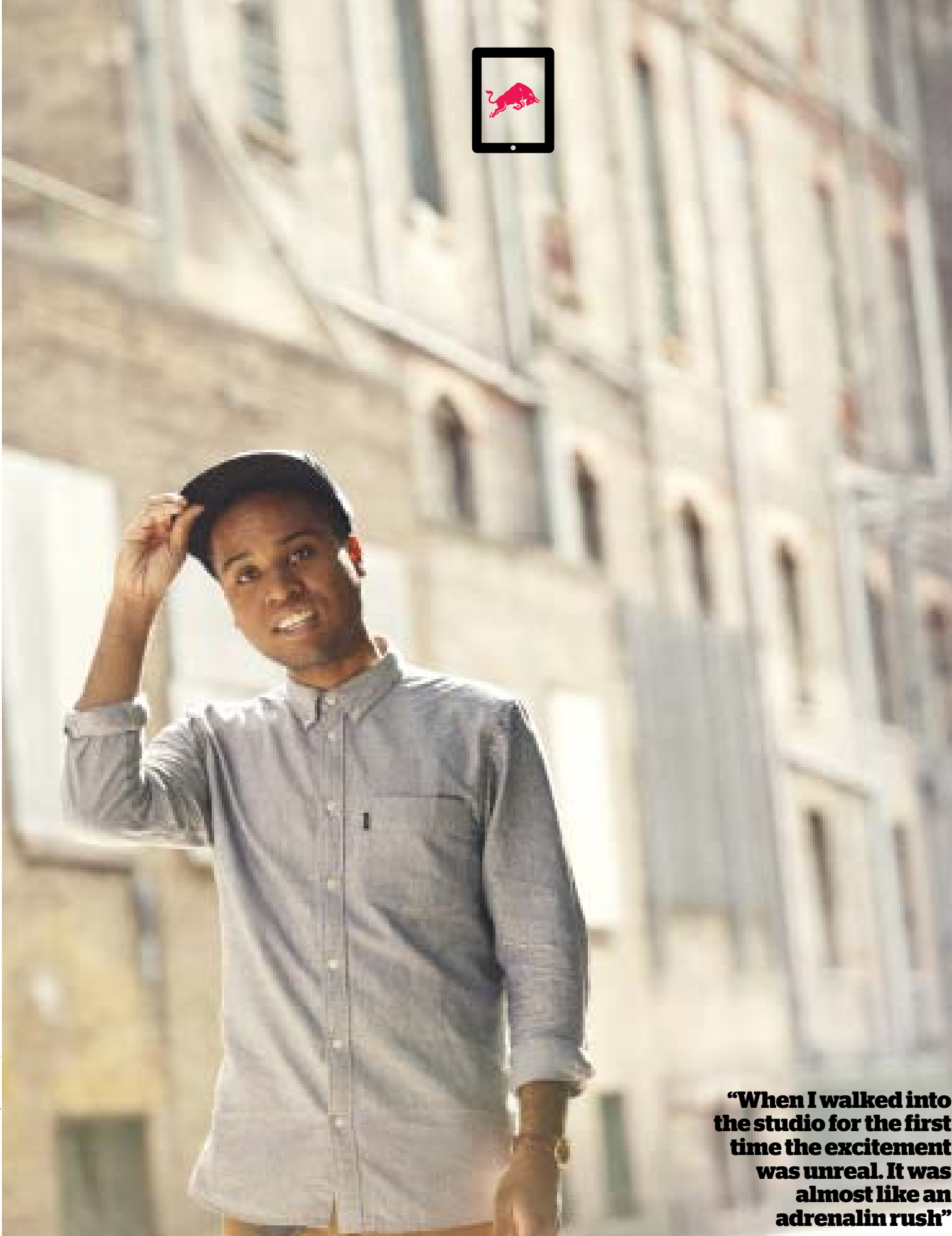


A CLASS OF THEIR OWN

Eighteen months have passed since the Red Bull Music Academy stopover in London, where 60 young and talented musicians from all over the world gathered for a month to share their knowledge, jam and learn from industry luminaries such as Amy Winehouse producer Mark Ronson or minimal music pioneer Steve Reich. As this year's Red Bull Music Academy edition kicks off in Madrid, we check in with three alumni of the London sessions who were part of that musical parallel universe in February 2010. How have their lives changed? Where are they now? And what did they learn from the experience?

PHOTOGRAPHY: RICHIE HOPSON, STEVE BLISS/RED BULL CONTENT POOL



“When I walked into the studio for the first time the excitement was unreal. It was almost like an adrenalin rush”



LUNICE

Canada's Lunice Fermin Pierre II has set about reshaping the way audiences interact with and experience hip-hop

On stage Lunice is a vibrant and energetic 23-year-old showman who transfixes crowds with dance moves – popping and locking as he fires off self-produced tracks from his laptop.

These are stage tricks he learnt from years of dedication to B-Boying in his mum's basement, where he'd record the steps and post them on YouTube, earning him hundreds of thousands views and fans around the globe.

Lunice's love for the hip-hop beat stems from the nurturing hands of fellow Montreal musicians Jacques Greene and Prison Garde. The trio started a club night in their hometown that combined hip-hop a capellas with heavy electronic sounds, drawing on the musical work of Lunice's favourite independent record label, LuckyMe.

It was a foundation that allowed this B-Boy-turned-DJ-producer to shine at Red Bull Music Academy in 2010 and then go on to open for one of hip-hop's key players, MF Doom, getting crunk along the way in the Red Bull Studio London with international superstar DJ and Beyoncé producer, Diplo.

Moreover, Lunice has fulfilled one of his dreams by joining his muses on the groundbreaking LuckyMe label, which has released two critically revered EPs of his this year. With a full European tour under his belt he's now set to go down under for a series of Australian gigs.

THE RED BULLETIN: Your DJ sets are pretty physical. When did you learn to dance and do you find it exhausting?

LUNICE: I started out in 2002. Before that my sister always used to force me to do N*Sync and Backstreet Boys choreography. When I was younger she was the main figure I looked up to for dancing and singing. On stage I always try and keep my performance on point even if I'm tired because it's fun. When I'm in a situation where I want to stop I just think, 'What would [rapper] Rick Ross do?' because I think he has the best work ethic.

How did you first get into music production?

Breakdancing encouraged me to start beat boxing and I tried to create my own beats. When I figured out how to loop a sample and how to put a beat on top, I tripped. I was like [really happy] 'Oh man this is a song! It's made from scratch.' Ever since then I've always been on production duties and it's transformed into something amazing.

What are some of your best memories from Red Bull Music Academy 2010?

When I walked into the studio for the first time the excitement was unreal. It was almost like an adrenalin rush from the moment you wake up till the moment you are in there [the studio]. I felt like I had known the participants for years. Everybody was so like-minded, positive and on the same page, just like family.

Is there anyone you met while you were there that you work with now?

Gabriel Nascimbeni and I exchanged music at the academy, but we didn't have time to work together. Gabriel knows how to traditionally compose bossa nova and a lot of beats that I sample are bossa nova. We've stayed in contact and he sends me recordings of his vocals and guitar and I add drums on top of that.

Shortly after your time at Red Bull Music Academy you got signed to your the LuckyMe label. What was that like?

I'm such a huge fan and I still feel like a groupie. It's crazy. When I signed with them I was tripping, telling all my friends and calling up my mom because Hudson Mohawke, Rustie and Mike Slott [electro producers and DJs], specifically those three people, completely shaped my sound into what it is today.

How was the session with Diplo at Red Bull Studio London?

In the studio he just puts you on his level, he is super-humble and you never get the vibe that he's looking down on you. When we had time together in the studio we almost finished the song in 30 minutes. He made the session really comfortable.



TOKIMONSTA

From Krautrock icons to bossa nova innovators, Los Angeles beat mistress TOKiMONSTA made all kinds of new friends - and future collaborators - during her time at Red Bull Music Academy

The first lady of electronica record label, Brainfeeder, TOKiMONSTA was already one of the brightest stars in the LA beat scene when she was hand-picked to take part in the London edition of Red Bull Music Academy.

Known for her soulful brand of avant-garde electronica, TOKiMONSTA – real name Jennifer Lee – fell in love with music when she stumbled upon her father's old record collection. "My father passed away when I was between two and three years old," says Lee as she flips through albums at Rockaway Records, a vinyl emporium close to her home in Silverlake, Los Angeles. "His record collection was really eclectic – a lot of rare funk, soul and classic rock, as well as Korean funk. Those were the first records I ever sampled."

She took the name TOKiMONSTA – 'toki' means 'rabbit' in Korean – and befriended the beat fiends at the Low End Theory club, hub of LA's hip-hop and dubstep scene, making a name for herself for her ethereal yet occasionally bone-crushing textural soundscapes. Fresh from a world tour with label-mate and notorious beat maverick, Daedalus, and with a string of European dates booked for this month, TOKiMONSTA continues to make a sonic scene wherever she goes.

THE RED BULLETIN: How did you learn to make music?

TOKIMONSTA: When I was in college a friend of mine installed software onto my computer and said, 'You like music, you should make your own.' I can be kind of dweeby with tech stuff, so I figured out all the tricks and did the YouTube tutorials, and it started snowballing from there.

You tour all the time – what's the difference between audiences in the US and elsewhere?

The big metropolitan cities are similar – LA, New York, Tokyo and London – you tend to get a similar response. People appreciate the music and they are very discerning, but they are also a little spoiled because so many acts come by so often. I recently played in Bulgaria and in Greece, in areas where they might not get musical acts as often, and the crowds had so much more energy. I loved those shows. **Do you feel like as a woman in a male-dominated music scene, you have to work a little harder, even today?**

I feel like most of my peers are not judgmental. They are more interested in the quality of what I'm doing, rather than the fact that I am a girl. With general listeners, it can be a good thing and a bad thing, being female. Possibly because I am a girl, they feel more inclined to listen and check me out. Then you have those who will judge me twice as hard because I am a girl. Like, if they find some discrepancy, they want to blame it on the fact that I am a female. At that point I just have to come to terms with it. **What's the most valuable thing you took away from Red Bull Music Academy?**

I really loved meeting Kluster. They were a German Krautrock outfit in the 1970s and their take on music was really inspiring. The greatest thing was meeting incredible artists I might never have otherwise connected with. And now we're making music together. Like Gabriel Nascimbeni; he's an excellent bossa nova guitarist and vocalist who I'm working with on a track at the moment.

When you play shows, you're orchestrating a lot of the sounds live – and you make it look easier than it really is. What was it like the first time you performed in front of an audience?

Oh man, the first show I did I messed up so much! It was in LA's Chinatown and the worst part was that everyone in the crowd were my peers. These hip-hop people were watching me as a girl doing this really terrible live set. There's some really embarrassing footage on YouTube. Weirdly, people seemed to really enjoy it. I guess I'm my own biggest critic.



PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVID BLACK, RICHIE HOPSON/RED BULL MUSIC ACADEMY

"The greatest thing was meeting incredible artists I might never have otherwise connected with"

“I learned how to be more confident in an interview and how to act at a photoshoot. Besides, there’s a lot of networking going on”



JACKMASTER

Thursday: Madrid; Friday: Berlin; Saturday: Manchester; Sunday: Tilburg; Monday: London; Tuesday: Glasgow. Even for a high-profile businessman that would be a pretty tight schedule. But Jack Reville - aka Jackmaster - is used to it

Over the past two years the Glaswegian’s career has taken off like a summer hit in Ibiza. Now he’s always switching from clubs to airports, DJ desks to plane seats.

Even before he travelled to London for Red Bull Music Academy in 2010, the 25-year-old was a talented part-time DJ, jobbing at Rubadub in Glasgow, one of Europe’s most prestigious record shops.

But since then Jackmaster has become a tastemaker of electronic dance music. With acclaimed releases from aspiring producers such as Jamie xx, his record label, Nmbros, regularly redefines the direction of modern house music and bass-driven dubstep. And the readers of *DJ Mag*, one of the world’s largest electronic music publications, voted him Best Breakthrough DJ 2010, which led him to the honour of compiling a mix CD for London’s renowned Fabric Club, following in the footsteps of DJ giants like John Peel, Diplo and Goldie.

THE RED BULLETIN: You played six gigs in five countries last week. When do you sleep?

JACKMASTER: On Friday I played Panorama Bar in Berlin, my set was scheduled for 8am. I’d planned to go for a sleep before it but I was too excited. When I was getting tired I had a double espresso and a shot of Jägermeister as a chaser. Immediately I felt sick and went to the toilet and fell asleep there. Luckily I woke up before my gig!

What’s the best way to kill time at the airport – what’s your strategy?

Watching stuff on my computer or preparing for the show by selecting music. But the best way to kill time is actually just to go to sleep. I’ve become an expert at sleeping on planes – head back, cross your arms, don’t try to stop your thought process, just keep thinking about whatever you’ve been thinking.

How did you get into vinyl culture?

When I was growing up, my dad had a big record collection. He’s a massive fan of The Beatles but he also had a lot of soul records. From the age of eight, my dad got me into music. There was always vinyl.

Does your dad come to your gigs?

Nah. I would never take my dad to one of my gigs because he’d probably embarrass me. But he’s really proud of me.

He must have been proud when you won the *DJ Mag* Breakthrough Award. How did that come about?

They choose nominees and the public votes. I was in a pub in London when I got a text from my friend Joe and that said something like, ‘*DJ Mag*, wow! You’re nominated for the Best Breakthrough DJ!’ I was thinking, ‘I will never win this, but it’s really cool to be nominated.’

Unlike most other Red Bull Music Academy participants, you’re not a musician, you’re ‘just’ a DJ. Did you still benefit from the experience?

The main thing I got out of it was an industry thing. I learned how to be more confident in an interview and how to act at a photoshoot. Besides, there’s a lot of networking going on. For instance, two days ago I was at the BBC Radio 1 studios in London doing a label showcase with Benji B. And I don’t think that would have happened if we hadn’t met.

The MP3 revolution created millions of new DJs? Would you encourage them?

Absolutely, man! It’s a lot harder to become a name today. But I’d always encourage them, it’s the most fun you can have. The feeling that you get from DJing, especially to your friends in your hometown, is one of the best feelings in the world.

www.redbullmusicacademy.com

PHOTOGRAPHY: RICHIE HOPSON, DIEGO GONZALEZ/RED BULL CONTENT POOL