

AMBERHAZE

ORGANIC SOUL FOOD

Text Wayne Lee Image Amberhaze

Making Singapore home, Italian multi-instrumentalist, Amberhaze aka Giuliano Gullotti, has brought ambient, post-rock, soundscape and electronic love to our shores, having released his latest music offering, *Then We Saw The Stars Again*, right at our doorstep to great acclaim. Beautiful as it is, the album proves to be a masterpiece of various lush sounds and bleeps, touching the most intimate of spaces within the heart and providing for good soul therapy whenever and wherever.

You must get this question all the time... but we were going to ask about how the name came about.

I was living in London at the time, and I used to go out to Camden every week to check out all these new indie bands. At the time, I was more into writing, so I imagined the story of a band that would have played that kind of post-shoegaze and post-rock music you could hear in those clubs in the mid till late '90s. I was looking for something organic, warm and ethereal at the same time, so I guess amber and haze kind of stuck!

Describe your music as it really is.

Warm and organic! I try to bring in the various things I listen to, which influence me on a daily basis. And since they are very different, I think the amberhaze sound reflects that too. There is a certain affinity for electronic sounds, though I don't listen to much electronic music, and there is definitely a connection to the early '90s sound of My Bloody Valentine, and the quieter side of Mogwai or Explosions in the Sky. Recently I've been going for something a bit more stripped down, and slightly louder too. I like to think that sound, like people, changes with age and experience.

And that change can be seen in your new album...

As many albums go, personal event shaped its creation, and though it's mostly instrumental, the songs do refer to intimate stories and feelings.

I've tried to make them more open, so that each listener can identify on their own terms and backgrounds.

How was it like producing this one?

It was a great experience! I started recording it at home, but I realised the shortcomings of doing everything on your own, and we've been very lucky to have had Nick Chan (producer for MUON and I am David Sparkle) on board to help produce and mix it. The production process took a few months, and those weekly sessions became an escape from the daily routine of work and other "adult" commitments.

What's one track that gives you a fuzzy feeling?

Personally, "When You Sleep" feels very special to me. My youngest son, Dante, was sleeping on my bed at my parents' place in Italy, and I was trying to play as quietly as possible in the room. The song really wrote itself during his naptime. I always think of that beautiful afternoon when I listen to it.

There has been a growing presence of post-rock and ambient musicians here in our city. Things must be getting better yeah?

The whole musical landscape has been expanding so much lately. It's amazing to see new bands create their own identities and sounds. I'm hoping more exposure will come in due time for the genres that still remain in the fringe.

And your record label, KittyWu - how essential are they to your work?

More than my label or my managers, they are above all good friends, and generally great people. Obviously we know we're not aiming at world domination, and I think it takes a lot of pressure away when you are clear about your objectives. And KittyWu feels like a second family where strong bonds are made through the music we share.

What advice can you offer to budding producers who want to make good music from their laptops?

Buy a Mac! And buy nice software that sounds like what you have in mind, and which you will have to tweak like crazy. But seriously: find your own voice, and don't be afraid to go it your own way. If you want to make music, you have to be ready for disappointment and frustration, so you have to be focused on your passion, and know why you're doing it. And at the end of the day, you've got to make yourself happy first. And people will follow. J

Then We Saw The Stars Again is released on KittyWu Records and available at amberhaze.com/shop and all good music stores.

www.amberhaze.com