



CGNY: So tell us how the Balance 017 came to be? It's a lot of music packed into 2 CD's and a real blend of artists and styles. Did the Balance folks ask you to be involved?

TM: Yes exactly. I was thinking of doing a mix album, a compilation because I hadn't done something like that in so many years. They came and asked me. I think they heard me in Miami or so, and about a month later they asked me if I was up for doing the next Balance series and this is quite an appealing format. They said be crazy, be yourself and we will license everything, don't worry about that. And there was no branding like "you have to do this or that" -it was really, really good. For me it was the perfect opportunity. Lots of music styles are on the CD; I was able to do really everything; makes me happy as a DJ! I had in my mind to do this whole thing and I working like a good four months listening to a million tracks – trying to fulfill the trip I wanted to create. And everything I didn't have from others, I was producing with Santos. We had, I think 14 exclusives from our side on the 2 CDs and filled the gaps with brand new stuff just for this album. But I'm very happy with the result.

I was listening to it non stop while I working on it but I'm just playing the first CD again now in the car – hearing it again with a fresh ear – and I'm very satisfied with how it came out.

CGNY: You're back in NYC on Nov 26th at District 36 but you started here with a residency in 2000 at the famous Twilo! Have you seen the dance music scene change here since those early days?

TM: Yes definitely. It's a lot more regulated in New York. NY was also for a few years, standing for a certain sound. The experience of going clubbing, the intensity there was something, maybe I'm wrong, but it is really something I haven't experienced since then. It's a different way of clubbing, a different mentality. Electronic music was not as big as it is these days. It was also about being a member of a community as opposed to just being a music lover. I have to say I did a gig a year ago at Santos Party House though and it was brilliant. It was like the highlight of that tour. This feeling which you only have in New York. Good people, very intense, intimate, great sound system. So I'm also looking forward to District 36 – what that's going to be like.

Courtesy of: [seemeinnewyork](#)

CGNY: How important is it to you to balance –pardon the pun, touring with production and studio work?

TM: By the end of the day my production partner, the guy who is basically programming all of this stuff is Santos. And Santos is here in the village near me in Hanover, Germany. He lives across the street moving here 2 years ago from Italy to Germany. And the studio is in the barn of my farm so it's like when I'm at home and not really full on touring, I'm usually every day in the studio and Santos is every day anyway in the studio – he's like a complete studio nerd! It's just a comfortable situation. This is the only possibility for me to work this way because I am touring like crazy and I would need to rent a studio out and go there every day – you know it would be quite an effort. I make 2 espressos – go over, have an espresso with Santos and when I am there, we are extremely creative, the vibe is really good in the studio and every time we sit together we have ideas and this is the ideal case scenario. He can continue to work on an idea when I am traveling.

CGNY: You are one half of Mutant Clan, partnering with Italian producer Santos. How is the Mutant Clan sound different from something purely made by you?

TM: Mutant Clan is a bit more open. Santos and I come from the underground music scene. We both love it and we both have a similar understanding for this kind of music and it's our

experimental field. Sometimes we go classic house and sometimes classic acid a little bit old school, and sometimes something completely modern. But it's really open, experimental and I don't have the pressure to put my name solely to it because I always feel like people have a certain expectation from the projects my name is attached to as do I. The Timo Maas sound is slightly more radical and different.

CGNY: Why do you think Germany is such a hot bed for techno – so many great sounds coming from there from way back and continuing?

TM: Germany always over the whole music history has been very influential for strange music. That was back in the 80's Kraftwerk time. The music scene was strong back in the 70s, then 80's the industrial techno stuff, the Frankfurt scene and a handful of people from Berlin like Paul van Dyk, Cosmic Baby etc – the sound that we now know as trance music. Nobody knew what minimal was like, but then the Cologne scene started up – 8/9 years ago and they were really upfront. A huge amount of Djs's and producers live in Berlin these days, it's a melting pot. It gives you the opportunity to be crazy and the Germans love to party really hard, going out on a Saturday and coming back home on Monday morning! I always say "Only extreme can create something extreme". Only if you are an extreme character then you can do extremely good music possibly.

CGNY: Do you have a favorite club or festival that you like or have played?

TM: Well I would say again and again its DC 10 in Ibiza and for festivals, one of the bigger stages in Glastonbury – I've played there 6 or 7 times there. It's out of this world; it's completely unique and something special. I was playing last year and it was the week when Michael Jackson died. And it was causing kind of a strange vibe but by the end of the day I had one gig there on the great stage that was just amazing; the perfect sound system and great energy and a really good vibe.

CGNY: You've just started a new label – Rockets and Ponies with some new tunes on the label. I loved "Rebels" and "Kick1, Kick 3" – great tracks!

TM: Thanks! Yes they are just out on Beatport right now. And Kick 1, Kick 3 might be a track on my next artist album for next year. I'm working on some cool vocal collabs even for that track

and also like on many other things. It's like a peak at what's coming; the next Timo Maas album will be on our label.

CGNY: I've heard you a number of times now playing – always feel like I'm never going to know what your set will be – which I love – how do you prepare for a set? Do you have a set list or stay flexible?

TM: I can very honestly say I have only prepared one set in my whole DJ career when I was warming up for Depeche Mode, a big stadium gig – because I had some visuals and I had to sync the visuals with the music I was playing. This is the only set list I have done ever. When I do my dj set – I really try to be completely open. Every venue is different, every vibe in the venue is different, and you never know if it's full, if it's half full, what kind of crowd is there. I try to come a little before my set to catch the vibe.

CGNY: What do you like to do in your spare time? Any other passions besides music?

TM: Well I'm in a very privileged situation in that I was able to change my hobby into my profession. But besides that I like to read. I don't have much time, I'm traveling or in the studio and I'm a father too. But what I really love is cooking! For me it's relaxing, I just cooked before the interview session, I made some really good steaks, to get my head away from everything. Everybody does it different, I do it that way!

CGNY: The world as we know it is coming to an end and you take one track with you to the next planet! What would that be?

TM: Roy Ayers - "Everybody Loves the Sunshine"

Timo Maas plays District 36 on November 26 with Sleepy & Boo. [Details here.](#)

Timo Maas

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