

MIXED UP MAGAZINE

MIX TO THE MAX WITH DJ SMALL PAUL

Mix Fax: INTERESTING PHENOMENA VS. SHIFTER

MILE AFTER MILE - THE
INITIAL STAB MIX.

After an unenforced silence of more than four years new remix material from Shifter and Interesting Phenomena is finally emerging. We sent a MU Magazine reporter to ask remixer of choice DJ SMALLPAUL 'Why Now?', 'Why Him?' and most importantly of all, 'Why?'



DJ Small Paul

All good things come to those who wait. And wait. And give up hope, before waiting some more. So it was like a bolt from the blue that IP Productions this week announced the availability of a new remix of an Interesting Phenomena vs. Shifter track, 'Mile After Mile'. This 'Initial Stab Mix' is being placed exclusively for simultaneous global release at <http://www.backformore.co.uk>

The track has been reworked by long time Shifter mix pilot and sonic agitator DJ Small Paul. In this world exclusive interview we caught up with Small in his alpine mixing shed, somewhere in the southern hemisphere.

MU Magazine: Small, good to see you. How's it mixing?

DJ Small Paul: Tripping and a rippin, base, man, base. Quite good actually. Nice of you to ask...

MU Magazine: You and the band(s) go back a long way. How did the commission originally come about?

I guess I was the right dude in the wrong place, possibly at the right or wrong time. I started doing some disco duties during early informal gigs, mostly out of sympathy. Over time I grew to love the band, in the same way that you might grow to love a defenceless puppy. They were often thought of as a cult band, but without the following. The fact that they never 'sold out' or went for easy popularity was part of the reason for why they appealed to me as a remixer.

MU Magazine: And yet it's been a long time since we heard anything from 'The Phenomena' or its fallout band, the mighty 'Shifter'. Why is this?

As you know, the band went their very separate ways back in 2002. I was then asked to do some remixing work by their management company, IP Productions. This was a major challenge for an artist such as oneself. For me, the work of Shifter has always been a toy box of opportunities, all rutting riffs, crunchy chords and appealing arpeggios. However, the band's disregard for traditional song structures and uniform tempos presented a particular challenge. That and the fact that they agreed to fly me to a variety of top world locations. Since then it's been a long and strange road...

MU Magazine: On that (discordant) note, it's long been rumoured within the industry that relations between you and the band's management company have been more strained than the average footballer's groin. Care to comment?

It's not a secret, it's just that we have different creative goals. Their view is that I was contractually obligated to deliver a remix album by Spring 2004. My goal is



The Original Interesting Phenomena, seen here relaxing between arguments.



to deliver the best mix. Any good remixer worth his or her knobs will know that a good mix takes time. All true art takes time, after all Da Vinci's 'Last Supper' wasn't painted by teatime. So far this mix has taken over three years, which is a shorter period than I would have liked, and I'd like to stress that I have been forced to issue it in an unfinished state.

MU Magazine: We noticed. 'Mile After Mile' is also not an obvious choice for a remix, given that it was never performed live and lacks many of the oomph and time tested stompingness of more popular tracks such as 'Runners' or 'Someone Else's Dream'. Tell us about the remix. Why this one?

This is track for the connoisseur, for the true fan, the real Phenomenistas out there. I think a good remixer needs to mine a less populist musical seam if they are to produce something unique. For me, I think the mark of a good mixmaster is to stamp your own authority on track. You will note that with 'Mile After Mile' I've cleverly improved on the original by leaving almost all of it out of the remix, and I'm confident that this mix has the originality and modern feel that will mean that even the band themselves won't recognise it.

MU Magazine: Do you not think that they will mind?

Given that they were never able to play the track in public and probably last heard the track in the late 1990s I'm confident that they are not in a position to notice.

MU Magazine: There's an unexpected guitar solo in there at the end. For God's sake, why?

The challenge. I am particularly pleased to include an early Mark Horswill guitar solo. By early I mean possibly even three or four a.m. This solo was originally played in around 1994 and has since been gathering dust in the band's tape cupboard. I was lucky to find it.

Mark's solos are legendary for their effortless fluidity and

willingness to depart from traditional musical time signatures. It's been a real challenge to include it given that remixer are forced to work in electronically enforced tempos. Through the use of clever software and with a casual disregard for what sounds right I think I've left the rough edges in, and have captured the spirit of his playing.

MU Magazine: So, what's next out of the remixing bowl...

It's an extensive reworking of the track 'Legend'. No, really, stop laughing...

MU Magazine: Small, thanks for your invaluable time, mix to the max.

We contacted a representative of IP Productions to get their side of the story. They us sent the following statement:

"DJ Small Paul was originally contracted to deliver an album of remixes back in 2002. Since then we have not heard a musical sausage, despite flying him round the world at great expense as he felt it would help him 'open up his creative sluice gate'. This track has been extracted as part of a contractual obligation and follows an increasingly threatening round of legal correspondence. We note that Mr Paul has chosen to honour this commitment by delivering a heavily refangled version of a particularly obscure track. For this reason we would like to make it clear that this track represents merely an offcut from the remix project and is unlikely to appear on any forthcoming remix album. The release date for this album was Spring 2004, and is currently anyone's guess."

Track Facts: The original 'Mile After Mile' was written in around 1992 and was originally called 'The Hunt'. The track later appeared on the Interesting Phenomena album 'Beyond The Edge' and after significant reworking and new lyrics the band never performed the song live, leaving the track as one of the band's lesser known works. This remix segues two thirds of the way through into the outro of another track 'Faces of Glass' which appeared on the band's uncelebrated album, 'The Scarred Land'. Why it does this we don't know.

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