

The Shapeshifters are London DJ and production duo Simon Marlin and Max Reich, also behind long running club night Nocturnal at AKA, London, the party hang of Nocturnal Groove – the boys' and Lola Marlin's record label. Party people at heart, the pair met when Simon signed Max to the Down Boy record label that he was working for. Musically, Simon found his enthusiasm for house on the dancefloor in the late 80's and early 90's, while Max got into production via a passion for techno honed whilst throwing illegal raves in his native city of Gothenburg.

Together, they make and play what can best be described as club music – underground house with elements of funk and soul and a darker, techy edge. 2008 brings a new home for them on the Defected label, and they're already loving the opportunity to produce music for clubbers rather than for mainstream radio and the charts. "We're really proud of what we've achieved – our remix of Christina Aguilera's 'Ain't No Other Man' topped the US Billboard dance chart, our Candi Staton 'You Got The Love' cut was number one in the Music Week Club Chart, and we remixed George Michael's 'Flawless'" amongst others says Simon. "Our debut single, 'Lola's Theme', reached number one in the UK charts and our album 'Sound Advice' gave us 3 more top 20 hits, but when we came to make our second album for Positiva it was starting to feel as though what we made in the studio was getting further and further away from what we were playing out, and it just didn't feel quite right. The dancefloor is our home, it's where we want to see our music working. Ultimately, what makes us happy is moving away from the live band element and returning to our roots, making music that we can then watch explode at the weekend..."

Their latest two productions, 'Treadstone', a techy but uplifting track, and a re-work of Orbital's classic 'Chime' track have excited the duo's existing admirers and found them new champions in the form of Xpress 2 and Laurent Garnier. Stripping away the live sounds and layering fewer elements has left The Shapeshifters feeling reinvigorated about their sound.

"Having made the decision to return to what we enjoy and feel we're best at, what we make and what we play is much more in tune with each other," says Max. And with the amount of gigging they do it's a good philosophy to have – as well as their London home the boys are in demand around the UK as well as the world: their diary is crammed with dates from Australia to Canada, Europe to the far East and everywhere else in between.

The US has also welcomed them with open arms – they've long been a favourite of Frankie Knuckles and the Def Mix crew but their 2007 dance remix of Leona Lewis' 'Bleeding Love' has now topped the US Billboard chart just in time for them to embark on a tour taking in Miami, LA, Denver, San Francisco, Washington and more. They're currently remixing Todd Terry's 'Get Down' for Defected, and the next stop is Ibiza for their annual summer appearances including dates for Defected and Def Mix.

"Signing to Defected has given us a new lease of life and we're so immersed in it," says Simon, "but we're also excited by clubland's eagerness to hear music with a bit more depth and melody to it. If we want to make underground music and express ourselves that way they're happy – if we do make something radio friendly then it's still the perfect home for us."

The Shapeshifters' Nocturnal night is going strong – after rocking Turnmills for a year it's now returned to central London's AKA venue for 6 shows in 2008 (expect sets from the likes of Liquid People, Frankie Knuckles and Martijn ten Velden), and will put in an appearance alongside Defected at Ministry of Sound.

For Simon and Max, the future couldn't seem better. An 'in Da House' compilation is due in August 2008, and after the success of their previous House Grooves compilations will be a welcome addition to a number of record collections – their programming, edits and mixes showcase the best sort of night out you can pack onto two discs... "For us, every record we've ever made has come from the heart," says Simon. "We want to concentrate on quality production that satisfies our artistic side and isn't dictated through number crunching, and making our parties rock with intelligent record selections. There's some great tunes out there and we want to celebrate that when we play."