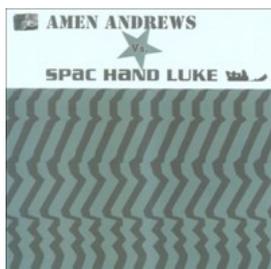


Brainwashed - Luke Vibert, "Amen Andrews vs Spac Hand Luke"

Written by Gary Suarez

Saturday, 21 October 2006 16:00 - Last Updated Sunday, 13 March 2011 08:45



In the face of diminishing returns from his midtempo/ downtempo releases for Warp, Ninja Tune, and Planet Mu, Luke Vibert's latest for Rephlex showcases his boldest material this century, suggesting that there may yet be some more good ideas up this maturing musician's rumpled sleeve.

[Rephlex](#) As someone who's followed and reviewed Vibert's work for a number of years now, I am dismayed at the crapshoot probability regularly faced when putting any of his post-2000 releases on my stereo or iPod for the first time. Originally drawn into his world by the untouchable electronic classic *Drum 'n' Bass For Papa*, it pains me that the vast majority of his released work of the past six years either failed to move me or didn't warrant a second listen. Still, for all the heartache brought on by *Lover's Acid*

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, projects like Kerrier District and Amen Andrews gave me hope that Vibert wasn't completely washed up. This new album is a strong showing, his best in ages, presenting a virtual soundclash between two co-dependent personas, both eager to dominate the other. Over 13 tracks, this charming yet spastic Jekyll and Hyde routine shifts almost tit-for-tat between furious ravetastic jungle and grimy curb-stomping dubstep, aggressively throwing wild punches and landing several direct hits to the jaw, crotch, and gut.

Although the tracklisting doesn't explicitly define which moniker is on deck at a given time (save for the obviously named "Amen Andrews"), anyone who's heard at least one of the projects can conclude that Amen Andrews is the maniacal post-rave junglist while the streetwise Spac Hand Luke doles out sinister sublow. Vibert keeps the mood as manic as possible for the uptempo numbers and equally quirky during the darker cuts. "Grime II Dark," a great example of the latter, features a looped echoey vocal over a speaker-rattling bassline and snappy beats, while the frenetic "Screwface" works sliced and diced amen breaks around Steven Seagal movie dialogue from that distant era when he was still a star and not a walking punchline. Admittedly, I'm partial to woofer-testing slower tracks such as "Play" or the Sheffield bleep rewrite "Like A Machine," morseso than the feverish tempos on the self-explanatory "1 Shot Killer Pussy." Opener "London" ranks among Vibert's finest ever, weaving together thematic elements of detective noir, Hitchcockian mystery, and gutter-level grime, creating a straight-up anthem in the progress. Alfred's voice reappears on the final number, the appropriately titled "Murder," which doesn't so much reprise the album's themes as it riffs off of them.

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While he's hardly abandoned his trusty 303, the typical acid-doused quality of his recent productions has been supplanted by a sparser, more inconspicuous application. Then again, it serves little purpose to analytically fixate on this with so many beats and noises clanging and firing away all at once. Instead, I strongly suggest cranking up the volume and dancing your motherfucking ass off.

samples:

- [London](#)
- [Screwface](#)
- [Grave](#)