

dance music • club culture

MIAMI SOUNDS



MIND SOUNDS

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EDITORS NOTE



HELLO READERS

What a year it's been! The team at MAD Sounds can't quite believe it's already December. Time to stuff ourselves with mince pies when we're off the dance floor! This year has been fantastic for the dance music scene and we have so much to share with you in this issue and the next about events and releases featuring all of your favourite DJ's and producers.

We were lucky enough to chat to the Bicep boys for this issue and they told us all about their rise to fame in the music industry so definitely check that out.

We also got to see them live at The Warehouse Project in Manchester which was phenomenal and we've got a fancy review of that packed into this issue.

For any parents reading, we've hooked you up with an article all about the latest raving craze... Raver Tots, which is raving for the whole family! Amazing right? We also caught up with Hector Couto and he told us all about his summer in Ibiza and performing at Together.

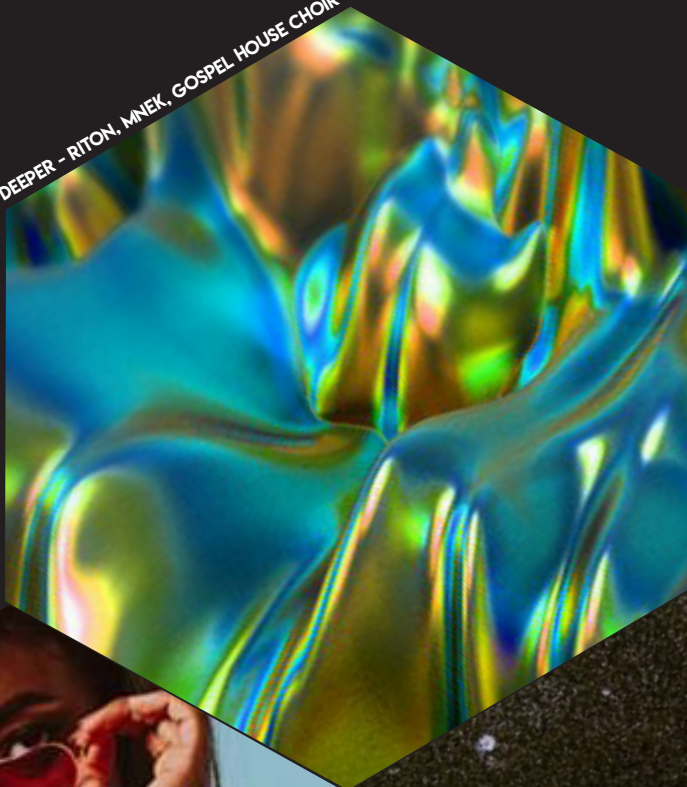
I hope you enjoy this issue of MAD Sounds and make sure you stay up to date with us on social media, we love hearing from you.

Keep boogying!

Lauren X

EDITORS DECEMBER BIG TUNES

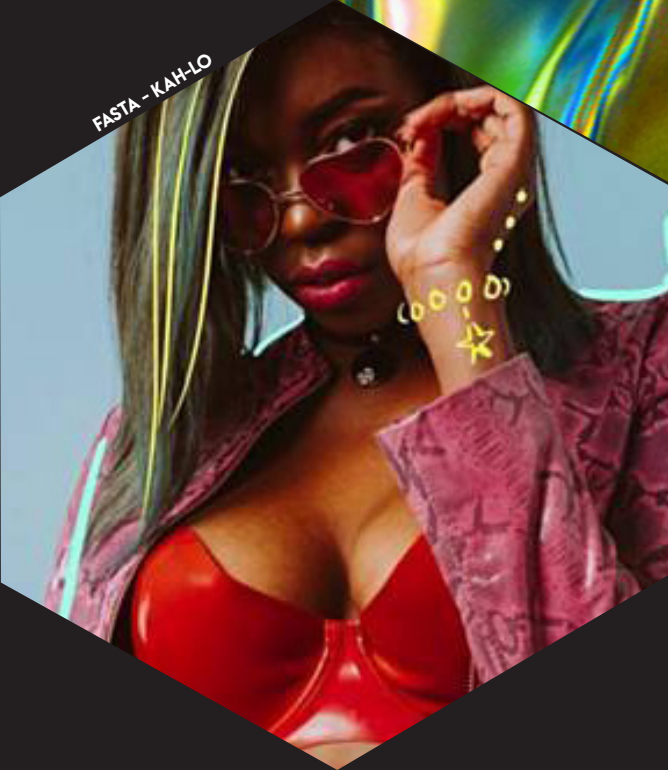
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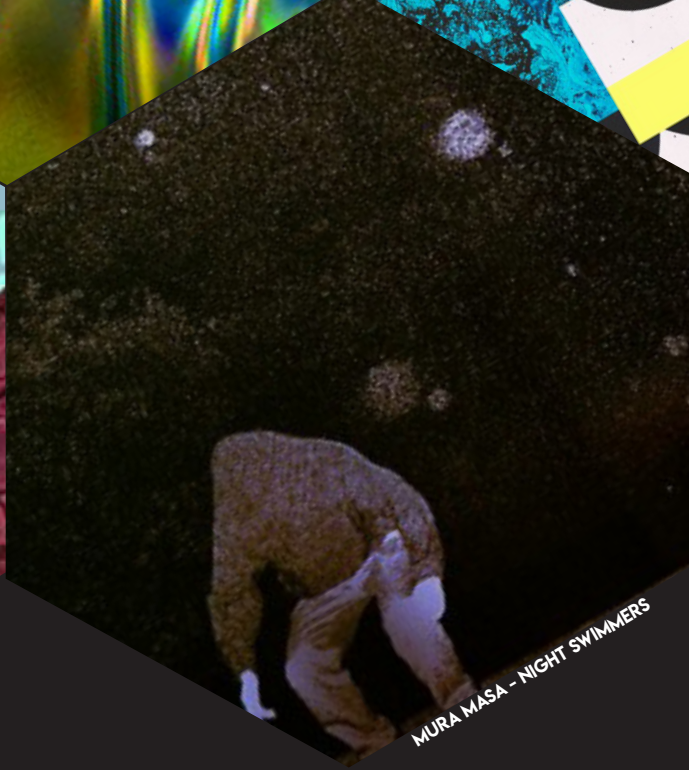
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DEC 17 COVER

BICEP

PHOTO CREDIT:

LAUREN BONES

Flex it

BICEP'S REMARKABLE RISE TO STARDOM

THE BELFAST BOYS HAVE GONE FROM BLOGGERS TO BIG-TIME ARTISTS

In certain DJ circles, a USB stick belonging to Bicep is a prized secret weapon. Backstage at the Dekmantel festival in Amsterdam, there's a commotion behind the booth. Dutch hometown hero Job Jobse is currently playing to thousands of ravers, but he has run to the top of the stairs overlooking the guest area

and is calling out for the Belfast boys. Suddenly, Bicep's Matt McBriar appears at the bottom of the stairs and lobs a tiny rectangle up to Jobse, as onlookers hold their breath. Jobse successfully seizes it from the air, dashes back to the decks, plugs it in, and out pours a joyous Italo-disco track to the crowd's slack-jawed delight.

This elaborate game of catch occurs every time the Bicep boys and Jobse are at the same gig. The track was a special one-off made by Bicep as a wedding present for their agent, and

they keep it under strict lock and key.

Jobse is such a fan, though, that he asks the duo for permission to play it whenever they encounter each other on tour. It's become a bit of a running joke, but it's also some light relief in the Bicep camp. It wasn't so long ago that 30-year-olds Matt McBriar and Andy Ferguson were just two former schoolmates with a music blog; now they're a fully-fledged live act and about to showcase their self-titled debut album at one of Europe's most respected electronic music festivals. The stakes are high.





“THE BIGGER
THEY ARE
THE MORE
NERVOUS
YOU ARE”

“The bigger they are the more nervous you are,” says Matt, the taller and chattier of the two, referring to the increasingly large shows Bicep are playing.

“We packed up all our stuff in the dark at the last gig, and we haven’t opened the bags since,” adds Andy, who is beardier, blunter and always has a quip at the ready.

“If anything can go wrong, it will go wrong,” continues Matt. “We’ve got about seventy cables to get right.”

Andy rubs his chin restlessly. “We didn’t get a chance to start at two hundred-person clubs and build up slowly. One of our first ever live shows was the last set in a tent at Field Day and it’s like... argh!”

It’s true that Bicep’s rise has been at remarkable speed. Since they started the Feel My Bicep blog in 2008 they’ve pulled off the rare feat of going from internet pirates to internationally renowned DJ-producers album artists... (Continued on next page)

MAD



B I C E P

It's true that Bicep's rise has been at remarkable speed. Since they started the Feel My Bicep blog in 2008 they've pulled off the rare feat of going from internet pirates to internationally renowned DJ-producers to album artists, releasing club smash after smash and effortlessly ticking off the dance music rites of passage: live streams, Essential Mixes, XOYO residencies, Warehouse Project takeovers, getting remixed by Carl Craig. They've managed to hang on to that notoriously slippery concept known as credibility, and their three-armed wheel logo now such a distinctive stamp of quality that some fans have had it tattooed on – well, you can guess.

Crucially, though, Bicep have remained powerhouse tastemakers. Through their blog posts and mix series, their releases and their own record label, they've helped turn a generation of music fans onto leftfield disco, electronic oddities and rave oldies from the past four decades. In particular, their role in the classic house-influenced sound that has dominated dancefloors in the past five years has been pivotal, even if they'd rather not admit that themselves. "The nineties was the last big area to blog – it was an amazing period," says Andy, who was drawn to the simplicity of its piano hooks and "the carefreeness of it all". It infiltrated their own productions, too, but when they realised how much it had caught on, "we stopped after that."

"[It got to the point that] if I started playing some Italo-disco that we've put up on the blog," says Matt, "people would be like, 'Why are you playing that, you're nineties house DJs', and I'd be like, 'This is ridiculous'."

That particular strain of retro revivalism is only half the Bicep story. They are quickly becoming better known for flexing their muscles in, well, any old club genre they care to revisit. Their current productions switch between breakbeat, ambient, Italo, trance and techno, all while sounding distinctly Biceppy: beefy, muscular, but no fat. These genres are already seeping into the wider club world but Bicep are blasé about being ahead of the musical curve. "We change our own curve every time and people follow it," says Andy. Beyond their blog-worth of free music, Bicep don't tend to give much away. At the same time as being a modern-day success story, their personalities remain fairly ambiguous. "I wouldn't say we are outsiders," says Andy. "Probably insiders that keep quiet."

**“THERE’S FAR
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RAVER TOTS

Mike Pickets tells us all about the family fun raves that are taking over Britain

Raves are a thing of many peoples youths, dancing the night away in clubs, abandoned warehouses or on the beaches of Ibiza. They bring out the kid in many of us and as many of us age and start families, we do not want to sacrifice those exciting experiences of our youth. But imagine if you could share those raving memories with your children first hand? Well, now, its a thing!

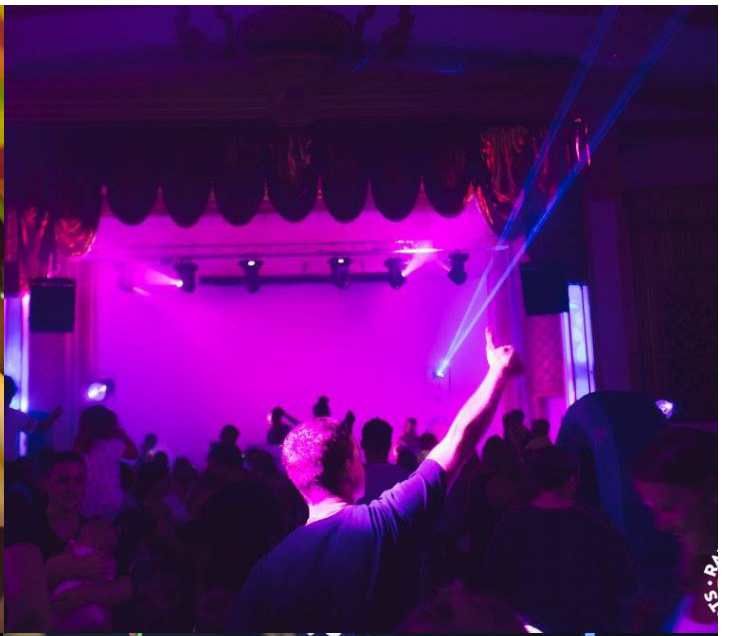
Raver Tots celebrates the notorious UK rave culture by allowing families to dance and play at events that simulate the iconic raves that sweep the British music scene. At their events, DJ's play the best in Drum & Bass, House and UK Garage, including tunes which you will definitely recognise from your youth.

Resident DJ's at the moment include Nicky Blackmarket, who

plays Jungle and some iconic drum and bass tunes. Also behind the decks is chart-topping Garage legends Pied Piper, MC DT and DJ Luck & MC Neat as well as old school raving pioneers Slipmatt, Vibes and Druid.

Mike Pickets, the founder of Raver Tots explains it as a "brand new party, where parents can re-live some amazing times to the sound of their favourite DJ's of the club scene, whilst the kids can have a genuinely fun day out with tones of entertainment".

Mike has been a club promoter for 10 years as well as being a father of two young boys. He 's always loved organising their birthdays just as much as his job organising club events, "I decided to combine my work and family life which is how I came up with Raver Tots. The response has blown me away and we are selling out in many cities."



The event now runs nationally and has been a huge hit with families across the UK.

“It is rare to find something on a weekend that the parents love as much as the kids, but we seem to fill that gap.” Parents can expect to hear all of the dance classics from their youth, and experience an atmosphere full of smiling faces and hands in the air.

There is activities from UV Face painting, face painting and a huge dance floor for the kids so there is no chance of them getting bored.

Andy Riley took his daughter to one of the raves in Preston, “The atmosphere was great. I was honestly shocked at how good it was from start to finish.” He plans to take his daughter to the next one, “We have already booked it! My daughter won’t stop talking about it to all of her friends so I think we’ll definitely have some extra little ravers with us next time...”

“It is a fantastic way to show your children something from when you were younger that

you loved. It was cool to experience it with them and see them enjoy it as much as we used to.” Many parents have taken to social media since attending Raver Tots singing its praises and plastering photos of smiling parents and children all over the Facebook page.

“There was definitely a sense of euphoria in the room listening to some of the songs. It was nice to meet people too...”

“Everyone obviously had a mutual love for the rave scene and the music so conversation flowed and the kids all got on. I barely saw my daughter at some points because she was off boogying with the other kids!”

The Raver Tots team have been overwhelmed with the response from the public, with some of their promotional videos being viewed over 7 million times in the last four months, “We have been featured in various national newspapers, on television as well as our events selling out. This

has enabled us to focus our energy and time on making our events great fun and memorable experiences for the families.” The Manchester Raver Tots event took place at Gorilla, in Manchester which is a favourite for the team, “we feel this is a really magical space with a fantastic team of people running it.”



“We have a great working relationship with them and the have done a lot for making the event what it is in the North-West.”

Mike’s love for dance music definitely helps with his passion for the fantastic event, “As a kid, I used to save up to buy jungle tapes and by the age of 17 I had played my first DJ set at Brixton Academy.”

Mike’s focus lies very much now with his family life, but he still has a huge love for the music, “Raver Tots enables me to keep a hand in the music I love but still be in bed by 10pm with a cup of tea!”

REVIEW: BICEP /// WAREHOUSE PROJECT

DJ duo Bicep have come from trendy bloggers to trend setters in the DJ and underground techno world.

Their iconic three arm logo has been plastered everywhere, from merchandise and album covers, to fire hydrants around cities. Now, they return to The Warehouse Project for their second self-titled appearance. Their 'Feel My Bicep' event last year is still talked about by fans and hardcore tech-heads today, so it came as no surprise that their performance this year was just as remarkable.

The Belfast-born duo have followed suit of huge names such as Skream, Eats Everything and they've essentially created a brand by 'flexing their muscles' in the music industry. In 2012, the pair won DJ Mag's 'Best British Breakthrough DJ Award' and their collaborative EP with Will Saul (which included the tracks 'Don't' and 'You') hit number one in the 2012 Juno Charts. The lads have been dominating the dance scene for the last few years and it was pretty clear to see what the hype was about during their euphoric performance at this Warehouse Project.

The 12 weeks of madness that Manchester's Warehouse Project brings is coming to an end, but the party definitely isn't. Feel My Bicep on November 18th fully exemplified this.

Although the line up was not one of the most prestigious of the season, it was undoubtedly a perfect concoction for techno lovers to take ravers into the early hours of the morning and keeping energy levels at a high until 5:30am.

When it was time for Bicep to take to the decks, they created a truly unforgettable experience, one that many DJ's performing at Warehouse Project probably only dream of delivering. They made Store Street Warehouse their temple for the 1 hour and 15 minute set, with the most incredible visuals and perfectly executed mixes.

The duo opened with the unmissable track 'Just' - if the crowd wasn't already infatuated by Bicep's performance, they definitely were after they dropped this absolute tune. They could not have picked a better track to start with, the crowd were cheering and bopping as much as they could in the jam packed Room 1 of Store Street Warehouse.

Tracks from their new album such as 'Rain' and 'Glue' followed on from the fantastic opening from the boys. Every track gave the crowd goosebumps, with the infamous eery echoes that are so quintessential of Bicep's style.

The most breath taking part of their set was the visuals and light show. Bicep are renowned for having a spectacle of lasers and visuals during their shows but to witness it first hand was extraordinary and I have never seen anything quite like it - I'm used to a few strobes and some lasers during big DJ's sets but to be totally mesmerised by the lights rather than by the music at times is definitely saying something - It was the whole package for both sight and sound.

Each track had a different light show, keeping the crowd gripped, from rainbow lasers that danced right to the back of Store Street, to an incredible projection of lights and smoke creating the most unique and incredible sky lines as backdrop to their iconic sound.

The Belfast duo outdid themselves this time with their mind blowing performance, arousing all our senses.



MIURA MASA

STORE STREET WAREHOUSE

Review...



Veteran SoundCloud tinkerer Alex Crossan, better known as Mura Masa entered the music world, industry conscious, about 3 years ago, introducing us to a flurry of arpeggiating marimbas and steel pan harmonies with popular songs such as Firefly or One Night.

There is no way to overstate the fact that Mura Masa's performance at this year's Warehouse Project was quite remarkable. No amount of familiarity with Alex Crossan's music could have prepared you for the electrifying atmosphere that flooded out of Store Street Warehouse during his set, as he dropped one iconic track after another.

The energy that pulsed from the crowd throughout the 6 hour stretch of the evening was definitely quite overwhelming for Store Street. At times you were literally unable to move, or the pushes and shoves from the reckless crowd made it impossible to even dance (or breathe...) which was definitely a shock for an event of this genre. The combination of styles thrown into the venue on Saturday night was quite

unexpected and at first glance it didn't really make sense to me, having the gentle vocals of NAO followed by 67? Questionable. However, as usual, Warehouse Project proved us wrong and made the mash up of genres enjoyable.

Vocalist Bonzai, who has worked with Alex on tracks like What If I go & Nuggets, was just one of the artists that helped wire the crowd's sense ready for Mura Masa - Her hypnotic dancing in collaboration with her vocal range was quite extraordinary.

At 2am, everywhere but the main room of Store Street Warehouse was completely empty as every eager Masa fan crammed into room 1, quite literally ready to push and shove anyone that stood in their way. This push and shove mentality definitely had a knock on effect to the enjoyment factor of the evening as most of us just wanted to dance and scream our hearts out to Mura Masa's magical beats but let me tell you, this is not easy when you're quite literally being pushed onto the floor. As soon as the first note of 'Messy Love' echoed through the

room, there was a mind blowing scream from fans and everyone began to throw their arms into the air and chant along to the stunning melody.

On his latest self-titled album, Masa works with the likes of NAO, A\$AP Rocky, Charlie XCX and Damon Albarn and he chose the perfect selection of tracks from this album to perform for us on Saturday, with Bonzai and NAO filling in the vocals of these big names, which worked flawlessly. Their vocals were beautifully executed and although trying to mimic such iconic artists can be quite daunting, the modified vocals were quite refreshing. Mura Masa, NAO and Bonzai were worlds away from the auto-tuned facade that we are being sucked into today which is what made the entire set so enjoyable.

After experiencing Alex's talents on the stage on Saturday, it's clear that he is creating something quite genre-melding and honest to add to the music scene, a very 'polished, but not plastic' kind of dance music that not only sounds good through headphones, but makes your heart race on the dance floor.

MINISTRY OF SOUND

Bring Ibiza Vibes to the UK

Ministry of Sound, dance music pioneers and Classic Ibiza are joining forces next year to bring some of the most recognised tunes from worlds biggest party destination, to the UK.

Revival Productions, the team behind Classic Ibiza have announced that they are teaming up with Ministry Of Sound, the notorious dance music brand to bring us two huge live outdoor concerts, next summer in Hertfordshire and Cheshire next summer.

The event will see the Urban Soul Orchestra and DJ Goldierocks performing iconic anthems heard on the 'White Island' from names like Groove Armada, Soul II Soul and Ultra Naté.

Lisa Ward, Director of the Classic Ibiza event explains, "There is no stronger illustration of what we have created with Classic Ibiza than the endorsement of Ministry of Sound.

"They continue to be the heartbeat for dance music lovers across the globe,

spanning generations and genres. "We look forward to developing a strong relationship with them to further enhance the experience of our audience now and in the future."

The entire team is over the moon to be collaborating with Ministry of Sound and they plan to take over next summer with their two live events. Goldierocks, one of the DJ's headlining is equally as excited as the Classic Ibiza team, "Classic Ibiza is epic, it's an overwhelming sensory experience..."

It's like every rave experience heightened, because it's me and a vast powerful 32-piece orchestra- Urban Soul Orchestra. They've worked with all the greats, including Nightmares On Wax, Groove Armada, Soul II Soul and Robert Miles.

"It's so much fun performing with that wall of sound behind you, those iconic tracks that bring back nostalgia and euphoric moments. One of the best shows I've ever done. I can't wait."

Goldierocks is notorious in the dance music scene, having performed at festivals such as Glastonbury and even DJing the Opening Ceremony of the Paralympic Games in London 2012, in the 85,000 capacity Olympic Stadium for the Queen, she said, "that was an absolute career highlight... I felt like Beyoncé, all those people screaming with joy?"

With Goldierocks and Urban Soul Orchestra behind the tunes for both nights, the event is said by Revival Productions to transport you back to the party island that is Ibiza and Goldierocks said, "The classic Ibiza anthems will be amazing, you won't be able to stop getting your jiggle on... The music and event is aiming to bring everyone together, that sense of hedonism, of escapism, of love, of being one, all sure to be felt at the event. How an event like this will unite people is going to be unforgettable."

Tickets for the events at Knebworth House, Hertfordshire and Bolesworth Castle, Cheshire are on sale now.



IBIZA

HECTOR COUTO: “TOGETHER IBIZA IS THE BEST EVENT IN THE WORLD!”

Ibiza’s music scene is one of the most talked about in the world according to dance music fans, arguably, nothing compares to boogieing on the beaches of the party island. This year, an event like no other saw names such as Hector Couto, MK, Gorgon City and Hannah Wants behind the decks of Together’s 4 weeks of parties. After an immense 6 years on the island, Together returned this year for another unforgettable summer.

Together mixed up some of the biggest names in dance acts across the genre spectrum and the party began back in June. It is home for the Summer was Amnesia, a venue which has been around since the 70’s and holds a huge capacity of 5000 rave hungry humans. The venue was decked out with giant ice cannons to keep the crowds cool on the huge dance floor and a mind-blowing sound system which literally rocked fans to their core.

Returning to Together this year was DJ Hector Couto who is a big name in the dance music industry, describing his style as the perfect blend of Chicago house & old-school techno. He has been making waves in the house and techno music world for the past 7 years; gaining a spot in Resident Advisors Top 100 most charted artists as well as being nominated for the 2015 Vicious Music Awards.

In September, Couto played at Together and described it as, “the best event in the world, nothing compares to playing in that place... I have played all over the world but Ibiza is something else.”

“I love the huge mix of cultures on the island and the fact that people travel from over the world and come together exclusively for music.”

Couto played alongside Chase & Status and MK this year. He has always had a connection with the island, “I think it is a true love story. I always dreamed about playing on the White Island since my DJ career began.

“In the last 3 years, I have had the opportunity to play in the most amazing and popular events and seeing such a response from the crowd at Together has been unbelievable. “

Not only is Together iconic because of its music, but it is visually compelling. Ravers come dressed in full carnival attire ready to dance until the early hours of the morning. “The vibes in Ibiza just seem to flow differently to anywhere else in the world, I love how committed people are to the music and the atmosphere. Everyone goes all out, it is amazing.”

“SEEING SUCH A RESPONSE FROM THE CROWD AT TOGETHER WAS UNBELIEVABLE.”



MAD SOUNDS

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NEW YEAR
NEW MUSIC

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Festivals &
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from Carl
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