Interviews · Magazine · 5 min read

Interview: Five Minutes with youANDme

Image: youANDme

youANDme is deeply engrained in the German electronic music world and especially the international Berlin club scene. As the owner of **Rotary Cocktail Recordings**, **Polymorph**, **CUTZ.ME**, and three other mysterious imprints, he provides a steady flow of music and talent from Germany to the rest of the world. As DJ and producer, his music runs inherently deep, with a raw and kicking signature. The ideas of funk and soul serve as its backbone across styles like house, techno, dub, and electronica. Not only is he in the heart of the bohemian capital for techno, he also serves a greater role as its artery, pumping blood through its veins with his labels as the valves. This has made him international transplants, playing gigs and festivals around the world in cultural hubs like New York, Chicago, London, Paris, Amsterdam, and most recently the **Epizode Festival** in Albania. Coming off his headlining set at the festival on September 24th, we caught up with the DJ and producer to find out more about what makes him tick, and what we can expect from him next.

Set the tone for us. Why the arts?

I was always fascinated by the art of music because it can touch your emotions like nothing else.

Which comes first when you're producing – the sound or the idea?

Most of the time I begin with an idea and try to realize it with my instruments but sometimes I just jam around and if I catch something interesting it can be the starting point of a new song.

Does your material feature any collaborations?

Yes, I did many collaborations in my career because it can be a lot of fun to make a track with good friends plus you can always learn something new or in a different way.

What's on your current playlist?

One of my favorite records of the moment is the new Ornaments by Carlos Nilmms feat. Keter Darker called "Infinity" EP or the new Ian Pooley – "Basic Juno" on Rekids.

Tell us about the chemistry you have with your fans on stage.

It's always important to feel the vibe and interact with the people on the dancefloor but I don't like "aerobic Djs". Sometimes it feels like they exercise more their moves instead of their Dj skills.

What techniques do you experiment with to get your original sound?

There is at least one element in my songs which I recorded through the Roland Space Echo followed by the Roland Dimension D. It gives a special depth and room which you can't create with plugins. I tried it many times with all available emulations but unfortunately it's impossible to reach the original sound.

Take us through a day in the recording studio.

A typical studio day starts in the morning with coffee and listening to new music. Then I start the machines and open the last project to continue the work. After the first session, I have to leave the studio in the afternoon to do sports in nature, meet friends and cook for dinner. Most of the time I do a second session in the evening because I really love to be in my studio.

Was there a specific moment in your life where you thought, "this is what I want to do"?

To be honest, I never thought that I could generate my income from my biggest passion and I'm really thankful that it worked out very well.

What do you keep close by while you're playing a set?

My headphones and my records 🙂

What gets your creative juices flowing?

Listening to new music…

Any emerging artists on your radar?

Elli Altenberger and Thomas Stieler

Take us through your collection of gear, tech or software that accompanies your creative expression.

See also

Review: The Brooding Midnight Techno Of Adiel & Anthony Linell's 'Raso' EP

on February 27, 2020

I recently bought a Prophet 5 which is an awesome synth. It has a simple minimalistic design that forces you to be really creative to reach your goals. The sound of the Prophet is amazing and almost everything sounds great because the sweet spot is fantastic. It's like a dream come true. When I started producing, my first synth plugin was an emulation of the Prophet 5 from Native Instruments called Pro53.

Any side projects you're working on?

During the Corona lockdown, I produced 3 different albums. It sounds a lot but music keeps me happy and brings some light into the dark times of social distancing. The first one is a modular techno LP which is inspired by the early Axis Records. The second one is a combination of dub techno and some more pop-inspired vocals. The third one was produced on a lonely island just with my laptop during holidays. It's a deep house album with some really positive summer vibes. I think none of the LPs really fits to my youANDme signature sound and that's why I will release it as side projects with different artist names.

How have you refined your craft since you entered the industry?

When you really love what you do then it's a natural process to improve your skills. It's always fun to learn something new and it's really exciting if you can explore different paths to be creative.

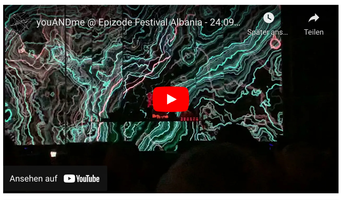
Breakdown the news for us: what can we expect from you this year?

Recently I've started a project with the amazing vocal artist Kristina Sheli. We signed our first record to one of the best house music labels Defected Records and we can't wait to release it soon. At the moment we are working on new stuff and I'm looking forward to testing it on a club sound system. I have finished another collaboration with the young DJ Elli Altenberger and our first song is inspired by our favorite dancefloor "Wintergarten". I'm sure you will hear a lot more from Elli in the next few years. There is another new youANDme release coming up on Rotary Cocktail Recordings with amazing remixes by Detroit's finest Kenny Larkin and Brazilian legend Renato Ratier. I also did some remixes during the lockdown which will be out in the next few months.

Famous last words?

Be always true to yourself!

Check out videos from **youANDme** at **Epizode Albania** below.



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