

Is Britpop over as far as you're concerned?

"It had to be really. If you start feeling uncomfortable with something it's best to remove it from your life."

Is your recent movie role in *Face* (alongside *Trainspotting* star Robert Carlyle) a sideline, or is acting something that captivates you?

"I was surprised by how much I enjoyed it, but I think it's such a dubious thing for a musician to be doing that I'll have to wait and see what it looks like. I think the film is going to be good, but I reserve judgement on myself. If I find it at all embarrassing, I won't ever do it again. So, if for some reason I click, I'd like to do it again."

You have acted before.

"I went to drama school for two terms. Film, you've either got it or you haven't. You can learn tricks and get a method together, but the camera either works with your face and your body or it doesn't."



Natural Rhythm

Coldcut

'Say Kids, What Time is It?' Coldcut time!

Coldcut are UK pioneers of the cut-and-paste sample techniques that so much of today's hip-hop and dance music is based on, and producers for and owners of one of the UK's most respected left foot, abstract beat labels, Ninja Tune. Ever since the release of 'Say Kids...', which predated and was in fact sampled on the seminal club classic 'Pump Up the Volume', Coldcut have been on the cutting edge. From their legendary remix of Eric B and Rakim's 'Paid in Full', which still sounds super fresh today, to their groundbreaking experiments with CD-ROM tomfoolery, Coldcut embody the spirit of dance culture's DIY ethic.

They've just released a new single, 'Atomic Moog 2000'/'Boot the System', and it comes with a well-nifty CD-ROM tacked on the end of it. Playable on either Mac or PC, it contains an absolutely stunning music video called 'Natural Rhythm'. It's made up of moving images taken from nature's kingdom, which are linked cleverly and completely to mostly natural sounds, creating a wicked tribal rhythm piece. What's also unusual about their new single is, it's political: 'Atomic Moog 2000' is an anti-nuclear statement, while 'Boot the System' decries the worldwide arms trade. I spoke with one half of the Cut, Mr Matthew Black, and it went down like this...

Do you think it's important for groups like yourselves, who are in a public position, to make political statements?

"I think with things like war and environment, nowadays it is very important to describe your position on those issues. I think with records in our scene — you know, alternative trip-hop, abstract beat science, whatever, it's all music to me — but there's an awful lot of instrumental tracks which do very little and say very little. There's an awful lot of lovey-dovey sort of business, which is cool, I'm into all that, but from time to time it's nice to drop the bomb in your own way."

You guys are well respected for being pioneers of the cut-and-paste sampling technique, but what about live deejaying? Do you get out and about to play much?

"Yeah, we do, we've just finished our regular Ninja Tune club night. That was running for a while at the Blue Note once a month, and it was very popular."

What do you think makes a good club night?

"Well, a good price on the door is always handy, so we only charged six pound, whereas the average is around 10. We put on three floors of entertainment, with three different DJs on each floor throughout the evening, and those DJs would have four turntables to mess around on. And we'd bring in people like Talvin Singh on percussion and Tom Jenkins from Squarepusher playing bass, with Hex-static on visuals. Just getting the vibe right."

How about vinyl, do you think it's here to stay?

"It's surviving well. It's a useful tool, Ninja Tune is pressing more vinyl than we ever have, so, I guess it's here for the meantime at least."

As Coldcut, you have your own radio show on Kiss called Solid Steel, The Broadest Beats in London. What's your philosophy behind good radio?

"Lots of bass, the right sort of mood, just an out-there atmosphere and having that sense of not quite knowing what's going to happen next, trying not to interrupt the flow. It's sort of like a DJ mix, but lying down, you know."

Back to the new single, tell us about the 'Natural Rhythm' music video on its CD-ROM.

"Well, it's taking the approach we had to sampling sound and applying that to visual images. We've taken images from everywhere, like there's some stuff on hi-8, we've taken stuff from libraries, anywhere really. And in this instance, we've combined the sound and visuals on a software package."

In your press release you say the average pop video is saying nothing because the images you see have no connection to the music they are bolted onto. With the cheaply available technology now, do you think it's time people took the power back and took a more DIY approach?

"I think so, yeah, because people have been doing that with the music, but not so much with the visuals. It's just a matter of people learning the software and taking it from there really."

You've also said the correct use of synchronised sound and vision could be a powerful technique for remixing human consciousness. Is that slightly tongue-in-cheek?

"Yeah, we're always slightly tongue-and-cheek. But music is a very powerful medium itself, but most people actually work on a more visual level, so if you combine the two, then hopefully you can create something that will move people."

You've got a new album coming out this year — any tentative titles?

"Well, we're thinking about *Back By No Demand*, but we'll see. It should be out by the middle of the year, and it will have a CD-ROM with three videos on it."

Is that a way of giving the consumer more bang for their buck?

"Yeah, it's an added value thing. It's not expensive to do, and I think on a DIY level it's very important. And if you haven't got a computer, perhaps it will excite you enough to go out and buy one, which would be great — just show people that computers are useful tools really."

That they are, folks. If you are connected, be sure to check the very entertaining Coldcut Website at www.obsolete.com/pipe/ — and go buy their new single, it's worth it for that 'Natural Rhythm' thing, I tell ya.

ANDY PICKERING



Being a former drama student, do you like making videos?

"I enjoy it, I spend more time on them because I quite enjoy being in front of the camera. I don't get really impatient. I enjoy the whole idea of film, but I think I'm in a bit of a minority. The problem is, making videos always comes at a time when you're doing a million other things — like hundreds of interviews and photo shoots — you're never just focused on making the video. If you're in a band you're either doing absolutely nothing, just hanging out, or you're working as hard as any person can work hard."

Did Justine enjoy the 1996 *Big Day Out* tour?

"They really enjoyed it, they had a brilliant time."

Are you keen to make it down to New Zealand?

"We'll be there in June. I'm looking forward to coming to New Zealand more than Australia. I like volcanic places."

MURRAY CAMMICK



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