

Drumcorps



THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY

AARON SPECTRE HAS HARBOURED A VISION FOR EXTREME MUSIC SINCE HE WAS A TEENAGER - THE POST-BREAKCORE CACOPHONY OF DRUMCORPS IS THE END PRODUCT.

“Drumcorps is the sound I’ve always been trying to make, since age 14, and never quite known how until now. I got diverted into the DJ realm for a while, but now I’ve found my true footing. If you wander for long enough you find you’re going in a specific direction,” Drumcorps mastermind Aaron Spectre explains of his increasingly legendary moniker. “Drumcorps is my sole focus right now - I’ve stopped accepting DJ gigs, and I’m not producing dubstep or jungle or breakcore anymore. Those have been fun, and I learned a lot, but I needed to cut those shows off in order to focus on the new tunes, to open up a bit and step back from the DJ cult.”

It’s an oft-repeated fallacy within the music industry that music is a language based primarily on the expression and discussion of ideas. The entire punk-rock discourse is built on such a concept; the romantic notion that all you need is one incendiary sound – one world-changing idea – and all will fall into place. It’s the inherent belief that audiences are yearning for groundbreaking performances and new ideas and will readily embrace challenging new forms and concepts if only given the opportunity. Aaron Spectre, however, knows that matters are slightly more complex.

A passionate musician from an early age, Spectre grew up within the fertile hardcore scene of Boston, Massachusetts - which has thus far given the world such luminaries as Converge, Cave In and Shadows Fall – before relocating to New York and discovering contemporary dance music forms like jungle, breakcore and drum’n’bass. It wasn’t until 2003, however, that Spectre relocated to Berlin and dedicated his time fully to the merging of the two worlds – an ideal that would eventually give rise to the chaotic breakcore/grindcore hybrid of Drumcorps and 2006 debut album *Grist*.

“I moved to Berlin with a little savings, no means of support, zero connections and no releases,” Spectre reveals, grim amusement colouring his words. “I realised music was my heart’s desire, and doing anything else would lead to unhappiness. The choices got easier from there - you only get one shot at this thing.

I bought some flea market speakers, focused on writing tunes 24/7, mailing out demos, putting 100 per cent energy into the live sets and playing wherever I could - Berlin squat parties all the way up to festivals over a few long hard years. It was a work ethic I learned growing up, a bottom up approach, which I now realise is the total opposite of how people do it in hype/fashion-conscious electronic music, but that’s what works for my kind of personality.”

“I have a lot of the emotional background - the reactions to what it’s like growing up in a certain place - which is the roots of hardcore. The music had to exist, at that point in time or we’d have gone crazy,” Spectre explains of his time drumming for Boston hardcore bands. “NYC gave me some varied experience and Berlin and world touring even more, but the roots come from my early days in Massachusetts - the feeling of isolation and helplessness but also camaraderie and common ground among friends working hard to turn a negative into a positive. I’ll always have that feeling, no matter where the sound goes.”

“We’re in the infant stages of this new sound,” the one-time DJ enthuses of the scene he’s created and the arrival of synth-grindcore contemporaries like Genghis Tron. “It’s wide open right now. The tools are getting easier to manage, everyone has them, and kids are making groundbreaking tunes in isolation. The good news is that people are more open-minded now than they’ve ever been. It’s only a matter of time before things reach critical mass.”

WHO: Drumcorps

WHERE & WHEN: Monster sMash Fest, The Step Inn, Saturday Jan 10

BY MATT O’NEILL