

LINK 9: JIM'S ALL TIME TOP 100 ICE CREAM VAN

The next photo was taken last summer, and is of the All Time Top 100 Ice Cream Van. The van was co-owned by a small group of us, a like-minded cabal of friends who maxed out our credit cards and pooled what technical resources we had to create the UK's only touring confectionary-based rave sound system. Actually, we just ripped out the freezers and dispensers pretty early on, so it was really only a mobile DJ rig in an ice cream van. We never served a single ice cream cone.

It was our intention to visit the best of the festivals across the summer, working on the premise that if we couldn't find a venue that would allow us to live out our DJ fantasies individually then we should create one for ourselves and take it with us. We would play whenever and wherever we wanted, getting into the best gigs for free and building up a fan-base by actually taking our music *to* the people. We would become a cult act, unique, the van

would become famous and all of us would gain endless credibility.

It didn't quite work out like that.

The van was a money pit from which our investment would never return. The speakers strapped to either side of the serving hatch only ever produced a rhythmic muddy farting sound when they were pushed to any volume and most festivals barred us from entry due to the myriad of H&S contraventions. We were reduced to playing birthdays, weddings and the occasional free party.

In this photo the All Time Top 100 Van has been photographed with a fish eye lens and the inside of it is dark and you can only just make out the two figures inside standing at the decks. The one on the left is Travis, and the one on the right is me. You can see our smiling faces shining out from the gloom. There's a man in front of the hatch, wearing a white T-Shirt and gripping a beer can. He has turned to face the camera, a huge grin spread across his face. We're laughing with him, Travis and I. He'd come over and asked what kind of house music we were playing and we'd begun swatting replies back and forth between us; "Monkey house!" "No, it's reptile house." "No no actually this is pure gimp-hop mate." "It's Gitcore" "Sarcastic Trance." "Petulant Techno!" "Wobble!" "Wonk! No hang on there is a kind of music called wonk..." "No that's donk." "Oh God no, not donk!" We were riffing, pointless laughter and pointless fun, and the man played along. The world had seemed easy when I was with Travis, nothing seeming to trouble

him and nothing seeming to be too much trouble for him.

He'd tell me, in that brogue of his, thick and sweet as molasses, that he had no choice but to live his life this way, that it was his arcane duty. "If you look at my people Cornelius, look at where I've come from, I'm Irish-Jewish. My people know a lot about trauma and persecution and troubles. So when you grow up with all that, when it's such a part of you... you realise you have to feck it off and get on with life. You know what I'm saying to ya?"

"You're basically telling me I should lower my expectations?"

"Never have any in the first place!"

So, when we deejayed together it didn't matter whether we had an audience or not, we'd slip and switch records between us, just enjoying the moment for what it was; a little bit of nothing.

And after finishing our set we trotted out looking for Lucinda and found her sitting on a hillside talking earnestly with Josh. It was morning, the air was cold and the sky was coalescing into the beautiful blue of a clear summer day. They looked up at us, eyes reddened and lined with fatigue. Lucinda would return my smile and laugh with me, but I was keenly aware of her indulgence.

It was as if we were interrupting something between them, something personal and important. I assumed that it was something in their past, or more precisely in Josh's

past, something that he was striving to forget. I never thought that it would return to haunt us.