



ULTRACADE LIVE

GUY 'YUG' BLOMBERG FROM MANA BAR INTERVIEWS TYSON HOPPRICH AKA DJ TRIP

So the big first question is for a lot of people out there – what exactly is 8-bit music?

Briefly, it is the art form of creating music from now obsolete 8-bit video game consoles and computers. Primarily, the in-built sound chips and low bit rate sampling are used for all the sounds and instruments in a song. The Commodore 64, Amiga and Nintendo Game Boy are some of the most common machines used in making 8-bit music.

How did you get started in your musical career?

It spawned from owning a Commodore Amiga in High School. A group of friends and I all experimented and explored creative outlets from the all-mighty Amiga. My first and still much loved piece of music software is a tracker program called Octa Med. Twelve years on my kit has evolved but my signature 8-bit grit, grime and textured palette remains.

Why did you focus on compositions using old gaming consoles?

At first it was out of necessity. The Amiga was the only machine I could afford and as I grew as a musician I started to collect and revisit other consoles. I love the texture and the limitations of obsolete technology. Less is more. Limitations force you to focus on the essence of the energy or idea that you want to get across, you can not rely on equipment alone to do that. I like the grimy, gritty, lo-fi sound and edge that obsolete sound chips give.

It seems 'chiptunes' is still a fairly underground movement, do you see it gaining more popularity and recognition?

Through my music research as a DJ it is amazing how much popular music these days have subtle pixelated sprinkles of 8-bit bleeps woven in the mix. Also, the global effect of the Internet has also unified a lot of 8-bit artists around the world in their unique expression of sound and has allowed chip tune artists to share and showcase their work.

Is there much of a scene in Australia for 8-bit music currently?

It is developing at a nice steady rate; there are many exciting little pockets all around Australia, with some amazing talent showcasing their wares to the world.

You've had a lot of mainstream recognition with previous collaborations (you've played at Big Day Out and the Falls Festival to name a few), do you think you'll do more in the future or focus specifically on 8-bit?

With each collaboration or project I like to try different genres or methods. For my work in theatre and dance I find myself using session musicians a lot. But the signature 8-bit flavour is always present in my music, it being an album, theatre, film or future video game scores.

Tell us more about ULTRACADE LIVE – what is it specifically?

ULTRACADE LIVE is a fun, nostalgic club night celebrating the games, the sounds and the sprites of the golden era of video game culture. It's a unique event where you can play classic games, request your favourite games theme music, compete in tournaments and drink game inspired cocktails. Each event I curate a different theme based around various aspects of game culture. For each theme I dig up retro games, soundtracks and consoles from ever growing collection. The next one in Adelaide in December is themed *Zombies Vs Ninjas*, a celebration of all the best Zombie and Ninja games from the 8-bit to the 128-bit era.

What kind of crowds to you get coming to your gigs?

The crowd is a healthy mix of female and male ranging from 18 - 45, all in all everyone is out for a good time and to get a nostalgic rush.

Can the Brisbane Powerhouse crowd expect anything unique that is different to your regular Adelaide shows?

The Brisbane Powerhouse edition will be the biggest incarnation of *Ultracade Live* yet. Brisbane will be in for a treat with a large assortment of arcade machines, classic game consoles, the cream of cream in retro titles and some fever pitch tournaments with hot prizes.

Do you think that video games as a medium have grown up?

Yes, the art form of playing and making video game is maturing. With each console generation the medium slowly pushes the envelope of technology and concepts of how we play. It's amazing how retro titles still inform how contemporary games are made today, and also I love how some new games revisit the retro in exciting stylised ways. I feel in some ways we are close to another golden era of gaming.

And the closer – what kind of games do you play these days?

A combination of new and retro, mix it up, revisiting old titles can sometimes be better the second time around. Here is my favourites playlist: Legend of Zelda Ocarina of Time, Ico, Shadow of the Colossus, Castlevania - Symphony of the Night, REZ, We Love Katamari, Wipeout HD Fury, GTA IV, Metal Slug 3, Vib Ribbon, Mark of the Wolves, Super Street Fighter IV, Ikaruga, The King of Fighters '98.