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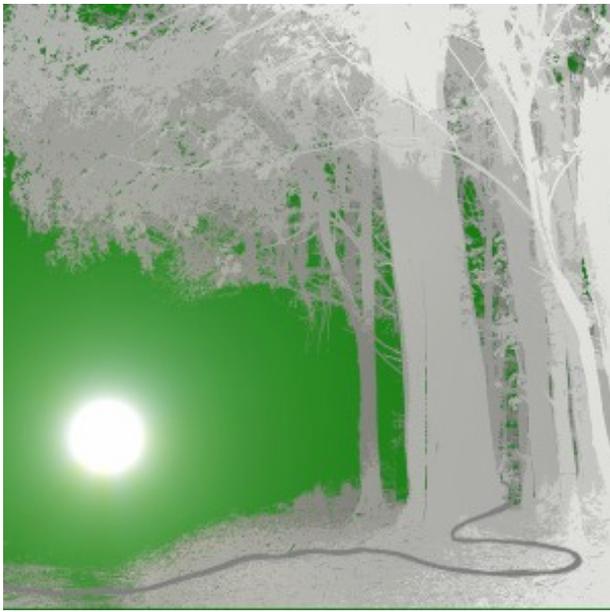
THE KISS THAT TOOK A TRIP INTERVIEW

BY [JAMES MCQUISTON](#) [MARCH 15, 2015](#)

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Electroforest is your current album. What story does it tell?

I tend to talk about very universal themes, but I have the bad habit of shrouding them in layers of highly personal and almost cryptic stuff, I can't help it. Regarding the current album, that is no exception. It's about the need for being alone sometimes, when you crave for detachment because being in contact with yourself is what will get you through the day. The electroforest is an intellectual construct that tries to portray a special place where you lose yourself in. But it also contains musical elements and allusions to emotional recovery, guilt, secrets...



What artists possess the greatest influence on your music?

I draw a lot of influences from musicians who shun away from the traditional concept of "song". That doesn't necessarily mean complexity, though. For instance, I could name Penguin Cafe Orchestra, Talk Talk, Godspeed You! Black Emperor, Brian Eno, Angelo Badalamenti... Those influences are mixed with more mainstream stuff, like the new romantics movement, dream pop or industrial rock. It would seem like I unconsciously threw a bit of A-ha or Mazzy Star in the mix to make it all more accessible.

How has your style evolved and changed over the time since you first started playing?

Being an amateur at heart, it's all been about learning and getting to know myself. That process has set the route for any stylistic evolution I may have followed. The level of self-demand goes up with time. Another formal element that has been more and more present is vocals. I've learnt how to incorporate them in my music in tiny steps, little by little. While the idea of adding vocals to a musical piece still sends some shivers of embarrassment down my spine, I'm much more comfortable with it. But the general idea is that I'm in charge of one of the very few musical projects I know that has gone through that journey of learning in public, under scrutiny. The vast majority of bands don't record their debut album until they have a tight hold on their

sound and musical abilities. But I have done something that is kind of irresponsible and bold at the same time: calling 'albums' releases that were basically 'demos'.

Which tracks off of Electroforest are your favorites?

It's hard to talk about favourites. If any, some songs make me feel proud in a special way. "Champions of delay" is an obvious choice. It's like a hymn, and it almost wrote itself. It was a totally automated process, brain to hard drive. I felt like I was discovering something preexisting. Another song I'd remark is "Flower of gas and smoke", because of the diversity of styles and its use of dynamics. I think it's one of the most solid things I've written. "Amplification of the senses" has a special place in my heart too, because it's the first standard singer/songwriter tune that I've ever shared.

Can you describe your creative process and your recording set up for us? How does a track go from initial thought to melody/arranging and ultimately to completion?

There's no default way of writing for me. Some songs come almost in full, in a quick flash, like a revelation. Others are born while fucking around with the keyboard or the guitar. And some others are nothing but cerebral work, not different from building a house. Regardless of methodology, I work very fast when I'm writing from scratch, but I'm hyperslow when it comes down to complete and fine-tune that work. I spend 20% of the time going from nothing to a demo, and the other 80% turning all that into a finished song. It's frustrating, but I don't know how to do it differently. It's a lot more seductive for me to think of a new song than finishing one in progress.

How can interested readers listen to your music?

Any way they choose. For downloading enthusiasts, there are links to my complete discography in my official site (www.thekissthattookatrip.com), for free. My music is available for streaming and download in Bandcamp, iTunes, Spotify, Last.fm... you know, the classic sites you go to when you're looking for music. You can also purchase it

from online stores and, of course, buy the CD from my official site. If you like visuals, you can look for my channels on YouTube and Vimeo. I make an effort to make it really easy for audiences.

What has been your most memorable experience as The Kiss That Took A Trip?

This is going to sound teeny, but fuck it: the first time I ever uploaded a song. That was 2006. The first feeling of artistic exposure ever for me. Every other artist is going to understand this answer.

What goals do you still have left to accomplish in your career?

The very existence of The Kiss That Took A Trip is a goal and an achievement itself, if I think of it. But there are plenty of them. I want to have a big musical catalog. I want to reach much more people, because I'm positive that I haven't even reached a 1% of people who would appreciate my work one way or another. I want to collaborate with others. And there's this common goal for every musician that is very embarrassing to admit for many of them, but not for me: writing that perfect song that spreads like gunpowder and everybody loves.

Thank you for your time. Do you have anything else that you would like to say to our readers?

Defend your rights. Express yourselves. Try to make a difference fighting injustice. Music is just not a sonic background, it's an experience that has a start, a finish, and must be enjoyed with intensity.

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About James McQuiston

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