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Function

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Function

One of techno's true underground heroes, Function (Dave Sumner) has been DJing and making music for over 25 years. He is a founding member of the Sandwell District collective, Ostgut recording artist and owner of Infrastructure.

Hailing from New York, he was seduced by techno when Jeff Mills held residency (as well as his own first) at Limelight in the early 90s. Producing from the mid-90s onward, he released his first 12"s on Damon Wild's Synewave and his own Infrastructure imprint. A chance meeting in 1996 brought him together with Regis (Karl O'Connor). The two worked as Portion Reform, releasing uncompromising music on Downwards, making him the only non-Birmingham producer to appear on the label. He later moved to Berlin in 2007, still working with Regis, and now Silent Servant (Juan Mendez), putting his focus on Sandwell District. Since, the label come collective, skyrocketed into cult status - decentralizing the artist ego, blurring the lines between the artist, label and dj; re-arranging the DNA of modern dance music.

Initially releasing records under their own identities, as the label's success grew, it came to be seen increasingly as a collective entity, releasing tracks and albums anonymously partly in revolt against the increasingly celebrity-oriented DJ culture of the time, culminating in its 2010 collective album Feed Forward. Their sound has been highly influential across the following generation of techno musicians, and has informed a major shift in world techno. By the time the label announced its "glorious death" in 2012 (continuing only as a performing act) the American Billboard magazine would write that "Sandwell District's influence on underground techno can hardly be overstated."

The move to Berlin proved successful, bringing both Function and Sandwell District to enigmatic status. Headlining festivals worldwide, his sets at Labyrinth, Japan from 2009-2011 became things of legend; Sandwell closing Sonar's main stage in 2010 proved their impact, with regular Time Warp, Awakenings and Dekmantel appearances (to name a few), combined with frequent club appearances at Berghain, Berlin; Fabric, London; and The Bunker, New York, and other key techno clubs/parties around the world, Sumner's status as one of techno's most important figures became evident.

After disbanding in 2013, their final transmission being; Fabric 69: Sandwell District, Sumner was invited to join the Ostgut family, releasing his debut album, the critically acclaimed, Incubation on Ostgut Ton, and becoming a Berghain resident. In 2015 he

contributed to the notable Berghain mix series releasing, Berghain 07 - Function; the game-changing series which left behind the mix CD format, making the mix available as a free .WAV download and Soundcloud stream alongside two EPs with eight exclusive tracks by various artists.

The album Incubation landed on Ostgut Ton in 2013 and was a heavy impacting reminder of Function's single-handed talents, solidifying his status as a solo artist. The album flows very fluidly and is meticulously detailed with a futurist and foreboding sci-fi feeling throughout. The LP circles in hypnotic loops with unsettling tones luring you into the darkest corners of your mind. From the day of release, Incubation is rightfully considered as a landmark in techno's ever growing history.

In addition, in 2014, he collaborated with Vatican Shadow on Hospital Productions, releasing Games Have Rules, a beautiful full length ambient affair. Feeling the need for a platform to explore developing new artists and an outlet for solo material, he then decided to relaunch the 9 years dormant, Infrastructure New York, in 2015 - releasing a string of beautifully crafted 12"s and albums, developing a camp of new exclusive artists; Campbell Irvine, Post Scriptum, Mariano DC and Function/Inland, as well as involving techno classics such as Steve Bicknell and Altern8's Mark Archer (Trackman). Going on to release the quadruple pack vinyl/CD label compilation; Infrastructure - Facticity, in 2016.

In 2017, Function established a new residency, being the only international resident at Bassiani at the time, in Tbilisi, Georgia. He also celebrated nearly 25 years as a recording artist, releasing a retrospective compilation for the newly formed Ostgut Ton off-shoot; A-Ton.

Alongside an already eventful year, Function engaged in a new project which would form the techno supergroup LSD in collaboration with Luke Slater and Steve Bicknell that they would described as "lysergic machine music". The trio debuted on Ostgut Ton with a 3 track EP titled "Process", too much acclaim, in conjunction with mesmerising performances at both ADE and Berghain which led to them playing headline shows ever since. In 2019 and 2020 they followed up with "Second Process" and "Third Process" which were both self released titles.

2019 saw Function re-inventing himself once again: releasing a fresh batch of newly orchestrated productions on Berlin's legendary Tresor Records and roaring with his typical energy playing shows across the globe. His next album *Existenz* got released and marked a new era in Function's already long lasting career. Sounds becoming more colorful while still maintaining the haunting and dystopian feeling he is known for, the album feels as an ode to New York, the city he grew up.

As always, Function keeps on shifting to the next gear with this year see him relaunching his Infrastructure New York imprint with a new EP of his own making. There's no doubt he'll be turning a lot of heads in the years come and be the enigma he's always been. One thing is sure, when Function is making waves, the world is paying attention.

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