

# STEVE LAWLER BIOGRAPHY

## OVERVIEW

**STEVE LAWLER** is a definitive DJ and producer, renowned as one of the world's premier and most respected talents. His rise to the top has been the result of pure talent and dedication to playing and producing the finest quality house music first. It's been a steady rise from the infamous 'motorway raves' of the early '90s, to his legendary residency's **We Love** and **VIVA** at **Space** in **Ibiza**, **Viva Harlem Nights** at **The End** in London, and his **Lights Out** and **VIVA** tours of North America. Lawler continues to build an ever-growing band of avid followers who pack out any venue that bills his name. He is one of the most powerful touring brands in electronic music – period.

Steve Lawler was once hailed the pioneer of twisted house, but his sound has evolved through the years although the main elements still remain, meandering through deep, dark, sexy house tracks. Still evolving, and as always still innovating, Lawler will be at the forefront of global dance music for many years to come ...

## THE HISTORY

It Started in 1988. Steve Lawler used to avidly buy **Depeche Mode** records, which put him on the path of electronic music. But it was **Acid House** that really turned his head. Tuning devotedly into a local pirate radio station gave Lawler a taste for house music, and it wasn't long before his mates were luring him off to warehouse parties.

Lawler was inspired to put on his own illegal parties at the age of 17, in a disused tunnel underneath the M42 Motorway (1990 – 1994). These parties became legendary throughout Birmingham (his hometown) and across the Midlands, but were stopped due to pressure from the police. This didn't deter Lawler. Next stop Ibiza, where Lawler has been every summer since 1990. It was his residency at **Cafe Mambo** in 1995 which was his real breaking point, where he performed eight-hour sets, seven days a week, as well as playing three times a week at **Pacha** on the roof terrace. It was there that he was spotted by Darren Hughes (then promoter of **CREAM**, now **We Love**), who recognised his talent and ambition and signed him to Cream's DJ agency with an immediate residency at **CREAM** the eponymous Liverpool institution.

Following his residency at Cream, Lawler launched his residency for Darren Hughes at **Home** at Space in Ibiza in 1999, the place where his legacy was truly realised. After two incredible years, he was crowned by the locals and the Industry '**The King Of Space**'

With a solid fan base, a proven track record and his first compilation '**Dark Drums 1**' locked down what Lawler needed was a home in the UK, and that is exactly what he got. He set the capital alight with his weekly Friday night residency **Deep South** at Leicester Square's multi-million pound super club **Home** London. The latter half of 2000 saw the timely release of his hugely successful Home compilation that reflected his successful residency.

Steve Lawler fast became the DJ every clubber wanted to hear but he wanted a new home and outlet. The perfect solution came in the form of his own monthly Thursday night at Code, titled **The Midweek Session**, which quickly became established as one of the most important club nights in the UK, where guests such as **Danny Tenaglia, Sasha, Carl Cox, John Digweed,** and **Laurent Garnier** all joined him behind the decks. In March 2001, Lawler then released his revered **Nu Breed** album with compilation kings **Global Underground**.

Lawler was by now touring North and South America, South Africa, Australia, Asia and Eastern Europe to great acclaim. Due to this workload, he decided to end The Midweek Session after just 12 parties and end the residency on a high. His second Dark Drums compilation '**Dark Drums 2**' followed in September 2001, further appealing his worldwide fan base, being listed as Compilation of the Month in many publications, and also in many end of year polls.

In 2002, Lawler launched two new concepts around his distinctive sound. The first was the '**Lights Out**' compilation series, released in the summer of 2002 with the follow-up '**Lights Out 2**' hitting the shelves in late 2003. The third installment '**Lights Out 3**' came out in October 2005 completing the trilogy. 'Lights Out 3' was accompanied by Lawler's most extensive US tour to date. The second Lawler concept **Harlem Nights** saw him make an eagerly anticipated return to London in 2002, with his own night - **Harlem Nights at The End**, which continues to provide the perfect setting for Lawler to unleash his six-hour sets. It is now over five years old and titled **Viva Harlem Nights**.

Harlem Nights is where Steve Lawler feels completely at home as a DJ. It's the umbrella for his sound, taking things back to basics and setting a vibe that keeps people coming back for more. As Steve himself states: *"This is my baby, and a lot of my musical direction and inspiration comes from that night, from that crowd. I feel so comfortable from the second I walk into that room. Harlem Nights to me is one of the best parties in the world."*

Lawler's next chapter began in the summer of 2005 with the launch of **VIVA**, marking a new direction for him both visually and musically. VIVA launched on a Thursday night on the new terrace at **Space**, and in 2006 hosted five special events at **Pure Pacha** on Friday nights to mark the launch of **VIVA: The Album** for Ministry of Sound, a three-disc album that has bucked the trend in international compilation sales. Lawler then launched **VIVA Music**, his own independently owned digital-only record label, an A&R facility for Steve to continue signing and releasing music he loves. Following the decision to close the **Harlem Records** umbrella of labels, Lawler wanted to continue expressing his ability to break new artists, and in the digital age, he now owns the highest-profile download-only imprint. Due to an exclusive relationship with **Beatport**, VIVA Music is the model of how to release electronic music in 2007.

The next chapter in the VIVA series arrives in October 2007 with a new global compilation concept from Lawler, focusing initially on his residency at The End. Titled **VIVA: London**, the double-CD is built around the sound and energy of the Viva Harlem Nights residency. The series, released via Renaissance Recordings, will then focus on other cities where Lawler visits on a regular basis. He also holds VIVA residencies in Canada and Vanguard in Los Angeles.

It's not all about being a DJ. Lawler's accomplished productions include the singles **'Rise In'** (2000), **'Andante'** (2002), **'Lost'** (2003), and **'Out@Night'** (2004). More recently, Lawler has produced a range of new tracks in 2005 including **'Souls On Ice'** (2005), a collaboration with hype production outfit King Unique. Other releases include Lawler's **'Illectronic Music'** (2005), and **'That Sound'** (2005) released by Joia Records from Sweden (August 2005). Lawler is currently writing his debut artist album for release in 2008, whilst keeping the discerning dance floors busy with his **SL Projects**, **SLADLY** project with Dino Lenny, **SLAAF** with Audiofly. Along with his new singles **'Courses For Horses'** **'Violet'** **'KrunK'** **'Superflake'** and **'Fools Paradise'** under his own name. Expect a stream of new underground music from Lawler in the next 12 months.

Lawler's earlier remixes consist of BT, Dub pistols, Cevin Fisher, amongst many others. His recent remix CV consists of his first step into the Hollywood film industry with his huge rework of incidental sounds from Hollywood film **The Skeleton Key**. A multi-million box office hit in America, the remix became a true Ibiza classic. Elsewhere, Lawler remixed **Donna Summer's** 'I Feel Love' for the **Heineken Thirst Tour**, which Steve recently performed for across key Asia markets. Other mixes include **Dido's** 'Sand In My Shoes' (Billboard USA Dance Chart number one), the second **Shapeshifters** single 'Back To Basics', and house classic 'Reach for Me' by **Funky Green Dogs**. And who could forget hearing his remix of **Bombdogs** 'I Can't Explain' in Ibiza summer of 2004. He's recently remixed heavy weights **Jamelia** and **Justin Timberlake**.

Overall, Steve Lawler is a DJ who has never taken the easy path to success. A DJ whose passion for house music overthrows the boundaries of just playing records. From his mammoth sets at Space in Ibiza to his tendency to re-edit half the tracks in his box, Steve Lawler continually proves his true passion. As *Jockey Slut* puts it, 'One of the best DJs in the world.'

**June 2007**

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