

Justin Schumacher

Written by CGNY

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Justin Schumacher is a busy man. If you take a look at his Soundcloud profile, the list of releases and remixes is pretty long and varied. So CGNY was lucky to snag him for an exclusive podcast of original material alongside his perspective on techno, djing, living life in the fast moving techno lane and in true Brooklyn style, keeping it real!

CGNY: What's your earliest recollection of hearing any piece of music and where did you hear it?

JS: Probably Michael Jackson.....my mother had a pretty decent record collection and would always blast music around the house. Whitney Houston, Sheila E, various Disco records etc.

CGNY: When and how did you get into djing? What was your first piece of professional gear? What was your first gig like?

CGNY: In the mid 90s I started going to raves and outlaws in NYC. There were kids from my neighborhood in Brooklyn who were actually throwing some of these illegal parties and were DJ's themselves, DJ Reality, DJ Deceit, DJ Phix....these guys were the first to let me play around on their turntables. First pieces of gear were my Technic 1200s. I actually saved up enough to buy 2 decks, a mixer, an amp, and a speaker off my boy for super cheap. He even threw in a bunch of old techno records that got me started. My first gig was a Monday night party at Guernica (one of the venues Tronic Treatment did jams at) in NYC in 2001. They weren't many people there, but I was still nervous as hell haha. I did pretty good though and got a lot of props after.

CGNY: We've definitely partied at some of the same events/clubs but have you seen a big change in the party scene since you began djing/producing?

JS: I caught the tail end of the rave scenes golden years. Once raves died off the techno scene in NYC was really small with some occasional big one offs featuring the big acts like Hawtin, Cox, etc. You had Twilo, Sound Factory, etc but that wasn't really my bag. I'd say the past 5 years in NYC has seen such a dramatic rise in underground club culture. Nothing like the early 90s or anything, but there is so much going on nowadays. It's really great right now. Clubs, warehouses, secret loft parties.....even raves are drawing a lot of kids again. It'll never be like it was but you can't really complain.

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CGNY: Your sound is unmistakably techno! Why this genre of music more than any other?

JS: Techno is my favorite because in my opinion the boundaries for this music are the widest. It's the most expansive genre of dance music. It can be hard and aggressive, deep and trippy, funky and groovy, moody and melodic, or all of these things combined. Techno and House are siblings and can coexist so many ways. The possibilities are endless. It never gets old for me.

CGNY: You have released on some solid techno labels and remixed for many others. Your Beatport page is long!!!But still it's got to be hard to make money now in this game with simply releasing music. Do you think the internet has harmed or helped you in terms of your career?

JS: I've long conceded the idea of making any money off sales in this business. Breaking even (even on a digital label) is considered a win nowadays. The only way you're gonna make any money is from shows, merch, or licensing. Knowing this allows me to accept the fact that I would be nowhere without the internet/social media. Soundcloud and Facebook alone have brought me out of obscurity and onto the radar of the artists and labels that can take my career to the next level. Obviously good ole fashioned real life networking and politicking are the most important steps in this business but there's no question that the convenience of online self promotion has been paramount in what I've achieved so far.

CGNY: Where are you playing next and what's next on your musical agenda?

JS: My next gig is at Sankeys NYC with Mark Reeve and some awesome locals this coming Sat Aug 16th as well as gigs at Cielo, Place to Beach, and gigs in Detroit and Raleigh next month. Right now I'm working on a bunch of music to submit to labels that have been hounding me for tunes. I've got a bunch of remixes and original tracks coming out soon as well but I've cut down on remix work to focus on finishing EP's. There will be some big announcements very shortly.

CGNY: What is one of your pet peeves (if you have any!) about the industry you work in?

JS: I'm no stranger to voicing my displeasure with the way club politics operates in this city. I'm sure it's the same everywhere you go. I don't believe a DJ is above promoting his gigs, or making a strong effort to draw as many people as possible, but promoters nowadays are booking DJ's because they can bring all their friends regardless of whether they're any good at working a dancefloor. Some can, but most have no idea how to control a mood or play a slot right. It can be frustrating. I'm lucky to have been able to do ok despite this sort of climate.

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CGNY: An alien lands from another planet and has no clue what techno is! What track/album do you hand over as a learning tool?

JS: I'd give them Robert Hood and Surgeons entire discography but something tells me it would sound familiar to them.

Check out Justin this Saturday August 16 at Spektrum 29 West 36th Street - details [here](#)

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