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LABEL FOCUS: MOON HARBOUR

Moon Harbour marks 15 years of unwavering commitment to house music

WORDS: SEAN GRIFFITHS | PHOTO: TOM DACHS | 16 FEBRUARY 2016

There was no masterplan when label owners Matthias Tanzmann and André Quaas first got together to start Moon Harbour back in 2000. At first, the label only sought to put out the house records it wanted to hear. But as its hometown of Leipzig became renowned for its deep house movement, the label developed into a bastion for local talent. And when that scene faded away, the label began to diversify. It branched out into new sounds and connected with international artists, seeing a growth in recognition in the mid-noughties. Moon Harbour's deep grooves have remained intact over the years, but they have also delved

into tech-house and minimal, its close-knit family of artists always remaining on-point with their releases. Steve Lawler, Marlow and Luna City Express are among those who form this family, some of whom have been with the label for over a decade. When Moon Harbour first started its owners thought they'd be lucky to make it to five years. Fifteen years down the line, the label is stronger than ever.

LABEL CO-FOUNDER: MATTHIAS TANZMANN

How did the label begin?

It started in 2000 when I met André Quaas, who was co-owner of The Distillery in Leipzig. I was DJing there. We both wanted to start a label and decided to do it together. It was a good idea, because he could handle the administrative stuff and I could take care of the creative side. We were a good combination.

What was the first release on the label?

A project I did with Daniel Scholz called Garmat 3000. We'd released on other labels, but this was one of my first steps in that direction. It was one of the reasons why I started the label: to create my own platform, bring friends there and create a harbour for everybody.

What's been your proudest moment with the label?

One of them was in 2006, when we gained quite a lot of attention for a couple of releases – but I would also say now. With our fifteenth anniversary we've realised how far the label has taken us. We are able to do this world tour, and for the label to carry us that far is a very proud moment for us.

What makes you decide to put a record out?

I have to like the music; it has to be original and nice. Then it is even greater if we get on with the artists behind it. We need to have chemistry. We wouldn't put out somebody whose track is great, but didn't feel were the right person for the label.

What's the ethos of the label?

It's actually pretty simple. We want to release the music we like to play. That was how it started and what it still is, even though the music has changed a little over the years. It has been fifteen years now, and naturally as an artist and a label you will evolve.



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10 KEY RELEASES SELECTED BY MATTHIAS TANZMANN

Sabb - One Of Us feat. Forrest (Dennis Ferrer Remix) (MHR079)



SABB 'ONE OF US' FEAT FORREST (DENNIS FERRER REMIX)

“Bringing back the summer of 2015”

Sable Sheep - Upon Burning Skies (MHD012)



SABLE SHEEP 'UPON BURNING SKIES'

"A breakthrough track for the young German producer and DJ"

Arado & Marco Faraone - Strange Neighbors (MHR051)



ARADO & MARCO FARAONE 'STRANGE NEIGHBOURS'

"This caused a lot of trouble on the DC10 terrace in 2010"