

DJ SHADOW Biography

Don't get it twisted. DJ Shadow is a hip-hop DJ -- at least according to an Afrika Bambaata playlist.

"Introducing..." DJ Shadow's seminal debut album, embraces Soulsonic's M.C G.L.O.B.E.'s definition of hip-hop--"Punk rock, new wave, soul/pop music, salsa, rock & roll/calypso, reggae, rhythm & blues."

Shadow takes us there. "I have no problem delving into realms that -- by '96 standards -- would never be considered hip-hop.

The last frontier of hip-hop is to go back to the extreme form of experimentation while still keeping that funk. Hip-hop has become one of the most conservation forms of music out right now.

This album doesn't follow the status quo. "Introducing..." defines the time, embracing the past while taking us forward into a new era.

Working in isolation, away from any constraints of a formal hip-hop scene, in his hometown of Davis, California, DJ Shadow (Josh Davis) became influenced by the pioneering production skills of Mantronik, Double Dee and Steinski, Latin Rascals and Hashim and later, by the sampling techniques of vanguardians like Prince Paul and Ali Shaheed Muhammed, who opened up infinite creative possibilities through which Shadow could build his vistas.

Shadow's timeline was set off with "Legitimate Mix," followed by "In/Flux" (Mo Wax foundation), then the 32 minute 30 seconds EP "What Does Your Soul Look Like?," and now with the 360th degree: "Introducing..."

DJ Shadow's entirely sample-based music speaks for itself-a narrative so-journal cut and pasted together from 1000s of dime store vinyl that provides ample space for listeners to choose their own path of understanding.

"I wanted to be as forward thinking as I could in the way the beats were put together. I tried to do things with the drums that haven't been done before and make the arrangement of the samples sound beautiful together; making it into something that people should care about."

"I spend a lot of time thinking about the sonic soundscapes and the storytelling level. There's a plot in every song; titles give a clue to what's going on underneath. There has to be a beginning, middle, and end-not only on the tracks themselves, but in the album as a whole. The listener should be dropped off back at the apex a little wiser."

This is what happens when a music maker doesn't forger first and foremost that he's a music fan. Being "Master of Records," Bambaata saw it coming. And Shadow's music counters the times. Don't get it twisted.

"Introducing..." is a hip-hop album.