No Bounds
11—13.10.19
Event
Programme
Music, Art,
Film screenings, Talks
Workshops
Optimism isn’t really in fashion, and understandably so. We’re overwhelmed by populists, scammers, liars, Fascists, fools of the worst sort, and earnest attempts to counter this takeover are themselves all too often taken over by further Fascists, fools and saviours with feet of clay. The world is burning and melting around us, and we seem to be volunteering to put in hours of labour for free and live under constant surveillance – indeed we even seem to be willing to pay for the privilege. Debt is normality, the lie of austerity is normality, slaughter and torture being beamed into our personal timelines is normality, withering irony and pompous righteousness as cloaks for the worst and most hateful views are normality. Meanwhile in the cultural sphere, recorded music is so devalued that any of the big four tech giants could buy the entire global music industry with the loose change down the back of their sofas, and the only reason they don’t is that it’s not worth the hassle.

But – and it’s a big but ["big butt" – Beavis & Butthead cackle] – somehow there’s a lot going on that is pumped full of hope. Not hope in the save-the-world sense, mind. OK there’s some of that around, but even Greta Thunberg’s rhetoric is shot through with a huge amount of bleakness. But small scale, human level stuff where little things that people do in themselves make looking a week, a month, a year forward seem not just bearable but – in the moment at least – exciting. Now, this isn’t about bad times creating good culture: that’s a dunder-headed oversimplification, and in fact was used by some of the worst privileged libertarian bro types to justify tacit support for Trump when his election first looked possible ("Hey at least he’ll shake things up! At least there’ll be, like, some kewl rebellious music!"). No, this is about world builders, tradition preservers, diasporic networkers, people building and shoring up culture that’s right for the sake of it being right first of all.

For me, personally, this has been thrown into relief by the process of finishing and beginning to promote the book I’ve been working on with the photographer Brian David Stevens for the past half decade and more. *Bass, Mids, Tops: An Oral History of Soundsystem Culture* is essentially a series of 25 interviews with the people who’ve woven the values of Caribbean soundsystems into UK culture over the past half century. Starting with the likes of Dennis Bovell, Adrian Sherwood and Norman Jay, it goes through warehouse parties, rave, jungle, garage, dubstep, grime and on to fusions of Swing Ting, Barely Legal and Shy One. Listening back to the interviewees, several things have struck me.

One, perhaps obvious one, is just how much work and passion is expended daily, hourly, minute to minute, over the course of years by these practitioners to transmit
not just the sonic but the cultural values of what they do on to ravers, listeners and other practitioners. Someone like Terror Danjah [and here I want to give the biggest of shouts to him: at the time of writing he is still critically ill in a coma – we all wish him well] manifests all the transformations from dancehall and hip hop into jungle into grime and beyond in the micro details of his own unique life story. So the way we anecdotalise, the way we shoot the shit in the kitchen at parties and down the pub, the way we describe the seemingly frivolous details of our time out and about, buying records, sharing experience: all of this matters to a vast degree.

Another emergent theme has become the way that deep and long undercurrents in music are preserved by passionate people and can reemerge decades later in glorious fashion. The examples in my recent research that have leapt out where British hip hop culture, and what you might call the rare groove continuum. I had always tended to see British music through the rave prism, purely because of my age and my transformational experiences in the early-mid 90s. But as I heard older generations’ experiences, I began to understand just how huge rare groove soundsystems, street soul, soul weekenders, Soul II Soul, Rapattack, even Westwood roller jams all were in the 1980s, but also how integral they all are to underground culture. Seeing how people like Dego, Zed Bias, Krust and others weaved the soul-jazz and b-boy culture all the way through rave and beyond brought my own previous experiences to life in new ways. And seeing how the younger generation, most notably Shy One, whose dad was DJing alongside Norman Jay and Soul II Soul in the eighties, take this forward is thrilling. And now I see these lines of transmission everywhere. At We Out Here festival this year, watching Shy One’s comrades from Touching Bass roll sixties spiritual jazz into grimey garage into ‘07 Bristol dubstep like it was nothing gave me goosebumps, knowing that this wasn't just random selections, but informed by these young DJs deep immersion in the culture. Watching Stormzy's Glastonbury set on TV, hearing the grime producers' tags, seeing his DJ making certain cuts, hearing him namecheck ‘Bass II Dark’ in a lyric, knowing this wasn't a victory just for grime but for UK bass and hip hop as a whole. Speaking to Congo Natty about meeting Stormzy and realising there is mutual respect between the 2010s and the 1980s hip hop generations. Hearing "a Toddla T producky!" in 'Strike a Pose' and knowing the generations of Sheffield bass and funk that this represents, but seeing it as part of a new wave of young British bass / rap musicians taking over the charts on their own terms. And then seeing similar connections not just in UK lineages but going out across the world and into the future: at CTM festival this year I was brought face to face with the explosion of radical electronics from the global south, the connections to Nyege Nyege in Uganda, to Indonesia, Brazil, people with detailed knowledge of global hard dance scenes and sounds, and of pop, and of R&B and on and on and out…

Look it's easy to get breathless about this. We can all start listing exciting things. But it's real. What No Bounds represents is real. And it's not just about x or Y exciting new sound, or A or B retro vibe, it's about these real life transmissions through thousands of parties and millions of conversations that build these living, breathing cultures that continue for their own sakes. And we have to preserve that. Terror Danjah's illness - and he's not the only interviewee in Bass, Mids, Tops to have had health scares either - really hammered this home. This is our culture: or rather, these are our cultures, each of us weaving our own one from the unique choice of threads we choose to follow. So follow them! And in pure bloody minded fashion, keep making something worth looking forward to. Build, as Alvin Toffler put it, “the habit of anticipation” even if that is on a hiding to nothing. Who knows if everything is fucked: some days it really feels like it's going to come down round our ears at any moment. Sometimes, just sometimes, hope works…
According to the oft-repeated history of UK dance music, British electronic music’s love affair with ribcage-rattling sub-bass began in 1990 via the London-centric sound of breakbeat hardcore. According to the man behind this theory, Simon Reynolds, all of the sub-bass-heavy styles of UK dance music that followed – jungle, garage, grime and dubstep primarily – can be traced back to hardcore. While Reynolds’ theory has some merit, I’m here to argue he’s wrong. In my forthcoming book *Join The Future: Bleep Techno and the Birth of British Bass Music* I explain how and why. To cut a long story short, the DJs, dancers and producers of Bradford, Leeds and Sheffield got there first.

While Londoners were playing rare groove records on soul soundsystems, falling in love with hip-hop and indulging in the guilty pleasures of Balearic beats, their counterparts in the North of England were body-popping to electro and making footwork moves to the freshest acid house and Detroit techno. The serious dancers who enthusiastically traveled between clubs in Yorkshire, Lancashire and the Midlands moved to a different beat to those down south: harder, edgier dancefloor tracks that more accurately matched their experiences living in grey, crumbling, concrete-clad cities that had been devastated by the neo-liberal policies of Thatcherism.

In June 1988, just as London was finally beginning to wake up to acid house culture, the first great British house record emerged from Manchester: A Guy Called Gerald’s ‘Voodoo Ray’. It was made by a former jazz dancer who grew up obsessed by the weight and warmth of Jamaican style sound systems, but had later fallen in love with hip-hop, electro and acid house.

Across the Pennines in Yorkshire, the record hit home hard, not least because ‘Voodoo Ray’ sounded like it had been forged from steel by aliens squatting in a poky Park Hill flat. Four months after the record was released, a Bradford collective called Unique 3 self-released their response: an insanely sparse, raw and bass-heavy affair that channeled similar influences into something even more remarkable. This was ‘The Theme’, the first Bleep & Bass record.

It kick-started a predominantly working class musical movement that could not have come from anywhere other than the darkened dancefloors and run-down inner city areas of Sheffield, Leeds and Bradford. The major Bleep records that followed in 1989 and ’90 reflected the mixture of sounds appreciated by dancers in the county’s clubs, illegal warehouse parties and hush-hush ‘Blues parties’ – unlicensed after-hours events held within abandoned houses in predominantly Afro-Caribbean neighbourhoods – with a dash of Cabaret Voltaire style industrial music thrown in.

The rapid spread of the Bleep & Bass sound throughout Yorkshire was in part fired by local rivalry and a hardened battle mentality associated with Jamaican soundsystem culture and electro/hip-hop. This desire to out-do your rivals could also be seen in the dance battles between footworkers at key clubs such as Jive Turkey, Cuba and Downbeat.

From the word go, Bleep & Bass caught the imagination of dance music enthusiasts all over the UK, with releases from the sound’s most prominent record label, Warp, selling by the skipload. It was at this point that hardcore emerged kicking and screaming from London, via records that fixed mighty dub style basslines and Yorkshire bleeps to sampled hip-hop, funk and rare groove breakbeats. In *Join The Future*, I argue that the earliest hardcore records were little more than breakbeat-fuelled mutations of Bleep & Bass (i.e. ‘Bleep & Breaks’). Even when hardcore sped up over the years that followed and became darkcore – the precursor to jungle – many of the leading records still contained samples from classic Bleep cuts.

Thirty-one years on from the release of Unique 3’s groundbreaking debut single, the simple formula they and their Bleep & Bass comrades created – sub-bass, industrial aesthetics and alien electronics – remains at the heart of the British bass music template. Sorry Simon Reynolds, but it’s time that story was told.

*Yorkshire: Birthplace of British Bass Music*

Matt Aniss

*Join The Future: Bleep Techno & The Birth of British Bass Music* will be published on December 2nd. For more information and to pre-order your copy, head to: velocitypress.uk
Everyone's Got an Opinion
About the Soundsystem
Hugh Taylor

Sheffield is a city with a fiercely DIY culture that’s visible throughout, from its high streets and restaurants right through to its nightclubs and record labels, even its sound systems. Hand built rigs have been part of the city’s nightlife all the way back to the sixties, with Sonny’s and Donkey Man’s Blues providing much of Sheffield’s sound. The birth of free party culture saw a slew of new crews and hand built sound systems hit the city and the surrounding peaks, names like Smokescreen, Curfew, Spoof, Pyramid and Atomiser.

“Before the label we were very much a soundsystem collective.” Dankle, founder of the Sheffield based rave label Off Me Nut Records tells me. “Building speakers, breaking into buildings and throwing warehouse parties. Semtek Soundsystem. No one was playing bassline when we were playing bassline, it was banned in a lot of clubs in Sheffield. So a free party was the only place where you could really hear it.”

At the same time, a crew called LSS were running parties with a similar approach. They'd met the Semtek crew through mutual friends, Reuben says – “but when we were using cafes and restaurants, they were using fields. Over time our two sound systems merged more and more and we did stuff helping each other out with different parties.”

Like with Semtek’s problem of clubs banning bassline, there was an element of necessity that lead them to building a sound system themselves. “There were no good clubs with good installs, so the only way to get good sound was to have a soundsystem. Rent is quite cheap, so here if you’re renting a space handbuilding stuff you can get quite far without spending horrendous amounts of money with just with knowhow. Sinai and Raze, they're kind of the next phase along, and doing it in a much more professional way.”

Huw, who built and runs Sinai Sound System, would agree. The realisation he says, came from meeting Mungos HiFi, and seeing how they run it is like a business. “They had six members of staff on salary. And it’s a soundsystem. That’s insane. And seeing stuff like that it was kind of, right, if you go about it seriously and you put effort into marketing and branding you can push yourself further”

For Huw, the appeal of this DIY approach isn't one of price, or one of necessity, it's inherent to what makes a soundsystem special. “If I gave you £50,000, tomorrow you could go and buy a Funktion-One sound system. It's like buying an off the peg pair of trainers, and you can have the same as anyone else. I don't want the same as everyone else. If you had all the money in the world you couldn't buy my sound system tomorrow. The guy that makes the top boxes doesn't make them anymore. The bass boxes are only built by one person who decides if he even wants to make them for you. The processing equipment is handmade, and there's a year and a half waiting list. It's not off the shelf, but from me experimenting over the years it gives it the sound it's got.”

Raze Sound System, run by James, Joe, Lucas and Wez, concur with that mindset. “All sound systems have their different strengths and what sets them apart from others as they're all tailored for different purposes. Sheffield is full of class sound systems – in terms of quality there aren't many cities that touch it. For us, we wanted certain components involved because of the way they sound on the music we love. It's been tuned to exactly how we like it after countless hours of listening down our unit, and to tie it off we have an experienced and hard working crew that take it out.”

Indeed, the crew behind the rig have a huge amount of experience in the scene. Joe and Lucas built the Dedication Sound System back in 2012, Wez built LSS back in 2007, and Joe's owned Komatik for five years. “we all started off doing individual party sound systems which is how we met, now we all work together, which again is rare between 'rival' sound system crews, and in doing so, all moved on to work on larger projects inside and outside the city collectively.” In that way, Raze is a perfect example of this city-wide culture, of skill sharing, and of different groups of friends coming together to make Sheffield's party scene sound incredible.
Friday 11 October

Opening Concert
● 19:00 → 22:00
● Kelham Island Museum
● Jackie Wicks (live) [18:30 → 19:00]
● Caterina Barbieri + Ruben Spini (Live AV) [19:15 → 20:05]
● Graham Dunning (Live) [20:10 → 20:40]
● Lee Gamble (Live A/V) [20:50 → 21:45]
● Tessa Gordziejko [21:50 → 22:20]
● Lanark Artefax (Live A/V) [22:30 → 11:30]

Talk: Subsonic Socialising in Cities of Bass (conversations in dub)
● 17:00 → 17:45
● Testone Factory
With Winston Hazel + Dj Flight.
Hosted by Joe Muggs.

Doc Fest Screening Pt. 1: Lisbon Beat
● 18:00 → 19:00
● Testone Factory

No Bounds × Hyponik × Off Me Nut × Tekkers × Wub Club × Displace Opening Rave
● 23:30 → 06:30
● Hope Works

Installation: Zaron Mizmeras: Post-Communication II Installation
● Location TBA
We have reached a time wherein our evolution is no longer driven through natural elements, instead our advancement as a species is primarily driven by technological change. An reactive installation involving plants and sound. Look out for direction on the day!

Saturday 12 October

Ticket Exchange opens at 11:00

Synthesiser Workshop
● 11:00 → 18:00
● Kelham Island Museum (Power Lab)
● Future SoundSystems presents Build your Own Brunswick monophonic Synthesiser.

Cyborg Activism Talk
● 18:10 → 19:00
● Kelham Island Museum (Metal Lab)
Cyborg Activism with Zaron Mizmeras.

No Bounds × Eulerroom × Live Code Lab
● 11:00 → 16:00
● Kelham Island Museum (Power Lab)
● Talk: Panel session on Artificial Intelligence; Coral Manton, Women Reclaiming AI; Leila Johnston, AI and ‘physical’ empathy; Shelly Knotts, blending AI and Live Coding [11:30 → 12:30]
● Talk + Workshop: Intro to live coding visuals with Olivia Jack [12:45 → 13:45]
● A/V livecode performance with Coral Manton, Shelly Knotts, Olivia Jack and Alex McLean [14:45 → 15:45]

Talk/Masterclass
● 16:00 → 17:00
● Kelham Island Museum (Power Lab)
Mixing and mastering bass music with Rob Gordon.

Panel: Grass Roots Organising
● 17:15 → 18:15
● Kelham Island Museum (Power Lab)
Intervention × Equaliser × wxmb2 × GRL.

Workshop
● 18:30 → 19:30
● Kelham Island Museum (Power Lab)
womxn/non binary DJ workshop hosted by Equaliser and Intervention.

Joe Muggs Ambient Salon
● 20:00 → 21:00

Sky Code Club Exhibition
● 11:00 → 19:00
● Kelham Island Museum Temporary Exhibition Space
They came they saw they coded... meet the people behind Sky’s Code Club and learn more about their Tech Office at Leeds Dock.

Tek Lab
● 11:00 → 19:00
● Kelham Island Museum (Temporary Exhibition Space)
Presented by Synthetic Pro Audio
Tek demos on various products including Ableton Masterclass and Pioneer DJ Recordbox Masterclass.
Saturday 12 October

Tactical Contact. A series of projects, new works and commissions exploring the relationships between artists, environments and spaces. Curated by Mark Fell and Pedro Rocha.

Sote “Defragmentations Sanctions” Installation
- 13:00 → 22:30
- Workshop/Charlesworth Gallery

Other Words for Anger Installation
- 13:00 → 22:30
- 1916 House

Caty Olive Installation
- 13:00 → 22:30
- Crucible Shop

Ellen Arkbro Installation
- 13:00 → 22:30
- Crucible Shop

Ryoko Akama & Nakul Krishnamurthy Performance
- 14:00 → 14:45
- Little Mesters Lane

Angharad Williams Performance
- 15:00 → 15:30
- 1916 House

Sofia Jernberg Performance
- 16:00 → 16:30
- Cellar tunnels underneath the Museum

Antonija Livingstone Performance
- 17:00 → 17:30
- Engine Room

Sandro Mussida Performance
- 18:00 → 18:30
- Workshop/Charlesworth Gallery

Will Guthrie Performance
- 18:45 → 19:15
- Die Sinking Workshop/Lobby

Okkyung Lee & Liz Kosack Performance
- 19:30 → 20:30
- Melting Shop

Rian Treanor & Jan Hendrickse Performance
- 20:45 → 21:15
- Upper Gallery

Alex McLean & New Noveta Performance
- 21:30 → 21:45
- Upper Gallery

Goat & Collective Nominoë Performance
- 22:30 → 23:30
- Upper Gallery

Sandro Mussida Performance
- 18:00 → 18:30
- Workshop/Charlesworth Gallery

Will Guthrie Performance
- 18:45 → 19:15
- Die Sinking Workshop/Lobby

Okkyung Lee & Liz Kosack Performance
- 19:30 → 20:30
- Melting Shop

Rian Treanor & Jan Hendrickse Performance
- 20:45 → 21:15
- Upper Gallery

Alex McLean & New Noveta Performance
- 21:30 → 21:45
- Upper Gallery

Goat & Collective Nominoë Performance
- 22:30 → 23:30
- Upper Gallery

Sofia Jernberg Performance
- 16:00 → 16:30
- Cellar tunnels underneath the Museum

Antonija Livingstone Performance
- 17:00 → 17:30
- Engine Room

No Bounds × Debbie Chia presents Light and Sound Bath Pt. 1
- 15:00 → 17:00
- Testone Factory
- The Black Dog
- Prequel Tapes
- Lo Shea
- 96 Back
- Debbie Chia

No Bounds × Resident Advisor Saturday Rave
- 15:00 → 17:00
- Testone Factory
- The Black Dog
- Prequel Tapes
- Lo Shea
- 96 Back
- Debbie Chia

Sandhya Daemgen presents What’s That Noise?
- 14:30 → 16:30
- The Mowbray
- Sandhya Daemgen
- Shannen SP
- Sophie Cooper
- Jackie Wicks
- Kelly Jayne Jones

No Bounds × Memory Dance Archive / Film / Video Sheffield South Yorkshire 1960’s - 1990’s
- Saturday: 10:00 → 17:00
- Sunday: 11:00 → 17:00
- Millennium Gallery

No Bounds × Site Gallery Nkisi presents The Skin of Time… Like a Touch on Impenetrable Skin
- Saturday: 11:00 → 17:00
- Sunday: 13:00 → 22:00
- Site Gallery
A site-specific outdoor audiovisual installation.
Sunday 13 October

No Bounds × Memory Dance
Archive / Film / Video Sheffield South Yorkshire 1960's - 1990's
- 11:00 → 16:00
- Millennium Gallery

No Bounds × Site Gallery
Nkisi presents The Skin of Time...
Like a Touch on Impenetrable Skin
- Saturday: 11:00 → 22:00
- Sunday: 13:00 → 17:00
- Site Gallery
A site-specific outdoor audiovisual installation.

Ralph Dartford presents
Recovery Songs
- 01:00 → 01:45
- The Holt

No Bounds × Debbie Chia presents
Light and Sound Bath Pt. 2
- 02:15 → 04:15
- The Holt
- Prequel Tapes
- Debbie Chia
- Joe Muggs
- 96 Back
  + Special Guest

Doc Fest Screening Session
- 17:00 → 19:00
- The Holt
- Memento Stella
- Father Figure
- +6 Gain

Otis Mensah (Live)
- 19:30 → 20:15
- The Holt

The Black Dog (Live)
Deep Listening Pool Sessions
- 20:00 → 21:30
- Heeley Swimming Pool
- Session 1 [20:00 → 20:30]
- Session 2 [20:45 → 21:15]

Closing Party
- 18:00 → 00.00
- Foodhall
- DJ Soyboi & Stephanie (GRL.)
  [18:00 → 19:00]
- Jay Carder B2B Trieste
  [19:00 → 20:00]
- Groundwork [20:00 → 21:00]
- Broken Fm (Live) [21:00 → 22:00]
- Linnemann [22:00 → 23:00]
- Stevie Cox [23:00 → 00:00]

Venues

Foodhall
121 Eyre St, Sheffield, S1 4QW

Heeley Swimming Pool
Broadfield Rd, Sheffield, S8 0XQ

Hope Works
Unit 1A Sussex Rd, Sheffield, S4 7YQ

Kelham Island Museum
Alma St, Sheffield, S3 8RY

Millennium Gallery
Arundel Gate, Sheffield, S1 2PP

The Mowbray
118 Mowbray St, Sheffield, S3 8EN

Site Gallery
Site Square, 1 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS

Testone Factory
2 Kelham Square, Sheffield, S3 8SD
Hope Works Presents
Objekt
Batu
Lo Shea
Ifeoluwa
6.12.19
Design: Joe Gilmore
Hope Works Warehouse
Tickets: RA / Skiddle

Hope Works Presents—
Special Request
Djrum
96 Back
IDA
25.10.19
Design: Joe Gilmore

Hope Works Presents—
Mella Dee
Josey Rebelle
rRoxymore (Live)
Lo Shea
22.11.19
Design: Joe Gilmore

Hope Works Presents—
Dan Shake
DJ Python
Chris Duckenfield
More TBA
30.11.19
Design: Joe Gilmore
Festival Director
Liam O'Shea

Head of Programming
Liam O'Shea

Co-Curators
Mark Fell
Pedro Rocha
Alex McLean
Sandhya Daemgen
Ralph Dartford
Alex Wilson
Joe Muggs

Graphic Design
Joe Gilmore

PR & Sponsorship
Tailored Communication

Marketing & Socials
Liam O'Shea

Photography
Frankie Casillo
Alex Morgan

Video Editing
Richard Peirson

Production & Management
Transmitta
Mat Steel
Eleanor Wienel
Petra Kluk
Amelia Furniss
CVC
Sinai Sound
Raze Soundsystem
Shine AV
Visua UK

Web
93FT

Thanks
We would like to thank all our funders, partners and sponsors for their continued support. Special thanks to Sophie O'Shea, Mat Steel, Mark Fell, Pedro Rocha, Mark Valerio, Magid Magid, Helen Featherstone, Professor Vanessa Toulmin, Tamar Millen, Sharna Jackson, Eleanor Wienel, Petra Kluk, Amelia Furniss, Auriel Majumdar-Swift, Francesca Lambert, Alex Mclean, Joe Muggs, Carin Abdulla, John Humphrey, Marco Freivogel, Melissa Taylor, Alexa Gansera, Mita Suri, Melanie Iredale, Greg Povey, Robyn Haddon, Bill Allard, Nick Clark,Raff Latif, Nick Simmonite, Alex Wilson, Ralph Dartford, Matt Anniss and Aaron Mears for your help and support.

A huge shout to our fantastic team of volunteers and crew your hard work and especially to YOU, the curious and open minded individual who is attending No Bounds 2019. We make this what it is together. You are part of the performance too. ONWARDS!