

The Secret Garden

Double Whammy headlines electronic summer in idyllic Croatian setting



THE GARDEN FESTIVAL

PETRCANE, CROATIA, 2-11 JUL

DREAMING about an article on the eve of one's deadline could be interpreted in probably just the two slants. And given that it's a damp squib of a morning I'll err on the positive and conclude that this July's double whammy at The Garden Festival has been singled out by my subconscious as the blazing light at the end of the dark, wintry tunnel.

As The Skinny noted last year there are bespoke, electronic festival wonders in abundance on the Croatian coast throughout the summer, and specifically from July 2-11 as the headline event at the Petrcane site shines a wondrous assault upon sea, sun and seasonal sound-tracking. The two thousand capacity event, hugging its own tree-shadowed nook on the fringes of the historic fishing town, presents its fifth edition with a definitive who's who of house and disco.

Essentially two long weekends of entertainment are conjoined giving the opportunity to explore the many sites of local interest during the less-hectic days in between. Fresh from the organisers is the news of

a new purpose built stage while "the quest for perfect sound will continue and we are putting more lighting up in the pine trees to make everything that bit twinklier." A further addition this year will be a midweek outdoor cinema (the site is still accessible outwith the main weekends) and further platforms constructed upon on the ocean that double as dancing or sunbathing posts depending on the mood.

The line-up sees debut appearances from sulky Detroit anti-hero **Moodymann** (aka Kenny Dixon Jr.) and the **Sub Club's Saturday Subculture** team, who decamp en masse for the first weekend. Harri and Domenic will present a daytime Sub-marine boat party as well as locking down at the über-kitsch Barbarellas club on nocturnal duties alongside their Glaswegian deputies **Junior and Telford**.

The performance of **Killer Whale** (The Arthur Russell Project) will undoubtedly be the focal point of the second weekend. Russell, who died in 1992 and counted Allen Ginsberg, David Byrne and Larry Levan as collaborators, is cited as a key exponent of house music's early evolution with iconic releases such as *Is It All Over My Face* (as Loose Joints) and *Go Bang* (Dinosaur L).

Most worthy contemporaries **Faze Action** and **Yam Who?** team up to perform tracks by the infamous New Yorker while both these artists will be performing under their own monikers too. Other Skinny recommends include **Henrik Schwarz**, **Floating Points**, **Horse Meat Disco** and the artists formerly known as **Crazy Penis**.

Festival 'vets' **Crazy P**, who appear in all manner of forms over the two weeks, are also best placed to give us an insight into how the Garden has grown. Currently they are promoting the event through Croatia, Serbia and Bulgaria. Lead singer Danielle Moore explains: "It's to encourage a broader mix of cultures rather than aiming mainly at the UK market, which I think is very important. Tonight we are playing at a 1920s film set where they are serving a five-course meal followed by burlesque entertainment and then we step onto the decks... hopefully everyone will have digested their food by then!" This is an invaluable insight into how this event manages to capture the punters' imagination and strive for quality. "The intimacy is very important and quite a unique feature these days for most festivals," she explains. "It certainly makes the Garden festival

more of a family experience and not just a hedonistic overload. The music is carefully chosen and not based on big name acts, which again makes it more personal as artists tend to make a holiday of the event rather than just come to play and then leave immediately. Whilst we love playing the large festivals and love the hugeness and variations in audiences, it's great hanging out with like-minded people and a slightly 'more experienced' crowd, shall we say. The Garden is also guaranteed (fingers crossed) sunshine - a relatively 50/50 gamble in the UK."

As mentioned the dates are arranged so there's ample time to explore nearby Croatian delights. Garden HQ suggests the island of Dugi Otok. "It's just an hour away by ferry, it is sublime. Azure blue coves, inland lakes and breathtaking views of Kornati. There is only one road on the island and the locals are ridiculously welcoming. It's perfect for a midweek visit, another level of blissfulness. The spectacular waterfalls of Krka are a must too."

Something tells me missing this festival would be a nightmare. [Jaco Justice]

WWW.THEGARDENFESTIVAL.EU



Chris Duncan

MOURNING OPTIMO

ORIGINALLY there was a plan to slip an April Fool's preview into this section, an empty promise that on 1 April Daniele Baldelli would play the Bongo Club or Plastikman would appear at the opening night of Big Wooden Box in Le Cheetah on the 23rd. However, with the news the Optimo Espacio will finish on 25 April after twelve and a half years of ground-breaking music and wasted Mondays, it's fair to say that this is all the

unbelievable news this section can handle this month. After the tears, tantrums and pointless Facebook groups aimed at saving the night, it's time to accept the inevitable. By the time this issue prints there will be four left, ensure you're at all of them. After that, all complaints in writing to 22 Jamaica Street please.

Elsewhere however, other nights are celebrating their first milestone. Confusion is Sex marks its first birthday on 16 April at The Bongo Club

with sets from residents The Glitch and Dolby Anol along with a guest appearance from Platzblanche. Tictactoe have announced their plans to bring Seth Troxler to the Renfrew Ferry on 8 May for a four hour set after a BBQ on the banks of the Clyde, with support coming in the form of resident Andrew Doran and Affi Koman from Sunday Circus.

DJ CHART

BRIAN D'SOUZA

(Slabs of the Tabernacle, Volume!)

Tevo Howard - Crystal Republic (Hour House is Your Rush)
We're lucky to have Tevo playing his UK debut at Slabs' 2nd Birthday next month.

Actress - Paint, Straw and Bubbles (Honest Jon's)
Actress follows up the unreal *Hazyville* with his uniquely claustrophobic and unclassifiable new album *Splazsh*.

Diegors - O Sea, Hello! (Comeme)
This is my favourite Comeme release, Fela-style afrobeat with stealth subbass!

Alex Smoke - Lux+ (Hum + Haw)
It's been a long time coming but Alex finally delivers with his third album out on Hum + Haw imprint. The single *Lux+* is a beast but check out unCERN too!

Mark Du Mosch - Cold Sweat EP (Cyberdance)
5 tracks: from jackin' house to raw analogue dutch electro.

Pangaea - Why (Hessle)
Nods to broken beat and garage, total crossover material and one for the Volume! crew.

Amadou et Mariam - Bara (Joaquins's Sacred Rhythm Dance) (Polygram)
Possibly my favourite tune of last year, guaranteed to have folk asking what it is everytime I play it out...

Collage - Halb Sirp (Wool Records)
Estonia has a fantastic musical heritage, having defeated the Soviet occupation with song (check out the *Singing Revolution* documentary). This limited 10" is well worth seeking out.