





MUTE

I got connected with Mute through my work at the London Cartoon Centre. While I was working there, someone popped over from Mute Records, which was located just up the road from the centre across the Ha'penny Steps on the Harrow Road. They were looking for an airbrush artist for Renegade Soundwave's next record cover, for a track called 'Space Gladiator'. Someone pointed them in my direction, and that's how I got the gig. They were a nice company to work for, I could get to their office from my house, which was about a 15-minute walk.

The first two covers I did were made into A0 posters, which was nice for me as I could walk down the Golborne Road and see my artwork as a poster stuck on a wall. People would report back to me saying things like, "I saw your work in Manchester". I was well chuffed. I asked them for a couple of posters, and they gave them to me, which was also really nice. I only



did three record covers for them: 'Space Gladiator', 'Biting My Nails' and 'Women Respond to Bass'. I took over from Dave Little, who was doing covers for them before me. We met years later, and we're still in touch now. Actually, he's asked me to teach him Illustrator, which is a huge honour.

'I first met Junior in 1988 when we asked him to do the cover for our 12-inch single 'The Phantom/Space Gladiator'. He did what became a legendary image of the androgynous space warrior standing on a mashed up planet. After that, Junior did some more sleeves for us, and I used to enjoy sitting with him in his flat in Ladbroke Grove working on ideas. Junior was always losing his pencil and would spend ages looking for it only to find it where he'd left it - stuck in his afro. His record sleeves are classic examples of a hugely important artform now sadly deceased in the digital age. Lovely guy and an integral part of our culture.'

Danny Briottet, Renegade Soundwave

'His cover for the club mixes of Renegade Soundwave's 'Biting My Nails' is one of my faves. Dave Little's cover for the first release was already a classic but Junior turning the Balinese mask into a techno-futurist update is also a winner in my book. All that chrome and crystal sharpness took the mask on a very different journey into the 21st century. I later discovered his work in other fields (comics!), and Junior's work has always continued to impress me.'

Mark Moore, S'Express



The one that started it all. I loved doing that cover. I came up with a couple of roughs that I showed to the band. They were of a female Robocop character standing on planet Earth with a gun and shield. They picked one and I went ahead with it... They told me they were going to use it for street posters, A0 size.

So I went to my local art shop, got some line board A0 size and went big with it. It took about a week to do the image. The original artwork is pretty big, and the print is the same size as the poster. It was so big I couldn't put it on my drawing board - I ended up attaching it to my wall and airbrushed right here in my front room.



VINYL SOLUTION

I produced quite a lot of covers for this label. Alain De La Mata was the boss at Vinyl Solution, a French guy, very progressive. Not only did he like different types of music, but he also had a passion for film and ran a distribution company. It was here that I did my first metal cover. An image which is still being printed on to T-shirts today. I'd also pop into their offices to see them, not just for work purposes but for a social visit as well. The funniest thing was, when you were in their kitchen you could look into the kitchen at Kickin' Records, they were that close!

'Junior Tomlin's collaboration with Vinyl Solution in the early 1990s is a testament to the vibrant, cross-fertilising and boundary-defying Ladbroke Grove/Portobello Road scene of the time. During that unique creative era, a host of talented musicians, working with a variety of labels, lived and recorded in the area. Luminaries like J. Saul Kane aka Depth Charge (legendary producer, mixer, A&R), the much-missed Ian Loveday aka Eon and numerous others lived within walking distance of our office and could often be found rifling through the racks in our basement record shop.'

'The introduction was made by Peter Harris, colourful owner of Kickin' Records (also sadly missed), whose office was just around the corner from ours. Junior had provided the cover for the classic jungle track 'The Bee' by The Scientist for Kickin' and was keen to show us more of his work. I was familiar with his seminal rave flyers, but what he showed me at our first meeting was something else again. When we decided with Peter to release Head To Head - Kickin' Vs Vinyl, a joint compilation

to boost the local scene, named in the spirit of the classic Jamaican dub album battles, Junior was the obvious - and only - choice. The eye-bending tableau of gladiatorial robots he duly delivered sowed the seeds of what would grow into a long and productive relationship.'

'The first fruits - the horrifying flayed killer corpse that (dis)graces the sleeve of Depth Charge's seminal 'Dead By Dawn'; a profoundly unsettling macro-vision cosmic orb for Midi Rain's 'Eyes' - led to artwork commissions from a number of very disparate Vinyl Solution artists, all of whom were attracted by Junior's singular vision, flawless technique, warped futurist sheen and classic cinema poster/comic-style mastery of composition. A gothic western ghoulish posse for British rap legend Gunshot's 'Children Of A Dying Breed', a fractured haunted landscape for dance act Secret Desire's 'Respect For The Few' and brooding apocalyptic deathscapes for extreme metal berserkers Cancer ('Death Shall Rise') duly followed before our paths diverged.'

Alain De Mata, Vinyl Solution



Ahh, I love this one. Peter from Kickin' introduced me to Alan from Vinyl Solution. Their idea was to have a soundclash album. I thought it would be interesting to have gigantic robot DJs facing off

with each other and when their decks become overheated, they throw them in the middle of the arena to smoulder. Cheered on by the crowd, which are silhouettes.

This one has a nice story to it. Looking at a lot of my rave flyers, I realised that a lot of them feature Billy Bunter. So, of course, he was aware of my artwork because he played at a lot of the raves I was doing the flyers for. He got in touch and invited me down to The Rave Story, an event he organised at the Aquarium in London back in 2018. Myself and Pez were invited down to exhibit our work. We became friends through that, and he asked me if I wanted to do DJ Rap's EP cover Intelligent Woman for her book launch. Since then, DJ Rap and I have worked on a range of T-shirts.

'When I think of music and the concept of what I wish to express, I always want the visual representation to be in total synergy with what I am creating. Artwork is so important! This is why I didn't hesitate when it came to choosing an artist and legend like Junior for specific projects I had in mind. His work ethic is exceptional and flawless, and he is just a lovely human to collaborate with.'



DJ Rap

'Junior is an inspiration whose art captures the collective minds of the rave generation perfectly. It's been an absolute honour to work alongside him, and it's impossible to pinpoint a favourite piece of art from his vast body of work. As a music lover addicted to collecting vinyl, his sleeve for Renegade Soundwave' Space Gladiator' stands out as one of my favourite record sleeves of all time, it captures the futurism of the record perfectly.'

'I've had the privilege of my DJ name being on many of the flyers Junior designed for raves up and down the country in the 90s and his series of Peace Fest flyers really stand out for me, especially Peace Fest 92. The image really summed up raving in the early 90s - literally mind-blowing.'

'In the late 80s and early 90s, seeing the signature Junior Tomlin on so many amazing record sleeves and flyers, I could never have dreamed of working with Junior some three decades later. The piece he designed for DJ Rap's 'Intelligent Woman' record release to accompany her book release is the best piece of art I've had designed across the hundreds of records I've released over the years.'

'My proudest moment with Junior was when he designed an exclusive piece for my Love Dove Generation clothing brand. Come on now, who better to capture the image of The Love Dove Generation than the artist who had created so many amazing images when the era was at its height in the early 90s? Of course, he created a masterpiece that ageing ravers the world over wear with pride.'

Billy Daniel Bunter, Music Mondays

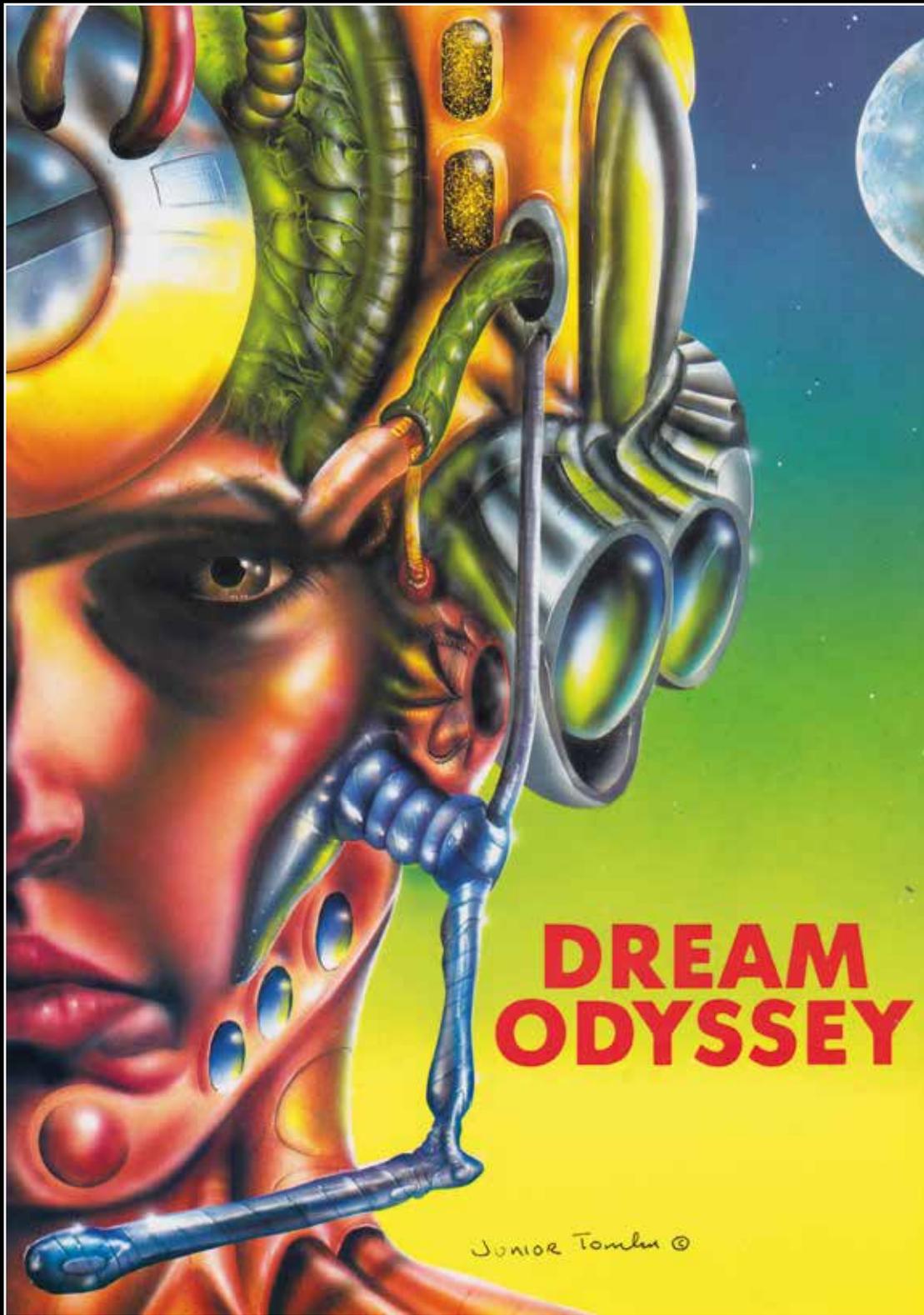


DREAM ODYSSEY

When I'm not working for rave promoters or record companies, I create ideas and drawings in my own time, for myself and my portfolio. Occasionally people don't have the time or money to commission a bespoke design for them, so I'll root around in my archive and use something that's pre-done. These promoters didn't have enough time to get the artwork created from scratch, so they ended up using a piece from my back catalogue - the Dragon Headed Woman. I don't know where I got that idea from, I must have been hyperventilating and tripping on air! They found this one and used it. The other story behind this one, that's actually Danny from Renegade Soundwave!



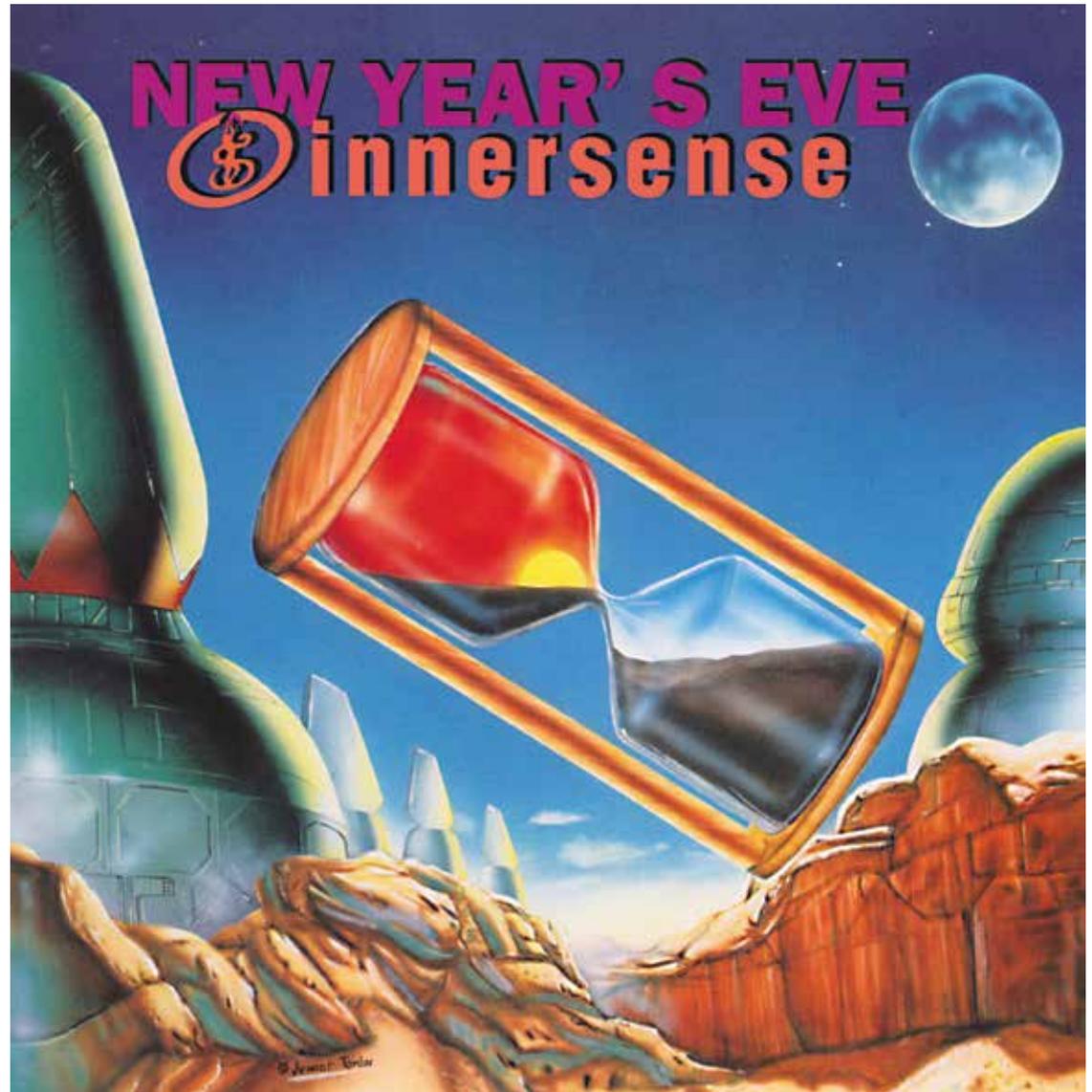
The next one is the same story, they ran out of time and asked if I had any spare artwork. This time they used the lady with the bat ears. I'm always creating new artwork, so there's a bank of material to choose from if anything like this happens.



INNERSENSE

They didn't give me a brief but they said they'd be putting on three particular raves. This is how I came up with the idea of creating a triptych. I never made it to any of their raves, as there always seemed to be a conflicting event happening, which was a shame.

I sat down and mapped them all out so they all connected to create one larger image. They're different time periods, there's the passing of time, people fleeing Earth because the sun has gone mad, then arriving at their home where aliens are launching an attack.



inner sense



© Junior Toulon

TIMELESS

When I did this piece I asked for a bottle of Jack Daniels as part of my fee... it went very nicely with the mug they gave me! They didn't have much time, so I had a piece that had never been used, and they took it. It came from a sketch which I did back in the days when I was still using Fractal Design Painter.

