



Photo credit: Bennett Sell-Kline for [ElectricZooFestival.com](http://ElectricZooFestival.com)

CGNY: How's your year going so far, are you pleased to have the album finished and almost on the shelves?

GE: It's been an amazing year, but also a tough one – I don't think I've ever worked so hard in my life, as I've toured more than ever before but also made my album beginning to end in the first six months of the year. Between January and July I usually only had 2-3 days each week back home, so I really had to prioritize that time. That meant locking myself away in the studio for virtually every moment I had at home, with everything that I could do elsewhere being done on flights and in hotel rooms, whether it was downloading new music, answering emails, interviews, dealing with my bank or whatever. It didn't help that I was also buying a house at the same time. Now it's all over, it actually feels quite bizarre. You know, the album's finished, I've moved into my new place, and all of a sudden I have free time again. I'm not used to it.

CGNY: Your debut artist album “Northern Lights “ is far from premature in your career, As an extremely in demand remixer with many productions to your name, was it a conscious decision to write your album now and what role does it play to you as a turning point in your successful career.

GE: I suppose it was, mainly because I like to do something different each year. I get bored quite easily, so if I find myself doing the same stuff two years in a row, I'll lose interest. I just need new challenges I guess. In 2009, we set up my new Garuda record label, which is now going great, and also did really well with our Garuda club nights at Sankeys where we sold out with every event we did, plus I remixed the likes of Armin, Above & Beyond etc. At the start of 2010, I had a few weeks off in January to contemplate the year ahead and ask myself whether I wanted to carry on doing the same stuff, or go and try something I hadn't done before, and an artist album was the logical answer – although I wasn't sure at the time if it was actually possible. The hardest thing was people thinking I was having a lazy year doing nothing, as I didn't want to announce I was working on an album until I knew I'd definitely manage to deliver it. So in May / June time, a lot of people were saying “what on earth has Emery been doing this year, maybe he can't handle DJing so much because he hasn't made a track for six months”. Then on one glorious day in July, I was able to say “I've been working on my album, it's finished, and here's a video of the first single” and it was a massive weight off my shoulders.

CGNY: For anyone that doesn't know Gareth Emery is there three words that can sum you up?

GE: Perfectionist, musical, nice (mostly).

CGNY: Your Dj sets always blur the boundaries between many electronic styles, covering Trance, Techno and House, is there any other genres that you personal love and would include if possible? If so do we see a hint of these influences on the album?

GE: In dance genres, I also really like jungle, particularly Sub Focus, John B type stuff, some good dubstep, and also I love downtempo electronic. Kruder & Dorfmeister, Thievery Corporation, Tosca, that sort of stuff. You won't find these styles on the album though because that's not what I do well. I could try and make a jungle or dubstep track, but it's not my area of expertise and it'd most likely end up sounding like a distantly poor man's version of the real thing, so I haven't tried. I hate it when electronic artists include tracks on their albums in genres

## Gareth Emery

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they don't know much about to try and be diverse for the sake of it, because it almost never works. House, progressive, trance, and techno – that's what I play, that's what I know how to make, so that's what's on my album. If I felt I could make a track in other styles that was as well made and current as the guys doing it properly, then I would, or more likely, I'd rope one of them in for a collaboration. That would be more likely.

CGNY: Tell me a little about Gareth as a world touring DJ and how you managed to end up as one of the youngest ever Dj's to enter Dj Mag's Top100 poll

GE: 2009 was the year it all happened really. I played over 100 gigs (over twice as many as the year before) including a lot of big festivals, but also started Garuda, the Garuda club nights, put in some high profile remixes, and also had some pretty big club tracks like Exposure and Metropolis, which you're still hearing in people's sets over a year on. It seemed like everything just exploded in that year, and all of a sudden for a lot of people I went from being someone who they'd heard of, but didn't know a lot about, to a serious contender who they'd go out of their way to see. Entering DJ Mag's top 10 at the age of 29 was still very unexpected though. I try not to take any poll to seriously – as they're all popularity rather than talent contests – but it's certainly nice when so many people vote for you.

CGNY: How do you see trance evolving or is it at all? Is the scene any different to when you started?

GE: It's changed a lot over the past ten years, in some ways for the worse, but I prefer to focus on how it's changed for the better. Trance is a massively global scene, and musically it's as diverse as it's ever been. Of course, you've still got the dinosaurs who don't want to hear anything but cheesy 140bpm super synth stuff circa 2000, in the same way you've got closed-minded people throughout the scene who think anything labeled 'trance' sounds like that. But fortunately both kinds seem to be a dying breed.

CGNY: I know you may have been asked this many times, but do you see yourself as a DJ or Producer?

GE: They're both great in different ways. DJing is more instantly enjoyable, more of an immediate buzz, because playing to thousands of screaming people is obviously more fun than

sitting in a dark studio listening to a hi-hat for the 100th time trying to work out why it's not sitting in your mix quite right. But once a gig's over, that's it – it's quite short lived. On the other hand, when you get it right as a producer and make something amazing, finishing it is only the beginning, and the joy you get from that record lives on for years or even decades. You need both.

CGNY: Your Top100 Poll placing is testament to your massive fan base. How important do you think it is to engage with your followers and what role do you think your presence on facebook and twitter plays with your success as both a dj and producer?

GE: It's important to be engaged and in touch with people, and both Twitter and Facebook are great for that, so I'm fairly active on them both. You have to be careful though, as it's quite easy to go too far, particularly on Twitter where frequent posting is encouraged, and end up posting every little bit of crap that pops into your head. You can come across as a real self-absorbed dick. So unless something exceptional is going on, I try and keep Twitter to a few tweets a day. I don't need to tell 15,000 people I'm fucked off because someone in a supermarket queue in front of me is going slow. I've got more friends on Facebook – about 125,000 I think – so we tend to keep it to vital updates and not barrage people too much.

CGNY: Your touring schedule is not only very busy but always includes many exotic locations, how do you manage to collect ideas and experiences and translate them into a production or piece of music? Can you describe any gig experiences that have made it on to the album?

GE: Generally I don't collect ideas when on tour, but I'll often write music knowing it's going to work in a particular context. I was in Bratislava in April playing a huge arena as a guest on Armin's 450th radio show, and realized the night before I didn't have anything good to start with. So on a moment of inspiration, I wrote a track in two hours, purely to have something big and exclusive to start my set with. The track ended up going down really well with a lot of people asking for its name from YouTube, so I went back to it, gave it substantial polish, added some new elements, and it ended up on the album as 'Arrival'. It's definitely one of my favorite tracks on there.

CGNY: How is the tour going and is there anywhere you particular looking for to going.

GE: The beauty of the style I play means you don't just go to the same places, it's different countries every week so there's always somewhere interesting on the horizon. This weekend I'm doing the Electric Zoo festival in New York and a pool party in Las Vegas. In a few weeks I'm heading out to Asia for India, Malaysia, Indonesia. Then I'll be back in Europe for a bit. It's so incredibly varied and you get to go to so many different places, there's always something to look forward to.

CGNY: Tell us about your Northern Lights concert at the O2 Academy in Leeds this October, what was the thinking behind performing live and is it something that you feel is important to showcase the album? What can we expect different from a Gareth Emery Dj set?

GE: Again, it's about doing something we haven't done before. We've done big one-offs at Sankeys in Manchester, the last one to celebrate four years and 100 episodes of my podcast in March. That was a real success and a total sell-out, so for the album we felt we needed a new offering rather than just repeating the same formula. The O2 is an incredible venue, and as it's an arena rather than a club, it gives us a lot more flexibility for bringing in additional production and doing live stuff, and it's also bigger, so people should be comfortable however many ticket we sell. We've got all the vocalists from the album performing their tracks, plus a few additional instrumental interludes woven into a four hour DJ set from me with a lot of custom production. It's by the far the biggest thing we've ever done, so I am naturally nervous, but it'll be incredible if we pull it off.

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