

Process And Deconstruction: A Personal Journey In Sound

Everyone's musical Journey is different. Some get where they want to be sooner than others whilst some think they have arrived well before they are ready. For me the journey so far has taken roughly 30 years and interestingly it seems to be finally coming full circle in many ways.

Looking back, I think that I've always favoured the artistic side of my brain. It's where my strengths are and where I feel most comfortable. I started playing the guitar when I was in primary school and soon after began recording my playing on a cheap cassette player. Eventually I got myself a 4-track recorder and began writing songs as well as making sound collages and noise experiments. I value that early work so much. The naivety and ignorance of it all is something that I constantly strive to re learn.

In my 20's I trained as a painter and I learnt to think like an artist which is a difficult thing to explain but for me it was about building an understanding of the world that was visual as opposed to conceptual. A world that acknowledged its own materiality and physicality, embracing its fundamental elements to construct an original language of expression. From that point onwards I've always approached music, art and writing in exactly the same way. The same processes apply.

I seriously thought that I'd continue to be a painter after leaving collage but having formed a band in 1994 the draw of making music with friends pulled stronger than the solitary nature of painting. Over the next few years I worked in a band that toured, did interviews, radio/tv etc. and made structured studio recordings. From a song writing perspective I think that I got lured into the world of the commercial music industry and unfortunately I got artistically lazy. Of course the music was important but the experience of being in a band was as much about being young with friends and enjoying making a loud art-Rock statement as it was about the details of sound.

My early love of 4 track recording and experimentation however has never been far behind me and when the band split in 2000 I continued to compose music that centred around conventional arrangements but it was the pallet of sounds that I had first developed in my teens that returned to me and interested me the most. Cheap instruments, found sound and noise mixed with ambient spill creating a sonic like autobiography.

I had a clear idea that I wanted to get back to making music with a simple lo-fi & minimal approach.

To be able to develop this new musical language I had to deconstruct a lot of what I had learnt in my 20's in order to try and get back to the raw basic sound of those early 4 track recordings. The process involved pulling apart the conventional idea of a verse/chorus structure in song writing and finally abandoning general structure altogether. I'm at a point now where I'm mostly just concerned with noise, sound collage & spoken word.

I do think that my personal journey through music is now beginning to bring me back full circle to where I first began as a teenager with a cassette 4-track. Hopefully I'm able to create music with a fresh spontaneous feel combined with the assurance of the knowledge and experience gained along the way.

Like I've said though, all this time I've been striving to think as an artist not as a musician. I say this because I've never ever been interested in the technicalities of being a musician. Theory and technique etc. mean nothing to me, they bore me. Music is about capturing the moment and coming up with something unexpected. I'm interested in sound in the same way I'm interested in paint.

I've always just felt like an artist plain and simple. An artist who uses sound, painting & words as opposed to being a musician who diversifies in other areas of art.

So to conclude! Keep yourself on the artistic side of your brain, appreciate & value your beginnings and most importantly, enjoy the journey!!