



Photo courtesy of lililoum_aformal

CGNY: How long have you been in the Techno scene?

MP: Since 1994. Prior to that, I was involved with various projects that emphasized electronic sound.

CGNY: Tell us a little bit about your background. Where did you grow up? What music did you listen to growing up?

MP: I grew up in a suburb of Maryland, near Baltimore. At that time in the early to mid eighties, there was (and still is now!) a good music scene in Washington, D.C., which also was a short distance from home. I saw many great bands there, like New Order, Kraftwerk, Gary Numan, Tangerine Dream, The Residents and so many others. There were lots of trips to places like the 930 Club and the Ontario Theatre. I got into these bands largely because of my exposure to college radio. There was an excellent station nearby that played interesting and experimental music. It was a small, low power FM station and the djs were all college students who played anything they wanted, in a completely free format. I can't emphasize enough the importance of this. It forever changed the way I perceived music and it led me to djing. I will never forget the first time I heard the band Throbbing Gristle; the dj went on the microphone and announced to his audience, "You probably aren't going to like this". Well, that got my attention and he proceeded to play a track called "Five Knuckle Shuffle" - I had already heard some of what I thought was extreme music, like the stuff on Ralph Records out of San Francisco, but this weird band from England completely reoriented my relationship with sound. TG also taught me that creativity is not always arrived at from a traditional path. I got into djing shortly after that. I was just a kid, but the students at the college allowed me to visit them during their radio shows and eventually I began to dj myself. Later, when I attended Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, I became involved with their radio station and also took classes in electronic music at the College of Fine Arts, where I was studying.

CGNY: I find you being a college professor so intriguing. What do you teach? How long have you been teaching? Do your students/colleagues know you have a dark Techno Side?

MP: I teach basic drawing, figure drawing, printmaking and time-based media. I've been an adjunct instructor since 1997. My students often don't know that I am involved in techno. Some are curious, others are indifferent. Occasionally, a certain student will investigate it more thoroughly. Young people today have so many options to access music, so they may or may not be exposed to techno in a proper way. My colleagues support all my creative endeavors. That's what's great about working in the university environment.

CGNY: At what point in your life did you stop and say “I want to create Techno”?

MP: For me, techno is an amalgamation of electronic music history. It absorbed many things along the way, and made it more fun at the same time. I began the first recordings when I was living in Baltimore in the early 90's.

CGNY: Your set at a Bunker party last winter was entirely vinyl. Do you strictly work with vinyl only?

MP: For the moment, my sets are all on vinyl. I keep saying that I'm going to buy a new computer and play on Traktor, but I always end up putting it off...

CGNY: I've heard some horrible vinyl sets, where the music kept skipping and cutting out, and poor sound quality. Your set at Bunker was completely flawless. What is your secret?

MP: I wish I could agree with you that my set was flawless, but I always make a few mistakes here and there... Track selection is the most important element. It's an "organic" approach, in a manner of speaking.

CGNY: How did you and Donato Dozzy start working together?

MP: He invited me to record two tracks for the label Orange Groove in 2006. Later, I played at the Brancaleone Club in Rome and Donato and I collaborated on some tracks in his studio.

CGNY: Tell us about your GEOPHONE label.

MP: I started it in 1997 so I could release my own tracks the way I wanted to. It's my "boutique" label, mostly for my own material (with occasional remixes from other artists).

CGNY: Is it true you design the covers for your releases on GEOPHONE using limited edition screen prints and some of those releases are considered collector's items?

MP: Some of the older ones are hard to find now. Also, I rarely pressed more than three or four hundred at a time. When I can afford to, I screen print my own drawings on the jackets. I hope it gives the releases a personal touch.

CGNY: I've heard your music described as 'Pure Raw Techno' because your releases are created live without any edits. Why do you prefer to make music this way?

MP: It's the only way I know how!

CGNY: Has your Visual Arts background influenced your music career or vice versa?

MP: They are reciprocating. When I need a break from one, the other takes over...

CGNY: What are your plans for the summer?

MP: I'm working on remixes and also preparing tracks for the next Prologue and Geophone releases.

CGNY: Please share some of your upcoming tour dates.

MP: Prologue Night at Berghain on October 8th.

CGNY: How can fans keep track of you?

MP: <http://www.mike-parker.net>

Interview by House Diva!