

bleeplin' electro...

Art direction & photography
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Producer Marc Adamo and vocalist/songwriter Rochelle Vincente are the names behind Brighton based Electronica act, Product.01. If I was to state the fact that I couldn't make a comparison between Product.01 and any other Electronica act in the music industry I would be lying, but the truth is there is no-one else like them around! Their style is fresh, it is a pure mixture of razor-sharp Electro beats, heavy Synth-basslines and a riot of bleeps that is complimented by lashings of aural S&M.

No wonders top names like Adam Freeland, Chicks On Speed, Dave Clarke, International Pony, Larry Tee, Si Begg and Princess Superstar are all vivacious queuing up to get their tracks remixed by the Brighton super duo. Avnit Nik Kalsi met up with Product.01 on an unusually sunny autumn afternoon in the heart of London's Eastend to discuss the three M's: Music, Mechanics and er, Marc's bad hair!

You are currently based in Brighton, but where are both originally from and how did you first meet up?

Rochelle: I was born in Austria, but my family moved to Australia when I was quite young. One of the reasons I moved to Brighton was because I was living in London and working with a producer down there and found it pointless to commute all the time. I was introduced to Marc through friends and the moment I heard his music I knew it was exactly the style of production I had been looking for my whole life!

Those times were quite memorable... for our very first recording we did Sheepskinz (which will most likely wind up on our debut album), we bought helium balloons so that I could sing with a non processed squeak! It was just silly stuff, but it was so refreshing! Then my brother, who became brain damaged through a doctor's botch up died. I was ready to pack everything in and quit music altogether, as life was going

nowhere fast. Marc stepped in and seduced me with all these loops and beats at a very high rate and we began Product.01 properly!

Marc: My parents are both Italian's who met in London, I was born in west London, and grew up there.

How would you describe your sound?

Rochelle: At the moment we describe it as 'vocal charged Electro-tech'. It's a way of describing our working process, we use Electro – technology to create sound and charge it with vocals! To me it's a bit like making love, sometimes you want it hard and fast, and other times u want it tender. I have my way of expressing things through words and arrangement, plus Marc has his unique style. The song based aspect is quite important to me, so is melody. I'm not really into things that noodle so much, as it tends to make me tune out. I have to feel like everything there has a purpose, otherwise I prefer the silence.





Someone recently described your style as 'the music flows of android machinery propelled by an overwhelming multi-layered sound density that almost compresses the air that surrounds the synthetic sonic waves crushing in and out into powerful electronic bursts of melody, grooves, rhythms and robotized angelic vocals'. Would you agree with that statement?

Rochelle: I guess it depends on the song you're talking about... 'Clone', 'Symbionic', 'Diamond' and 'Heart Ov Glass' are most definitely intended to sound like that.

The first track that got you noticed was a cover of Blondie's 'Heart Ov Glass' back in May 2002, was that the launch pad for Product.01?

Rochelle: At the time we were working on other tracks as well, but this certainly got us a bit of attention, oui! The 'Zero-One' EP was the first bunch of tracks

we had ever fully completed beyond demo form so I guess it was our way of introducing ourselves for real.

20 copies were floating around on white, as it's all we could afford to get pressed. We aimed it at people who we thought might be into this kind of sound... Paula Temple and Tom Magic Feet were the first people to get in touch, then Tommie Sunshine called us from the States to say how much he loves it. Adam Freeland asked us to do the remix for 'We Want Your Soul' after hearing it and that same week Skint offered us the 'International Pony' remix. It kept rolling like this; it was quite a turn around.

Those copies got on a lot of playlists, and by January this year (2004) we were ready to release it in its full glory. That's when things kicked in further for us with fantastic reviews and worldwide radio play.

But I don't feel like 'Heart Ov Glass' has peaked yet. I keep finding it on more and more playlists; people are

still discovering it and emailing us from around the world trying to get their hands on it.

There are so many tracks you could have chosen to cover and transform into Electro masterpieces, but what inspired you to select that particular Blondie track?

Rochelle: Blondie's 'Heart Of Glass' is such a great track. And sound wise it was different enough to begin with, which made us think that we could do something different with it sonically. We were in Oz at the time, driving to Sydney, in the middle of the desert, entering bushfire areas, I was like 'you know, if we get out of here alive we really should do That track!!' It was done primarily for us. Interestingly, after we did it, I read an interview with Chris Stein saying that it was an album track they never planned to release as a single because it doesn't have a chorus or formula. It's ironic to me that I was attracted to such a track, as this is how I tend to work.

Describe the process you go through when you write and produce your tracks. Does Marc's genius programming inspire Rochelle's lyrics or do the lyrics inspire the beat?

Rochelle: It cuts both ways baby! 'Crushproof' was written in 10 minutes and I had to leave a party as suddenly it arrived in my head; I'd actually just arrived at the party. We recorded that to a click and Marc wrote around my vocal.

'Symbionic' was an experiment where we planned to give ourselves, one day to write, record and produce a track from the ground up. Marc was a real trooper, he had the melody instantly, and I could have just lumped words in there, but I couldn't find the right lyrics. 2/3 days later... Marc was pushing and pushing; meanwhile over at the lab I was pulling my hair out of my head, feeling a lot like a soft cock when it's not supposed to be. What's a girl to do? I'm not a machine that u can just turn on and spew out tracks. I guess through my frustration came the inspiration and hence I penned 'I am your machine'!

Then with 'Clone', I snatched the loop off Marc as I really loved it, but despite my excitement it was floating about for 6 months as I pondered, and one day I was watching the Oscars and the botox-so-I-don't-sweat-under-the-earpits brigade inspired the hell out of me. Sometimes I won't know what I'm on about even once the songs are recorded. I'll listen to it months later and go 'Oh my God that's genius, that's exactly what I was feeling and I consciously didn't know it.'

Also, I was born left-handed but forced to write with my right hand at school. Totally forgot about this then a few years back when a friend in LA was reading my palm, she said I looked left handed and would live longer if I used it!!! So I re-learned to write with my left hand! It took me like, all of one week. Now I use my right hand for day-to-day stuff, and my left hand for song writing so that I can tap into that part of my brain and it seems to work! The thing that's important to us is to be formula free, i.e. to be creatively free.

Who would you say were your main influences from the music scene?

Rochelle: When I'm writing I tend to go on a music fast as far as listening to other music is concerned. So that I can figure out 'My itch!'

But I love so much music: Mouse on Mars, Stockhausen, Gorecki, Tom Waits, Siouxsie and the Banshees, Prince, Jeff Mills, Nirvana, David Bowie, Murcof, Aphex Twin, Astrid Gilberto...

My brother loved Nancy Sinatra's 'Boots Are Made For Walking' so much we had to fill an entire A side of cassette with that one song so he wouldn't have to keep rewinding and destroying tapes, so that song might have fixed itself onto my consciousness as well.

Marc: For me influences are as much about who you are ignoring as who you are listening to, so in reality I purposely avoided listening to some important musicians to resist the temptation of copying their style, while others were irresistible.

My oldest deepest influences come from electric guitar players, I was absolutely obsessed with playing as a teenager and taught myself to play so many Hendrix and Van Halen tracks it was unreal. I loved the way they could swing from beautiful melodies to wild sexy noise in such a fluid way. Hendrix was amazing at pushing the boundaries on his studio albums, experimenting with FX and transforming the way a guitar sounded, that was very inspiring to me knowing that a guitar didn't have to sound like a guitar. There wasn't a lot he didn't do; he did more with a guitar in the few years he was around than I've heard others do in all the time since. That's probably why I dropped the idea of guitars and became involved in synths and samplers.

From a dance music perspective I always checked out the Detroit producers like Ur, Drexciya, Daniel Bell etc, as it was always no compromise Electro/ Acid music with a raw purpose, and never 'functional DJ fodder'. Later on I got into Two Lone Swordsman and just loved the Tiny Reminders album.

Your style has a unique mixture of razor-sharp Electro beats, heavy synth-basslines and a riot of bleeps, which is complimented by lashings of aural S&M. How do you manage to maintain and translate this style when you perform live?

Rochelle: Most of it is self explanatory, but the aural S&M is the interesting part! It is very much electronic body music, to immerse yourself to, it's not light and fluffy fodder or background music, and it's not a goaty scratching spectator

sport, you are either involved in it or you might as well be elsewhere. We do take the sound from delicate and intricate passages to full on feedback drenched fury, which can hurt my ears.

After listening to some of Rochelle's lyrics on the 'Zero One EP', it seems to me you have a fascination with computers and machinery? Can you tell me more about this?

Rochelle: As mentioned earlier, I think this is particularly true with 'Clone', 'Symbionic', 'Diamond' and 'Heart Ov Glass'. They're an army of emotional robots, go figure! I guess I could compare it with how in Bladerunner, Rachel was a replicant and yet she had the unique ability to feel. I'm not 100% certain why I love this sound so much. I'm an incredibly sensitive person so tend to pick up on so much subconsciously. Technology is such a big part of our lives, and I love futurism. As far as I'm aware most futurism is quite cold, and I wanted to do another take on that. Bring some warmth into it. I feel like technology has taken over to such a degree that people are expected to function on that inhuman level and hence we are very out of tune with ourselves and our biorhythms as a species.

This is particularly true for woman, as our bodies aren't designed to function like a man's body is with our monthly cycles, and yet society is set up primarily by men. No wonder we get PMT! I also like what Osymyso said about our music recently. That it's more futuristic than 80's sounding, and tougher, meatier Electro element. I think he totally GOT it!

Back onto the subject of music. What was it like remixing tracks for Adam Freeland, International Pony, Dave Clarke, Chick's On Speed and Princess Superstar to name a few?

Marc: The great thing about all the tracks that I've remixed so far is that they all have really distinctive vocals in them, they are crucial to the track and it's so important for me to maintain that in the remix versions. So that's always the start point for me, then creating a new vibe that's different from the original, hopefully really different, so they are getting a completely new take on their style. Also all the tracks have had very different vibes, from the darker stuff like the Dave Clarke remix to the sexy/ funny stuff like Princess Superstar



Who would you like to collaborate with in the future?

Rochelle: To begin with Tom Waits and David Bowie would do it for me!

Marc: Honestly, if Tom Waits ever wants to do an electronic project. I'd be there in a second. He's just such an amazing vocal talent and has made my day on numerous occasions with his crazy imagination and I know he would make sure that the rulebook was burnt on the first meeting. I'm also looking forward to jamming with Jean-Paul Bondy on some electro-breaks mayhem, that's a future date for sure!

Your new EP titled 'Cloned' is planned for release in October 2004, can you tell me more about this?

Rochelle: The 'Cloned EP' is a natural progression from the 'Zero One EP'. Song based Electro, and an instrumental club mix that gets straight down to the dirty business! We had a bunch of songs that

we had rough mixes of and thought we had our suspicions of which ones we wanted to include on the EP. We sent these mixes to loads of people, plus put a link up in a Pop Stars style panel on the web and got people to vote for what they wanted to hear from us next. Voila!

'Clone' and 'Diamond' were the favorites so they got on. I've said what inspired 'Clone' already, and 'Diamond' is about unrequited love and sexual frustration when two people are clearly not in sync.

Marc: I had also been developing a raw and bleepy version of 'Clone', much more abstract and linear than the original, but using the same harmonic progression, that builds and builds and uses the vocoded hook at the crescendo. It was fun for me to create a remix of our own track without making the vocals the main player; it helps for me to work in different ways so that I can go back to the vocal music with a fresh perspective.

What type of tracks/ material are you working on at the moment?

Marc: We have just finished a heavy duty Electro-breaks track called 'I Like it Loud' and it is loud. This EP is out now on Bow Wow Records with a dubbier version and a remix by Si Begg. Bow Wow Records are also putting out an EP by Buck Funk 3000 with a remix by us of a track called 'Too much Booty'!

How would you like Product.01 to progress in the future?

Rochelle: It'd be well cool if our music hit every corner of the planet and its satellites. I spotted an old promo of ours in some collectors' item auction the other week so we're hoping that's a good sign! I'd also love Product.01 to become a much more visual experience, whether it's producing images and videos for the live shows or simply making music videos.

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