that might inspire you to be better in what you do?

Juan Atkins, Derrick May and Jeff Mills had always inspired me to act. As far as Djs there are lots of great talents some of them barely known.

Talking about inspiration, is Warsaw inspiring?

Yes, its actually overwhelming with inspiration as many things happened here during the last centuries. Warsaw, is a city that has a tremendous history background on the other hand music wise not much happens here so it's a great place to focus on studio work.

Then have you already found your place?

That's a good question, I think not as I'm still on the look out but speaking of a place...man place where one creates is very crucial to music making. I feel like I can't be in the place where I feel too safe and happy in order to make dark sounds to make techno. I discovered this during 2001-2003 when living in a shit hole, outside of the city where I had only one room with a small bed, filled up to ceilings with studio equipment, no computer, no internet, no television. The bathroom was not fully functional as well the room was in a terrible shape. All of this triggered very crazy ideas in my head. I isolated myself from the outside world for that time and made some awesome music. In such fucked up environment I have made some even more fucked music.

I'm felling like leaving my own flat now and perhaps moving back to a tiny room to recreate some of those moments and make music of that time laughs...but seriously nowadays I feel as I'm far too happy to make techno, being with my family and my new coming baby boy I feel like I'm going into more mellow direction this is all cause of the place I live in,. This might sound all weird but its true. I don't know why but I feel like I could make great music in Scandinavia. I have already done few tests while being in Norway, Oslo so perhaps that's the place where I'm going to be heading out next but can't tell you if that will be my final destination.....

If you could ever make music for film which film would you like to make music for?

Star wars without a doubt, Yet I wouldn't make so much of a symphony, but focus mostly on space sounds made from synthesizer, it would fit ideally within the concept of Star Wars, of course orchestral music is very powerful, glorious and gives a classic approach but what I strongly feel is that the orchestra should have been mixed with electronic music.

Which track would you love to remix?

I would love to remix LFO by LFO, Blue Monday by New Order and Halcyon by Orbital plus many more but I would stick to these for now.

Is there anything more important than music to you?

Besides the obvious, no. If it weren't for music I wouldn't be on this planet.

Is there still any gear that you would like to have and is out of your reach?

I would love to get a SCI Prophet 5 or 10, Oberheim Xpander a Mellotron, little Oscar keyboard and few others.

What do you think of the new roland mc 909 that is a dream come through piece of gear of many..?

Could I please not comment on this one as I want to spare you my criticism....

Would you call yourself a analog dinosaur?

Yes - I m stil there I mean in the 90's.

So which releases can we expect this year?

There are few confirmed releases. Soleil 010 - Warsaw Admixture 3 is out now then in October - HS002 - a new Echoplex - Flashback EP on a Spanish label from Madrid - High School records , then in November a track named "So far so close" which I gave for a Tsunami aid project..Then followed by Soleil 11 - Echoplex yet untitled ep. That's it for 2005. 2006 will bring few Echoplex releases as well as 2 ep's of Deaf recordings some of them previously released on Mutter, Semi Automatic, Mosquito and consequently licenced to Tresor as well as many unreleased ones.

Do you think techno is going to leave its mark in the music?

I feel like it already has. It connected people all over the world coming from diversified races, backgrounds, skin colors, religions and different music tastes.

Speaking of your new radio show Forward and Rewind on Livesets and taking into consideration that you have given different colours for each one of the weeks. Which Sunday you like most? Or is the most expected?

I feel like the blue Sunday is my favourite. It is a great way to spend a Sunday eve at home while listening to mellow tunes.