



label profile: funkatech

DJ Cubit reveals all about breaks imprints Funkatech and Sub Frequency Funk...

When and why did you set up Funkatech?

Funkatech is run by me and my long-time friend MC Incyte. It was originally started by DJ Mutiny and DJ Quest in 2002 as an outlet for their own tracks. At the time there weren't many labels pushing breakstep or bassline breakbeat so they went ahead and set one up themselves. In 2003 Quest left and Mutiny recruited myself and Incyte to help out. We'd all been doing pirate radio together for a few years before, so it was a natural progression really. Mutiny retired from the label in mid 2005 to concentrate on production, so me and Incyte have been running Funkatech and our sister label Sub Frequency Funk since then.

How would you describe Funkatech's output?

I think the name Funkatech pretty well describes the sound. The main theme has always been about big basslines and tough dance-floor breakbeats. We love the dark stuff, but you gotta have some funk in there too, throw in a bit of diversity. A lot of Mutiny's tracks are really funky, then you got big-room tear-out breaks from Control-Z and Shodan. We even put out stuff by dubstep producers Jay Da Flex and Elemental.

Our latest releases from Far Too Loud and Specimen A have really developed the label's sound. Spec A seem to have an endless pot of great tracks, and they're not afraid to experiment. Their track Blow Ya Head, which Incyte did the vocals on, sounds like the Audio Bullys on a breaks tip. It was really original and very infectious. Their collaborations with Far Too Loud on Contamination and Soldiers At War were also incredible.

specimen a



Sub Frequency Funk is there for more soulful and funky breaks tracks. We launched it in 2005 with Mutiny's Concrete Soul series which had this liquid breaks theme going on which no-one else was really doing. We weren't sure how it was going to be received but it got a great response from both the press and the punters. Then we got the NAPT boys on board last year for their remix of MJ Cole's Watertight which had been floating about for a while. NAPT have this totally unique funky but soulful sound and they really know how to work with vocals, an element we wanted lots of on Sub Frequency Funk, so we recently signed them to a four-part series called Contrast. The first part dropped in October with their second MJ Cole remix So Damn Into You and their own track Rock Your Style with our good mate Ken Mac on vox, which is funky as hell. It sounds like Daft Punk doing breaks.



What's been your biggest seller?

It was volume one of Far Too Loud's Louder Than Life series. FTL are technically superb, plus they have the musical backgrounds to know how to write a song and fill it with detail. But the main thing about that release was that they managed to cross the divide between the two ends of the scene, tear-out and progressive breaks, in a way no one else in my mind has. Not only that, the sound was totally original. They basically took bits of psy trance, drum and bass and techno and mixed them with breaks.

What's the hardest thing about running a label?

Finding time to do everything. We both have full-time jobs and only have our spare time which isn't all that much after you've got home, made the tea and watched EastEnders! The positive side is that we have very talented artists around us who we totally believe in, so that inspires us to find the time and energy.

What are the label's plans for the next 12 months?

On Funkatech in late January we've got Exodus/Check The Sound, which is Specimen A's second full release. Exodus has been getting a caning by the Control-Z boys for a while now and always gets a great reaction on Spec A's Breaks FM show. After that it's Far Too Loud's third and final part of their series which we can't wait for. I'm hoping they're saving the best till last. Then we've got some heavy tracks by Shodan of Easy Records fame whose been working with Offkey. We've also got more collaborations between FTL and Spec A.

On Sub Frequency Funk we've got the rest of NAPT's Contrast series with the second EP dropping early February, which we're really excited about. They've done a monster of a tune with MC Skibadee called Get Back which is definitely gonna rip up some dancefloors. Finally you'll see remixes of Mutiny's Concrete Soul tracks by The Breakfastz and Far Too Loud, as well as a whole new series by Mutiny himself which will definitely turn heads.

How do you track down new artists?

Mostly it's been through them coming to us. It's not something we actively spend lots of time doing although we've always got an ear to the ground. We tend to concentrate on building and supporting the artists we already have. They're a great bunch and they're all willing to put themselves out for us and for each other when the need arises, which is vital for small independents like us. We're more like a big family really.

Any advice for any budding producers looking to sign to Funkatech?

Ultimately every label is looking for someone who sounds fresh. If you're reasonably talented and you can write a solid tune then great, but a good artist has something that separates his or her sound from everyone else. It's a cliché but you do have to keep it real to what you know. You might write a couple of good tunes based on copying someone else's formula, but after a while it'll go stale. Make sure you have a well of influences. A perfect Funkatech

continued >



secret weapons

He's one of New Zealand's premier DJs and producers. Now, with his debut album in the pipeline and his new Shock Rocket EP shaking floors the world over, Greg Churchill might just be on the cusp of becoming an equally big star in the northern hemisphere

"It's summer here now, so that means sun, cricket and little else – good times!" Greg Churchill is in a good mood. For him, it seems, all is right with the world. His native New Zealand sounds like the perfect place to be at this time of year, and as an added bonus, his new EP – titled Shock Rocket – is currently hotter than a polonium pastie.

"Reactions and feedback have been simply amazing," says Greg of the Gung Ho! release. "You could definitely call me surprised, especially taking into account how many great tunes are being released every week at the moment.

"The EP is just a bunch of tunes I'd written about 12 months ago that we've finally got around to releasing. I pretty much write tracks solely for my DJ sets. One of the tracks, I Need A Bassline (Lemmy), came about from an experience of seeing Motorhead play live during the mid 80s. I kinda wanted to recreate the excitement of the first note Lemmy struck that night – the bass felt like it was going to explode my heart. One of my greatest musical experiences ever..."

The heavy metal influences seem to work. The EP has been picking up pretty major support from a wide cross-section of DJs – James Zabiela, Hernan Cattaneo, Mike Monday, Arthur Baker, Mylo, John Digweed and Gus Gus are all over it. This has always been the case with Greg's tracks though. From his first EP – Budonkadonk on Underwater – through to Shock Rocket, he's always managed to attract the attention of electro, house and techno spinners.

"That's probably just a reflection of me as a DJ and record collector," says Greg. "As much as I might play a particular sound, my attention span isn't too great for sticking with something for too long. I've always got my ear tuning and wandering elsewhere. I love music with lots of movement and ideas, rather than following a similar path from start to finish. I just spent all this week rediscovering the first two Gang Of Four albums, so I'm sure that will rub off on me over the course of the next few months."

Greg's DJing has no doubt had a huge influence on his production sound. He's been playing records for the best part of 18 years, and is seen as one of New Zealand's top DJs. This success is has been



helped along by his radio show, Aural Trash which specialises in bringing underground sounds to New Zealand's ears.

"I'd say my production and DJing go hand in hand," says Greg. "So what I produce is a good representation of what I play out. The club scene here in NZ is quite divided between electro house, funky house and breaks."

And Aural Trash will play all of these. "The radio show originally started out on the NZ student network about three years ago," says Greg. "It was hosted by myself and Angela Fisker. Then two years ago we were 'poached' by GeorgeFM, a 24/7 dance/electronic radio station that broadcasts nationwide. The show and the brand has gone from strength to strength (due in part to my wife Gaelyn who takes care of the management) with club nights and twice yearly national tours that see us travelling up and down the country for up to three months at a time. And the first Aural Trash release is in the pipeline..."

That, Greg's remix of the forthcoming Gus Gus track Moss and his debut artist album, due out in 2007 should propel him up the ranks in the northern hemisphere. As he says, good times!

The Shock Rocket EP is out now on Gung Ho! Visit www.gung-horecordings.com

label profile



artist would be someone who can step outside the breaks box – if you can diversify, your music will last because there's maturity in it. There's a KRS-1 lyric that pretty much says it: "Image is respected, records come and go and get collected."

Any other bits and pieces going on you want to tell us about?

Incyte has been busy touring with an upcoming Welsh producer called Culprit 1. He recently did vocals on one of Culprit's tracks called Hollow that you should check if you're into stuff

like Massive Attack. He's also been gigging with Subterfuse, a live breaks/hip hop/drum and bass band he formed with Miss Trouble, his MC/vocalist girlfriend and one of our most talented artists. You can also check out Incyte and Trouble on The Rogue Element's album Rogue Rock on Exceptional. In early 2007 Miss Trouble's got a liquid drum and bass track called Ethereal coming out on Easy Records produced by Shodan which Roni Size has been hammering. She's also sung on a track called My Soul with Madcap for Nookie's Strictly Digital imprint, the talented lass!

Funkatech-wise, tune into our internet radio show 8-10pm Thursdays fortnightly on iBreaks.co.uk. You can download the set from the site if you miss it. We're also soon launching a new shop on the website with all the back catalogue stuff from both labels on MP3 and vinyl, as well as T-shirts and other bits and pieces. Lastly watch out for a very special collaboration coming later in the year. We're really excited about it but can't say anything else just yet – check out our MySpace page to keep up to date.

Visit www.myspace.com/funkatechrecords and www.funkatech.com