



True Ballah Records
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TUNED LOUD!

bigger, better, louder!!!

ISSUE 25 - MAY 2018

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TUNEDLOUD!

KENDRICK LAMAR THREATENS TO PULL MUSIC FROM SPOTIFY!

Spotify recently rolled out a new hate content policy with the aim of limiting the exposure of problematic artists. R. Kelly and XXXTentacion were the first two artists affected by the policy, though at the urging Kendrick Lamar, Spotify is already amending its stance.

According to Bloomberg, Kendrick personally called up Spotify Chief Executive Officer Daniel Ek and head of artist relations Troy Carter to express his frustration with the policy and even threatened to pull his own music from the service if the policy was maintained. Among Kendrick's concerns, Bloomberg reports, was that the policy unfairly targeted people of color.

Since Kendrick got in touch, Spotify has begun to walk the policy back a bit. Yesterday, XXXTentacion's music reappeared on Spotify's flagship playlists, and Spotify is "talking to the music industry and civil-rights activists about how and when to adjust its rules in a manner suitable to both sides." As of now, however, R. Kelly's music remains missing from Spotify's playlists.



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editor's notes



XVENTURAX AND APOLLOPARX

“DON'T KILL MY VIBE (LISA)” EXISTS IN RARIFIED AIR!

Ventura aka xVenturax was born in Burbank, CA but raised all over the world such as the UK, Holland, Australia and Germany learning different cultures and pursuing her purpose since the age of 8 years old. Growing up in a family of musicians, Ventura pursues her music career, as well as her fashion career, hoping to inspire men and women all over the world through art. xVenturax and ApolloParx join forces on the single “Don’t Kill My Vibe (Lisa)” produced by Serge Crown, and taken off their upcoming project dropping during May 2018.

This new undertaking is proof that a young girl’s mind is nothing ignorable or foolish, particularly when paired with a clever vision. “Don’t Kill My Vibe (Lisa)” is not just a story crafted into a track, but instead a multidimensional exploration of the aching human heart via soul in its most honest forms: music and poetry.

In structure and purpose, the two crafts are innately connected. The song is a surprise slow burner trickled with drips of beautiful melancholy. The exceptional production adds real emotional power and groove to this chill, intimate material, which really transforms the song into an authentic celebration of rising talent.

With her gentle and nuanced vocalizing, xVenturax gives one’s ears a chance to consume what’s being presented. And in both sound and meaning, it only takes a second to feel enveloped by the song’s warmth. ApolloParx’s flow is as honeyed as xVenturax’s singing, and together their words and

rhymes are arresting and direct. As the songstress delivers a relentless stream of flawless vocals with the confidence of a performer twice her age, it’s almost incomprehensible that this gifted young artist is still not in the mainstream masses, while she slowly builds her own hype and reputation.

On “Don’t Kill My Vibe (Lisa)” xVenturax delivers an absolute masterclass, infusing urban soul, Hip-hop and R&B into her own uniquely irresistible mix, to completely justify all the immense excitement which will no doubt surround her prestigious talent.

ApolloParx, for his part is furiously inventive, thoughtful, virtuosic, musically adventurous and driven. Hence the laid-back and smooth atmosphere on this track is densely packed with ideas, allusions and ambitions, which intertwine harmonically with those of xVenturax.

ApolloParx and xVenturax voices harmonize together so beautifully, and the result is an effortless extension of an already beautiful song. “Don’t Kill My Vibe (Lisa)” is a track that you need close your eyes to and embrace. ApolloParx and xVenturax occupies rarified air.

They exist in a space shared by artists who restore your faith in modern music, but without any of the ubiquity. Existing in the outer orbit of the mainstream allows them ample room to chase their muse. The result is record that could have been made by few others, and frankly, it sounds really great. But it also feels like xVenturax is inching closer to a breakthrough: a project that fully lives up to her talent and ambition.

OFFICIAL LINK:
www.instagram.com/venturaohnae





D.NI.L

UNCOMPROMISING AND HUGE POWERFUL!

D.Ni.L is a self-taught, guitarist, bassist, keyboardist, drummer and vocalist. Born in Croydon and raised in York (UK), he was heavily influenced by Motown artists and especially Michael Jackson. D.Ni.L who grew up in the 90s also loved a lot of indie music from that era, particularly The Charlatans, Manic Street Preachers and The Stone Roses. While other big influences also include Nirvana, Helmet, Slint and Deftones. For twenty years though D.Ni.L's life had been in a downward spiral due to drink and drug addiction. He spent four years in hostels for the homeless and sleeping rough.

"The last year however has been different," says the artist. "I have stayed clean, with my composing taking a key role in my recovery." His third album, 'Boy Inside', is due for release in May 2018, while he is also adding the finishing touches to his fourth album." In the meantime D.Ni.L has released the single "Glue".

This isn't the first time Rock and Rap has been fused together, but it's certainly the boldest in 2018. You've got D.Ni.L shredding tasty riffs along the fret board, while the drums pound away and the bass throbs under it all. "Glue" comes at you at full force. And accelerates.

It takes you left, then right and then along a brand new axis of movement you had previously not discovered. It sounds angry, reflective and nonplussed all within a few bars of each other, yet stays consistent and tight. Despite the roaring and huge sound you encounter, the track, as a complete theme is profoundly introspective.

The sound quality is famously brilliant on "Glue": no over-compression, restrictive audio manipulation, clipping or other waveform distortions here. This track really is pure and unadulterated in every way. The single is all about inspiring music that is straightforward, in your face, uncompromising and hugely powerful.

Based on those criteria, this is an absolute authentic listening experience. The world we live in is going through hell, and in the face of heightened social tensions and personal turmoil in modern society, D.Ni.L's insightful catalog seems necessary and relevant, especially for people who fall by the wayside

facing life's difficulties. D.Ni.L openly lays his cards on the line, showing where he got his reawakening inspiration – "I'm thinkin' faster than before, writin' tunes by the score and, to booze, I was a whore – that isn't the case anymore."

But at the same time he knows of the dangers up ahead – "Sometimes I borrow from tomorrow, gotta watch it, I know. 'Cos if the shit hits the fan and I'm tired, there's one place I go; To the bottom of a bottle with my head in the sand..." The thundering power is driven by D.Ni.L's primal, unmistakable guitar riffs, while his lyrics and flow deliver the fire.

Sturdy and strong as a stone wall, while also mixing sharp riffs with melodic passages and the simple message of uplifting through music, there's nothing missing here on "Glue". It's energizing and unique, and it's got what it needs to get the fans going.

When D.Ni.L raps or sings his words, I believe that that's what he thinks, because he puts his emotions and his heart to what he does. He comes across as dedicated to moving his life and career to the next level. This is a bombastic and explosive listening experience!

OFFICIAL LINK:
www.d-ni-l.com



DEAN SHEPP

“FINER THINGS” – VERSES OF PURE AMBITION!

DeAndri Raffaele Sheppard professionally known as Dean Shepp, is an American rapper, hip hop recording and performing artist, songwriter, music publisher, audio engineer, record producer and executive producer from Detroit, MI. Dean's earliest experience with music came in elementary school where he studied the saxophone and piano. He went on to sing in a neighborhood church choir and started recording covers of his favorite songs over his sister's cassette tapes with a karaoke machine.

Later, after being introduced to the Dr. Dre song “Ring Ding Dong” by his cousin, he fell in love and with the hip-hop/rap genre of music. Dean has accumulated formal training during formative years having attended EMS Recording Engineering under the instruction of Craig T. Erquhart sr as well as Golightly Career and Technical Center where he studied mass media radio and television. The artist also learned both drum and piano skills.

Dean Shepp went on to release his first singles in 2011, under the pseudonym D.R.E., and in 2014, as a published songwriter he launched the DdotRdotEdot (ASCAP) publishing company through which he has continued releasing music.

Recently, Dean stepped up to the plate with his single release, “Finer Things”, to keep his career momentum pushing forward. The flow, the sheer glorious musicality of it all, the beat that puts a wiggle in your feet, and the hook that starts in the ear and spreads to your throat until you're shouting along with him: “I just want the finer things!”

On “Finer Things”, through skill and ingenuity, Dean Shepp makes his voice sound like the drums, pianos, bass and brass – the whole damn band. It's exhilarating, as he shifts his flow up and down. At his best, he blends lyricism, humor, an eye for detail and wisdom well beyond most other hip-hop packages out there that.

Thanks mainly to Dean's easy digestible hook and ridiculously addictive delivery. The track is surrounded by Dean's height of imagination and storytelling, wrapping itself in the tailoring of a well-conceived project that shows maturity and an artist

owning his own narrative while revealing his emotional side. Dean Shepp is able to hit many wow levels, while maintaining a sustained, yet restrained rapping balance.

Dean is never in your face or attempting to scream at the top of his lungs to grab your attention. He leaves the ear-grabbing elements to his flashy rhyme scheme and the elegantly soulful beat, while poignantly delivering verse after verse of pure ambition.

“Finer Things” has everything you could ask for in a hip hop release: strong messages, excellent lyricism, great production, authenticity, vulnerability and a focused concept. But to have that all squeezed into under 3 minutes, is simply beyond brilliant!

OFFICIAL LINKS: www.deansheppmusic.com





BONE NEST

PUSHES THE ENVELOPE ON MANY TRACKS

Most contemporary musical artists will do anything to chase – and then maintain – relevance. In an industry of declining record sales and infinite musical choices a click away, artists are prone to hawk their commercialized products and brand incessantly. The fear of overexposure has been replaced by the fear of being lost in the crowd entirely, and artists have reacted by shoving themselves in their audience's face to the point of exasperation and passivity.

Influenced by sounds from R&B and indie, to psychedelic rock, it's safe to say that Bone Nest – an artist and producer from San Francisco, California – is not like most acts today. Far from the spotlight, and locked into creating in the studio, his self-titled release is both a promise and an affirmation of his talents.

Right from the opening track, "Tube Amp", Bone Nest sends an immediate message that the album to follow was made on his own terms, and he is not beholden artistically to anything other than his own vision. The compositions on the first part of the album are largely dreamy, downtempo arrangements, frequently consisting of little more than Bone Nest's voice and varied keyboards with sparse guitar lines and percussion. This sparsity is at first disarming, as it often seems upon first glance that these tracks could be casual home demos rather than professionally-inclined recordings.

Yet upon repeat listens, you grasp that the power of this minimalism reveals the underlying beauty in the songwriting. Bone Nest's voice, as quaint and versatile as it is, often takes center stage, and his lyrics cut through the echoing and feedback with breathtaking emotional precision.

The record puts forth the framework of chilled out R&B crooning, falsetto here and there, amidst an experimental backdrop augmented by the electronic genre. Moving ahead the arrangements slice through groovier, funkier and utterly unique tunes.

These songs will move your feet and your soul, and make you think – and parts are absolutely gorgeous. The electro-chill-ambient-R&B-rock combination of musical genres is a pastiche that is rich and satisfying, and vocally compelling.

The songs and the production, when you listen to the entire thing all the way through, may make you feel like you just had a few puffs off a bong packed with high quality medicinal... even though you haven't. With a diverse array of singing styles, lyrics, sounds, effects and transitions, this album keeps itself fresh and engaging throughout its entirety.

Bone Nest himself, who remains elusive and consistent at the center of it all, has the ability to funnel just about any style of music into his creations. On a pure ear candy level, there are no songs here that will lodge themselves in the listener's consciousness by the second listen.

These songs require multiple plays as they unfold, expand and diffuse themselves through your brain. In particular tracks like "Hollow/Clay", "worstfear", "Set Me Free" and "Soul Flex". The album also displays plenty of experiments that all go over incredibly well especially the weird vocal escapades on "couldlivealife", "mindofyours" and "PrettyDamnCold", among others.

Many of the tracks will shift from calm to crazy and then back again in a matter of seconds – creating an unsettling, yet satisfying vibe. While this album isn't necessarily described as an experimental album, it sure has enough experimental elements to qualify.

Surprisingly, despite how incredibly experimental and diverse it is, the recording is also an incredibly easy listen in places. Bone Nest pushes the envelope on many tracks, moving between playful, quirky, soulful, funky, detached, indulgent, yet always refined compositions that are sure to keep you listening all night.

I think most mainstream fans may not be ready for this album just yet, but its true creative achievements will become more evident to them in the future. Bone Nest proves himself to be an innovative pioneer who evolves the science of music in the most ingenious ways rendering classifications and labels meaningless.

OFFICIAL LINKS: www.bonenest.com



D.S.P'S DARK ANGELS

"THE STRUGGLE REMASTERED" BELONGS IN TODAY'S TROUBLED TIMES

D.S.P's Dark Angels is group comprised of 3 solo artists – Justice aka Justamon, Rejekdakon & Shimek. Michael J. Henry Sr. aka Justice is from Brooklyn N.Y. and Jace Williams aka Rejekdakon is from Bridgeton N.J., while Philip Atkinson aka Shimek is from Philadelphia P.A. They all met up in the streets of Wildwood N.J. and rest is history. They were all featured together on the album South Wild Island Hustlers in 2002. After years of doing their own thing they returned to the studio in 2016 to get back to business. There are 2 producers in the group Justice is one and Rejekdakon is the other. Together these 3 form the Dark Symphony Productions Dark Angels.

The creativity of this dynamic group is displayed in the instant classic called "The Struggle Remastered", a 14 track album now available for download on all major digital download stores. With D.S.P's Dark Angels you will be educated on many current social topics that you may not be aware of.

The lyrical deliveries contained herein, will leave you with a thirst for more true hip hop. In the current dark age of Hip-hop music where every so called artist is stuck in the Trap and mumbling sub-genres with TR-808 overkill, this album is a welcome change. A return to the sound, the vibe and the energy that originally made Rap/Hip-hop so interesting and exciting in the Golden Age.

Though at the same time there is nothing dated about the beats which can stand up to the best technology is throwing at us right now. There's no mistaking that you are listening to underground hip hop royalty pouring their hearts and souls into making an album that manages to sound fresh.

The album flows from the first to last track seamlessly. There is not a bad song to be found here. While they're not all singles, they don't need to be. Superior in sound and word play, this thing kicks butt right from the opener, "Visions of a Positive Picture", which is nothing short of brilliant in its testimony and conviction.

"My Journey!!!" ft. James Harmony starts out with some soulful melody, while the members of D.S.P's Dark Angels come with a sense of urgency and camaraderie. It never feels like they're just going through the motions. "You Only Get One" is in your

face and confrontational, followed by the epic soundscape and angry social vision on "Don't Give a Fuck!!!".

As much as they represent consciousness and Afrocentrism, D.S.P's Dark Angels never get carried away with their intellectual tendencies, leaving plenty of room for street talk and technical showmanship in amongst their powerfully ignited sociopolitical sides.

Examples of this can be found on standouts, "Changing the Game" – which comes in two flavors the Dark Static Mix and the Light Freedom Mix – "Ask Your God Why!!!" and "Play It Back & Listen". The flows are consistently dazzling throughout the album, while there's swagger in every line.

There's a wide range of ideas and musical approaches here, but they orbit around an anchored worldview for justice, and nowhere is it clearer than on "I Can't Breathe", which unravels police brutality issues. "You Thought" is another epic track that is delivered in two flavors – the Dark Trap Mix and the Countdown Mix.

When it comes down to the push and shove, a great rap album usually is all about good beats, focused rhymes and real life, and this album has that in spades. Furthermore "The Struggle Remastered" possesses its own unique sound, and with each listen you hear different nuances and rhythms, prompting you to come back again and again. All backed by lyrical content that belongs in today's troubled times.

MORE ABOUT: D.S.P's Dark Angels is the first group on the independent label Dark Symphony Productions. Shimek is not on Dark Symphony Productions first release "The Struggle Remastered" due to his legal issues. He is in the Spotlight on the next album dropping sometime this summer "Angels And Demons" and there are many more artist to come after him, like James Harmony and Ern Boug, just to name a few.

OFFICIAL LINKS: www.darksymphonyproductions.com

***Small images from Left to Right - Justice, Rejekdakon and Shimek



THE STRUGGLE REMASTERED

WINTER RAE

“GET UP” – PASSION AND SWAGGER

Are we looking at a star in the making? When you peel back the beauty and creativity, of Winter Rae you see an artist with relentless ambition. The Alabama native wears many hats – she is a singer, a part-time model, a songwriter, and aspiring actress. Today in the urban music scene, if you don't have a presence, you risk not having your place in its genres.

Winter Rae stakes her claim in “Get Up”, her new single with a lot of passion and swagger. She kicks things off with a very confident and upfront start laying her qualms out on the table, and making a confident and powerful stand on her position in her career and life.

The track is as melodramatic as it is badass, with Winter showing off both her aggressive nature and her more intimate side. This is a three and a half minute track with multiple dimensions that helps the artist show her off abilities.

Bold. Unapologetic. Unafraid. Those are just a few adjectives that characterize contemporary blues, hip-hop and neo soul singer Winter Rae. She definitely creates on the edge. And this track exemplifies that edginess. Even so, what stands out the most about this project is her powerful, nuanced voice.

Throughout, it is the voice that shines brightest. “Get Up” balances the contemporary and soul soundly. The melodic lines are smooth, incredibly rhythmic, and at times, emotional. It's a catchy, sultry track that forges in-depth expression of Winter Rae's state of mind and soul.

In an industry where many female urban voices can only find their initial ground providing siren backing vocals for male rapper's tracks, women like Winter Rae have decided to do things their own way. She's keeping her heart and soul her own, and is projecting it into the airways on her own terms, in her own music.

She takes hold of herself and her emotions and presents them in a way we don't often get to hear anymore. The emotion is rooted in the core of the track but her perspective isn't clouded by emotion. She's singing from the sincerest part of herself.

Winter Rae exhibits grit, soul, and attitude alongside a few

colorful words, and shows how versatile she is artistically, bouncing between being unapologetic, showing class, and always flaunting her magnificent voice.

Mixing what she describes as “a fluid mixture of blues, neo-soul, and hip-hop with hints of a trap/southern rap essence,” its artists like Winter Rae that move the genre forward by experimenting with new sounds and singing straight from the gut.

Winter Rae is an advocate for herself as an artist, because she believes in her craft, and she has done so since she was 7 years old. Today she is no less eclectic and talented than her contemporaries. If anything, she's more.

And she is making interesting and entertaining music. You can tell that she is extremely involved in every aspect of her career. “Get Up” is set to officially arrive in digital download stores on the 1st of June.

OFFICIAL LINK: <http://www.facebook.com/officialwinterae>







SAM XHRI6

“CLOSE TO YOU” — A LUSH AND LAYERED RECORD WITH A STRONG DANCEHALL FLAVOR

Samson Adebalogun popularly known by his stage name Sam Xhri6 (pronounced as Sam Chris) is a Pop and RnB singer, a songwriter and guitar player from West Africa (Nigeria). Sam is a fast rising talent who has received numerous accolades and has enjoyed a series of collaborations with some of Nigeria's top artists. He achieved international recognition on releasing the track “Telephone” featuring American Rap act H.I.M. Sam Xhri6's powers are on full display on his latest single “Close To You”.

There are only so many contemporary male performers who still confidently exhort: “You're on my mind all day, you're on my mind all night”, to the girls they love. As most modern urban artists are so stuck in their misogynist and hedonistic ways to even care.

That track might be the crown jewel of Sam Xhri6's pop catalog – a lush and layered record with a strong dancehall flavor. It's his ode to a woman he cares for dearly and wants to be close to. The various soft pillowy synths, shimmering piano plunks, and Sam's lower register in the verses and melodious higher tones in the chorus all cohere into a song of seduction that straddles both devotion and confidence, capturing the track's tight songwriting. At the same time, Sam's crystalline enunciation will keep you looped in and listening.

“Close To You”, standing at a frills-free three minutes and thirty-nine seconds, is rigorously constructed and produced to one end: putting Sam Xhri6 in the spotlight. The vocalist stands front and center, whether supported by the enthusiastic chorus of backing vocals and punctuating ad libs, or the snappy percussion and hypnotic rhythm.

This carefully set stage would have been fruitless without a skilled performer to fill the space, and Sam is up to the challenge. He's got the pipes and he's willing to push his vocal nuances to capture the gist of the track.

The song's warm, laid-back vibe feels like exactly what we need during a time when everything in the country feels scary and seriously confusing. Our world full of anxiety and stress and debate can be exhausting — and sometimes, at the end

of the day, all you want to do is turn on a song that makes you feel good, and maybe puts you in a carefree dancing mood.

“Close To You” easily fits that playlist. It's a resurgence of the kind of music we don't get enough of anymore. The type of seductive songwriting that's quickly becoming a lost art.

Obviously, “Close To You” tips its cap to its musical forefathers, but make no mistake – this isn't some kind of stroll down memory lane. Instead, it's catchy template that features elements of infectious past hits to reshape current pop and dancehall. It's one of the few times where looking back actually moves you forward.

And “Close To You” puts Sam Xhri6 light-years ahead of the pack. Sam is using his skill to promote a feel-good brand of music that not only gets asses out of seats and on to the dance floor but it also offers something deeper than that.

OFFICIAL LINK: www.facebook.com/samxhri6



TRUE BALLAH RECORDS PRESENTS

MEATY

Meaty has always defied a box. He dodges labels and stereotypes. He has found a home on the independent scene and it's where he's remained for better or worse. He is a noble soul. He talks about resurrecting the culture. He's a curator of hip hop. Whereas other artists are saying that they don't want to bridge the gap between old and new, Meaty finds value in both. And he demonstrated such on his album "S3V3N", out via the True Ballah Record Label.

This time he went back to what he knows best- bars and beats. Here he lays soundscapes that matches his personality. We've seen him working back towards this foundation on his previous releases, but this album has a clarity that you didn't hear on those releases. Meaty has a purpose on this project that sounds like he is comfortable, and it presents some of his best work.

There is an undeniable arc to this album, starting with "Saucy", where Meaty quickly launches his stride. It's like listening to the soundtrack of a ball player in the zone. And it's incredible. "Get It On The Floor Ft Big Scrilla" is a quick glimpse into just how incredible a focused Meaty is. While "Vanilla Sky" is the type of creative Midwest music he excels on. "As The World Keeps Turning" finds Meaty taking us on an epic journey in music. Here he brings the culture back. While we've been spending too much time trying to have fun and make anthems, and not enough time trying to uplift the culture, he

has been putting together a soundscape of cinematic scale on this track then bathes it in a stream of lyrical consciousness. The powerful "Bang" Ft DoughBoi really puts some realism into the album as Meaty sends a set of important messages in trying to fix the problems of this street generation. The driving beat of "One Shot" and the eclectic rhythms on "So Gone" Ft Kush Scales, are fresh takes on traditional hip hop. Its clear Meaty is making the music we were looking for the whole time!

There are still times when he tinkers with a modern musical cadence here and there, but that's to be expected. What you don't hear on this project is a stretch. He's not chasing a hit record. There's no longer major label executive shadow clouding the recording process. What you get is Meaty on his own terms.

His label, True Ballah Records is one that shares his vision instead of one trying to get him to adapt to theirs, because when you let the Ohio rapper get to work, he produces great hip hop. Not just for his State but for the whole world. Meaty really shines on "S3V3N" as he mixes in solid lyricism with great beats to not only give you a sample of his potential, but to create a well-rounded project. With the right system behind him Meaty is the type of artist that can be added to the upper echelon discussion - and it's not a stretch.

continued...



MEATY

MORE ABOUT MEATY: Demetrius “Meaty” Goodwin hails from Mid-Ohio, raised in the small town Mansfield. From a young age, Meaty could always be found near a radio listening to the top underground and mainstream artists of the time. His love for music led to many impromptu performances for friends and family at home and during school.

The attention he received led to his first major performance at the annual city Drug Free rally. A lot of time passed before Meaty could capitalize on his early success. He joined the Army and served honorably. Never one to stop what he loved to do, Meaty continued to master his art by participating in military talent shows. Eventually he made a name known for himself at Ft. Drum in New York.

Upon Meaty’s discharge from the Army, he attempted to start his music career traveling to Virginia Beach, Va. While he was there, during one late night party session at a club called Shakespeare, young Meaty was introduced to his first real industry connection, a Def Jam A&R executive. Not one to shy away from a chance to grasp destiny, Meaty instantly started spitting bars.

The A&R was so impressed that he invited Meaty to a studio session. Meaty thought about the opportunity and another one that arose just as fast that would put him squarely in the war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

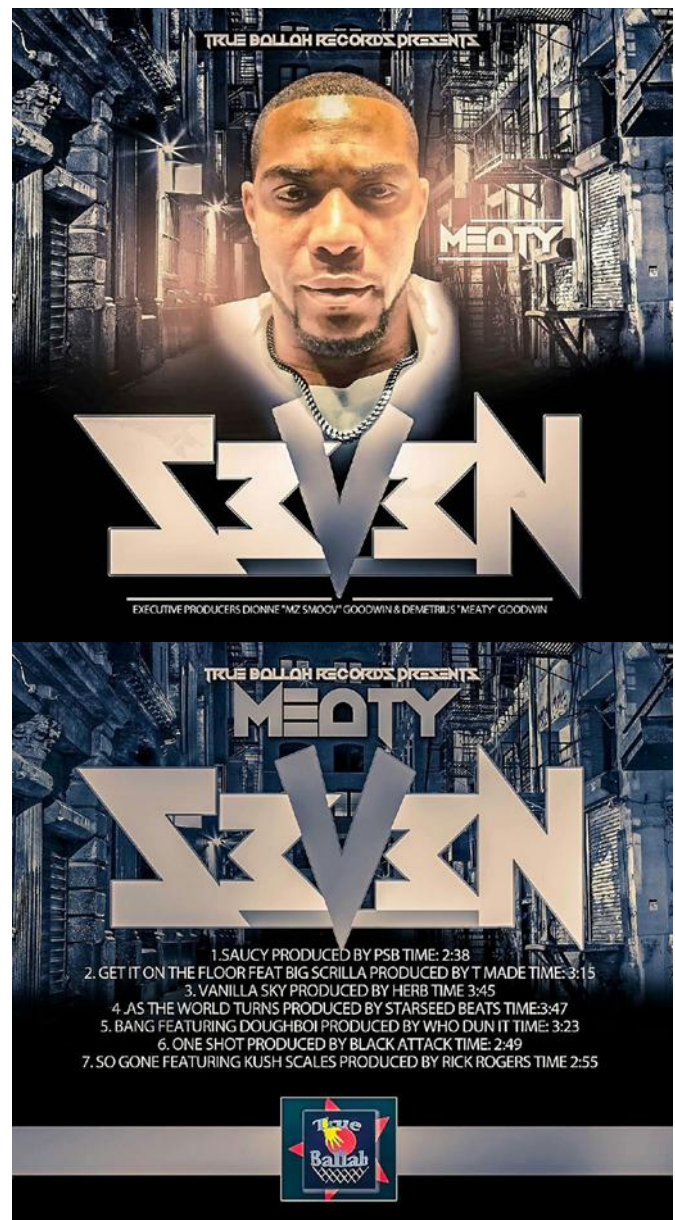
His patriotism and need to support his daughter led him to put his goals on hold. He soon learned that you can’t stop fate, as he became a magnet for independent artists like himself building a library of music with features from artists around the country, while in Iraq and Afghanistan. Without having a true presence in the United States, Meaty started to fear that he would not be heard.

This was a fear that subsided once he saw the love and support he had received on one of the largest music platforms. Meaty has stolen the hearts of hip-hop enthusiasts in the Midwest region. And 2017 was the year the King came home, the prodigal son returned,

and the future met the present. Meaty’s first two singles “Saucy” and “Get It On The Floor” from his album S3V3N soon created some buzz.

Meaty is steadily building not only a career in the music industry but a brand with staying power together with his younger sister and longtime partner, Dionne “Mz Smoov” Goodwin. The two run True Ballah Records an independent record label that records and distributes their artists’ music. True Ballah Records is not just a music label, it is a family.

OFFICIAL LINK: www.trueballahrecords.com





ARVA

“ALADDIN” — A ROUSING RACONTEUR AND ADVENTURER!

Born in Athens Greece, Arva moved to the United Kingdom at the age of 19 in order to pursue studies in Music and Entertainment. Shortly after, he successfully worked as an actor and singer, producing his own songs on TV and stage. In less than a year, Arva was able to garner massive audiences on multiple social media platforms, with hundreds of thousands of subscribers, millions of views, and a huge fanbase making him one of the fastest growing social media stars in Europe.

His YouTube channel “Arvaofficial” is featured on YouTube’s most viewed videos on a weekly basis. Arva has dropped quite a few tracks, all supported by his fun-filled and entertaining videos. His latest being the Trap-infused single, “Aladdin”.

What is immediately evident on this track even more so than on his previous mind-bending performances, is the vocal polyphony that he employs. His tongue in cheek lyrics match levels of speaking past most mother tongue rappers, and the way in which he says what he says has evolved to another level catchy cleverness.

There’s a surface-level explanation for this. In his songs Arva adopts multiple personas – some his own, others he’s stylizing off others. Each of his tracks reveal a new level of commitment, which makes you wonder if he is saying something literal and personal or simply playing a parody of his chosen subject. Either way his performances are always compelling, as it is on “Aladdin”.

Lyrical, the track sticks to the genre’s hottest and trendiest tropes: “Aladdin Aladdin Aladdin, Fucking your bitch on a carpet. Pick up your bitch in a market, Aladdin Aladdin Aladdin,” but everything is so rooted in the cosmic surrealism of his voice that it virtually ceases to matter.

Arva is far from your average rapper. He is the type of artist who doesn’t fit into the square boxed dichotomy of modern hip-hop. Instead, he completely flips the table on this debate. Arva is clever, colorful, and incredibly unique; has something to say, but it’s not complicated nor overbearing. He takes the trap-rap style and simply pushes it into his own direction.

Its sugarcoated beat with a multicolored melody and cleverly explicit wordplay illustrates his creative vision. The production on “Aladdin” is unsurprisingly strong, as I’d already heard some of his other tracks and knew the kind of quality to expect. Rich synths weave through the mix of heavy bass, a thumping kick drum and aggressive hi-hats.

The track has a punchy yet almost aqueous sound that compliments the vocals perfectly, and emphasizes the spontaneous quality that gives Arva’s words such raw power. The artist plays many roles in his songs, but all of them are directly connected to the overarching persona that Arva really is.

Arva who regularly straddles the line between anomaly and conundrum, is already something of a rousing raconteur and adventurer on YouTube. The fact that he keeps getting better is pretty exciting, if only to see just where he is capable of reaching!

OFFICIAL LINKS:

YouTube @ ArvaOfficial

Spotify @ Arva



Aladdin

Aladdin

Aladdin

Aladdin

Aladdin



BORIS JELIC

MOVING OUTSIDE OF HIP-HOP'S TRADITIONAL BORDERS!

Coming to the table with his own music genre which he calls "Gay Hip-Hop", Sweden's music rebel, Boris Jelic is truly an artist who is never afraid to speak his mind. He's being booked in the biggest clubs all around Europe and is just about ready to drop his new album "Do or Die" in July. Jelic's methods are novel, and the tenor of his crude, youthful intensity sounds unmatched, as he blends hip-hop rhymes, electronic soundscapes and a rock star-like pulse.

At a time when the genre is consistently in flux, Jelic is another one of the new breed of artists who does not stick to the fixed markers of its archetypal vocabulary, making music that challenges sonically while moving outside of hip-hop's traditional borders.

There's the crude sense of humor, used to relieve the built-up tension of so much dense, complex wordplay. There's the habit of handling emotional duress via confrontational swagger, lashing out at enemies real and imagined.

There's the prideful insistence on antisocial behavior, against the bigotry of establishment thinking. The focal point of Boris Jelic's rebellious métier, works within a familiar tradition of sublimated rage, oscillating wildly between ironic and genuine treatment of these emotions.

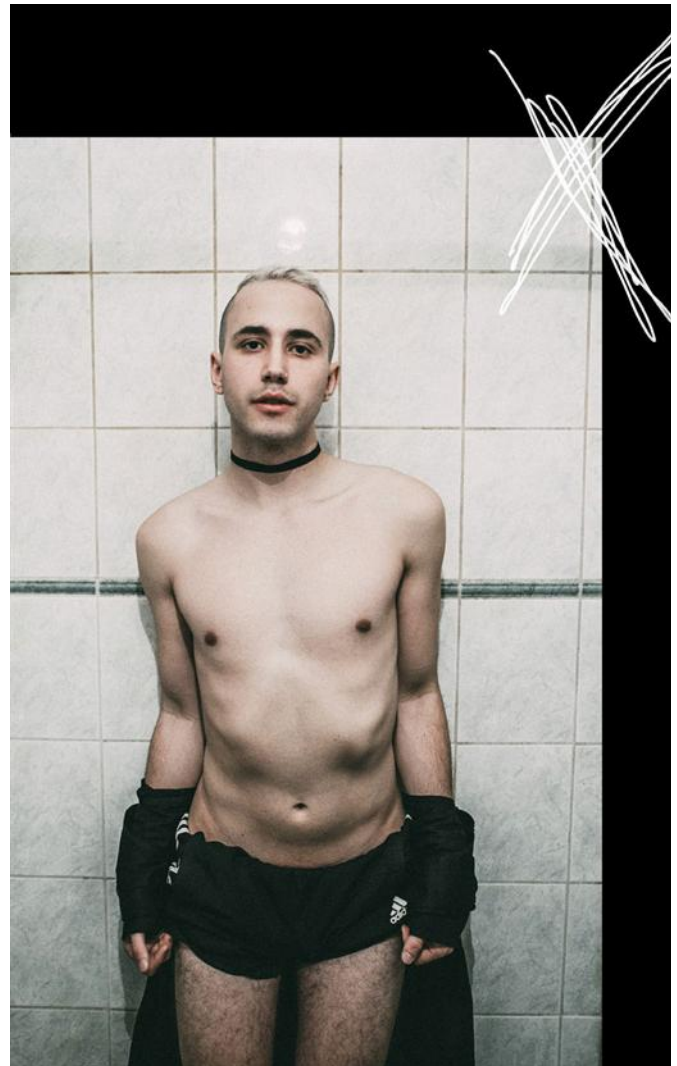
The single "Sell Me Something" testify to the artist's freethinking mind and hedonistic tendencies. "I don't care what it is, I want to get my mind off things. I want you to save me, you got the medicine I need. Sell me something (I don't care what it is. Sell me something (You name the price)..." makes a clear statement on substance use and dependence, as he continues: "I can never get enough, my body's slowly breaking down. What I use to be, is now the man that I fear."

On "Freedom" Jelic puts forth his freethinking mind and strong will: "You know that I'm a rebel always fighting for my rights. I've got an army of me, and we do care about equality." The song leans on a big banging electro beat, fired up by blaring synths and a thumping bassline.

It is a phenomenal representation of a creative mind bursting with artistic talent and self-determination. It's a track that

truly shows Jelic's growth, and his clear spectrum of maturity and emotional depth. It also proves that he is able to speak to a generation that can appreciate his raw confrontational style. The key to liking these songs is taking Boris Jelic seriously. It's tempting to not do this; it may be too uncomfortable to accept Jelic's provocation at face value, as well as the progressive thinking of his mindset. To take Boris Jelic seriously is to see his brilliant mind and steadfast willpower in searching for a liberated and just world.

OFFICIAL LINK: www.instagram.com/borisjelic



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WWW.CULTURE-BOX.COM



TUBORG
...GØR NOGET MED MUSIKKEN





ARIUS

"4U" — AN INFECTIOUS LAID-BACK GROOVE!

Managed by PKaldone, Arius is a 23 year old Detroit native, who moved to LA two years ago to pursue a music career. Arius who also writes for other artists beside herself, has done shows in LA, Miami, Detroit and ATL. She already has an EP out called "Pandora's Box", while she has just released the first single "4U" from her upcoming 2nd EP titled "Reality".

On the new single, the singer/songwriter has crafted a formula that blends her personal passions and struggles into a blast of contagious, natural energy, something that will keep fans coming back for more.

Arius welcomes the question of who she is and reflects on her relationships and goals, synthesizing her romantic identity onto the song. Feeding someone love is one of life's greatest gifts, but fueling and invigorating someone with newfound energy, can be painful when it is misused and unrequited.

"I don't want to do this every night. I'm sick and tired of all the things you do. You lie to me, you lie to me. I don't want to admit I was a fool for you. I didn't know what to do. Just know I was a fool for you," sings Arius. It is primarily a soul record with the majority of the song rooted in a strong bass arrangement and subtle keyboard flourishes.

Certainly, the production does a fine job in bringing a rootsy warmth to the classic Soul and R&B vibe set in a modern sound. More importantly, Arius' highly expressive voice commands the beat like she has been doing it all her life.

Arius is responsible for giving "4U", out via MafiaSoul Records LLC, its soulful snap. If it's true that this technological music world has become cluttered with many-a-chancer who has tried their hand at creating a vintage soul sound only to come up clutching nothing but cheap, tacky cliches, then Arius' smoky, sultry voice has an authenticity that can't be faked.

Her pipes turn the laid-back groove into an infectious, melodic banger, and her breathy vocals bring an understated, almost melancholic sensuality, to an openly heartfelt narrative.

It's that knack for heart-to-heart shape-shifting that gives "4U" its distinctive flavor. Throughout the track Arius' voice is the

top draw-card, going from strength to strength, the depth of its scrumptious yearning airiness, grows richer and more alluring.

Here she attempts to address basic human needs in relationships, and to nourish the heart and soul in every sense with a track that emphasizes the organic and the authentic. And she succeeds wonderfully.

In this sense, the lyrics of "4U" is a demonstration of how the narrator has gotten back in touch with, and in control of, her life. The scope of the song's self-awareness easily translates to everyone it touches, thereby slipping beneath the remarkable relatability of its lyrics and doling out soulful fare with a powerful meaning in the process. It is simply empowering, uplifting, and truthful!

OFFICIAL LINK: www.instagram.com/AriusOfficial_





INTELLESSENCE

“DYNAMO” – FUTURISTIC TEXTURES AND RETRO TONES!

432 Hz is said to be the natural frequency of the universe, to have cosmic healing powers and to attract masses of audience to our music. Just by tuning our music less than a semitone below our standard A=440Hz we are promised direct access to the universe's hidden treasures. There are many articles presenting evidence in favor of 432 Hz. Mozart, Verdi, Jimi Hendrix, Bob Marley, Prince were said to have tuned to 432 Hz. Whatever the pros and cons, I personally believe that musicians should be able to tune to any base frequency they like, as standards should not hold anyone back.

It's not often we bump into 432 Hz musicians to make comparisons, but I have just bumped into Intellescence, a solo recording artist, producer and formally trained audio engineer. He is known to be a pioneer in a melodic, hypnotic groove recorded at A = 432 Hz, and has recently released his 9 track album “Dynamo”.

This album takes the blissful imagery in life and immortalizes them into music. Sure, you've got problems, bills, work, and drama in your life – we all do – but when this album plays, those things go away for a little while, even if it's just a split second. When this plays, you're on a beach with friends soaking up sun; you're discovering the little things in life that make it worth living.

Luscious tones, sweet melodies, rich harmonies grooving organic rhythms and smooth electronics all sweep you up onto cloud nine and whisk you away to another dimension. It's a warping time travel between futuristic textures and retro tones.

It is a smooth, progressive sound reminiscent of early psychedelic rock like Pink Floyd and the acid pop years of The Beatles, mixed with co-opted jams from the sprawling soundscapes of Orchestral Maneuvers in The Dark, the razor sharp pop choruses of The Pet Shop Boys and the undeniable arranging genius of Thomas Dolby.

Intellescence music, is authentic and really good – refreshing, smart and beautiful. Great music that can make you disappear from the real world, for better, for worse. If there's one thing this artist doesn't suffer from, it's a lack of ambition.

“Dynamo” shows that Intellescence puts much more weight into his music than even his most scrupulous listeners do, often taking it to outlandish levels of complex excellence, as can be heard on the musically busy “Groovy Tune” and “Hey Now”.

But then he can also turn out a straightforward melody and beat like he does on “Simple Song” with its lavish strings and propulsive rhythm. The epic opening track “A Summer's Dream”, quickly indicates that the artist's intentions on this album, are nothing short of messianic. From the jangling, strumming guitars, to the sprawling keyboards, the sound soon engulfs you.

Those intentions are confirmed on “Think About Tomorrow”, as the grandiose musical arrangement wraps itself around the warm melodic vocals in a track that instantly brought back memories of some of Mike Oldfield's work. However little did I know that the best was still to come.

A great sense of momentum builds up over the course of the back-to-back tracks “Alive”, “So High” and “Rain”. A little more focused, a little more refined, a little more catchy, these three tracks are for me, the album's accessible centerpieces. No matter what your genre pick is, these songs are hard to dislike.

“Rain” is soaring, hypnotic, and beautifully charming song that blends sweeping auto-tuned vocals with elevated jangle-pop pathos; and places crystalline, thumping basslines over waves of gentle, atmospheric strings.

The song is driven by a carefully relentless rhythm, like the never-ending lope of a determined stallion, and delivered in irresistible streams of enchanting, focused melody. Subtly stunning, gorgeous and completely captivating; this is an album that I could live with for quite a while!

OFFICIAL LINK: www.facebook.com/Intellescence



RADIO DRIVE FT. KEVIN GULLICKSON

"SHE COLORS MY WORLD"

"She Colors My World", the 5th and latest album by award-winning Radio Drive featuring Kevin Gullickson, is pretty much a progressive pop-rock affair. As simple as that. There is nothing here that wants to stretch itself out of the canons of such a well-defined genre blend. On the contrary, the music on the album revolves around what has made progressive rock what it is today: complex dynamics, a wide range of styles harmoniously compressed to form a variegated compound. The pop and catchy art-rock elements that have marked Radio Drive's previous releases are still present both in the lyrics and in the music in ways that almost go beyond their usual duty as mere accessories.

There is an overarching, epic, major label feeling pervading the album, from the very first spin. And a lot of this has to do with Kevin having worked – from past to present – with producer by Chris Garcia (Adele and Katy Perry), Stuart Epps (Elton John, Led Zeppelin, Oasis, Twisted Sister, George Harrison, Robbie Williams, Bad Company and more) and on his latest album with Robert L. (Paul McCartney, U2, David Bowie, Aerosmith and many more) who did the final mastering.

The album opener, "Horizon", is one of the most meticulously composed pieces in the Radio Drive catalogue. It's a very entertaining song and not just because it's an extravagant spectacle of creativity, but because it has a set of alluring harmonies. The track kicks-off with an enthralling demeanor that brings some past Yes tracks to mind. The spontaneous energy on this track serves as a kind of ascension that takes us into a much more emotive sublimity on "A New Start". Kevin Gullickson directs the piece into a fluidly rhythmic mid-tempo epic, with squealing lead lines, strumming acoustic guitars and rich strings.

The intimate synergy that the keyboards and vocal melodies are working on throughout "Sweet Thing" are something that will bewilder the senses in awe. This entire song is a melodic voyage through musical passages that are governed by understated virtuosity – both instrumentally and in the vocal arrangements. There's a variety of influences all mingling together at once throughout "Forever I Do", with its crunchy overdriven guitar interludes, but the catchy pop aspects are

the most obvious of all, especially in the vocal hooks. "Every Road" is another mellifluous piece, and a rather innovative one because it manages to add a wondrous sense of beauty to the jangling undertones that carry out the rhythm and the massive synth strings that come sliding in and out. This is followed by the cover of "Hey Bulldog", taken from the Beatles' Yellow Submarine album. Just like the original, plenty shine is given to the great guitar and bass work. "Time To Rise" is one of my favorite songs on the album. Its melody leaves us sinking deeply within its emotive waves of melancholia that suddenly deliver eruptive vocal outbursts, adding a sense of excitement to the piece.

"Life As It Should Be" emphasizes on elaborate arranging and technical work, but it manages to orchestrate them in a manner that is captivatingly euphonic. Despite all the virtuosic musicianship and fantastic harmonies on this record, the songs on this album makes this very much a narrative-driven record.

This is also strongly evidenced on both "Life As It Should Be" and the closing track "Waiting", where the lyrical themes are communicated in a manner that is easy to connect to. Lyrically, Kevin Gullickson avoids the grandiose and instead opts to tell powerful stories about real life experiences.

The level of compositional complexity is always harmonized to that of the lyrical narrative. The songs with straight-forward lyrical content are structurally simpler, while the songs with more nuanced stories have more dynamic song structures. But what makes "She Colors My World" an outstanding album is undoubtedly the music.

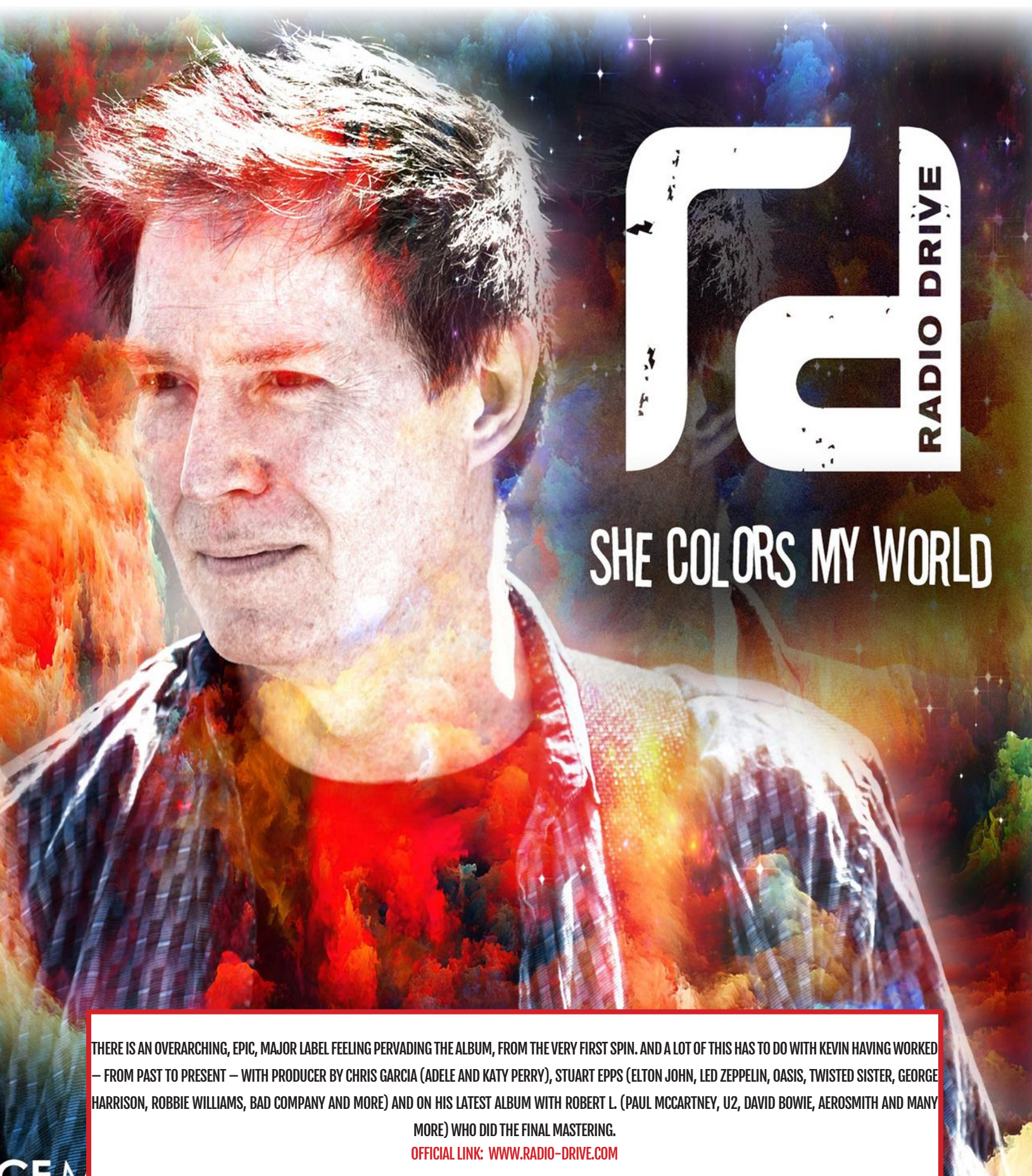
This is an accessible, sonic effort sounding like a clever compendium of influences filtered through the talent of one of the better underground indie rock composers around, rather than just another record aping something else. There's a very good chance the personable stories and delectable melodies of "She Colors My World" will win you over.

OFFICIAL LINK: www.radio-drive.com

TUNEDLOUD.COM

SPOTLIGHT/ARTIST

RADIO DRIVE



SHE COLORS MY WORLD

THERE IS AN OVERARCHING, EPIC, MAJOR LABEL FEELING PERVADEING THE ALBUM, FROM THE VERY FIRST SPIN. AND A LOT OF THIS HAS TO DO WITH KEVIN HAVING WORKED – FROM PAST TO PRESENT – WITH PRODUCER BY CHRIS GARCIA (ADELE AND KATY PERRY), STUART EPPS (ELTON JOHN, LED ZEPPELIN, OASIS, TWISTED SISTER, GEORGE HARRISON, ROBBIE WILLIAMS, BAD COMPANY AND MORE) AND ON HIS LATEST ALBUM WITH ROBERT L. (PAUL MCCARTNEY, U2, DAVID BOWIE, AEROSMITH AND MANY MORE) WHO DID THE FINAL MASTERING.

OFFICIAL LINK: WWW.RADIO-DRIVE.COM