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## Music from out of this world? Meet Koko Dozo

Contributed by MeanLittleBumbleBee.com  
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If you're like me, you've probably found yourself staring up at the sky and wondering if life really exists on other planets. Are we really alone? Is there life on other planets? The answer is: yes and the soundtrack is a trippy mix of galactic fusion electronica. Leading the way is Koko Dozo, an exciting duo making music for earthlings they like to call "post-disco." I caught up with Koko Dozo (a/k/a Amy Douglas and Polarity/1) from an undisclosed location as they are currently on the lam from their home planet of Bazbador.

MeanLittleBumbleBee: So how did you two meet, how long ago was that, and how was your sound born?

Amy: Polarity/1 and I met in the BEASTLY hot summer of 2007, when the former third member of the tribe hooked us up. The sound was born out of a shared deep love for music. When P/1 puts his signature electronic production style over the songs which we purposely make hybrids of all these genres we love, you get Koko Dozo. It's New York City Fusion Electronica but we call it "Post Disco."

Polarity/1: We met through our friend, Rubio. We recorded our first album, ILLEGAL SPACE ALIENS, with him. Then he moved to Bogota and we became a duo.

Our sound is the G spot where our influences and styles intersect. Both of us are music FREAKS. We came up listening to every imaginable kind of music. Amy is more pop-oriented and my Polarity/1 stuff is also groove-based but more left field. The combination is ideal cause she brings out the more pop and and danceclub side of my stuff and I pull her outside the genre zone.

MeanLittleBumbleBee: Can you talk to me a little about the process of making and writing the music?

Amy: Our process is quite unique, and interestingly enough where Koko Dozo is

concerned. Sometimes the sparks come from tracks P/1 has been working on, sometimes it's pieces of music I've been groovin on on piano. One of the things that makes the KD writing process so unique is that Polar is a very digital mind and I'm very analog; I tend to write songs just from sitting down at the piano, and letting it flow. P/1 uses his studio as an instrument, so he writes songs where the macro part of the picture has emerged and then we kinda fill in the micro part together. We write as individuals in such different ways that when we write together, there is really no rhyme or reason to our process. Sometimes ideas come from something we heard on TV, and we want to expand that idea into a song, sometimes it's a chord progression that I've been drilling for a while. Sometimes we just get a spontaneous idea and it goes from there.

Polarity/1:

We write all our stuff. I might bring in a sketch of a track with or without lyrics -- usually they're either partially written or not at all. Then we work it together. Either of us might come up with the melody/harmony/structure or we do it together. Sometimes Amy brings in a melody with changes and we work on the words together. The words might come in with an angle or we have to come up the angle. Then we argue. Then we agree.

MeanLittleBumbleBee: I've

been jamming to "Lay That Body Down" nonstop for days now. I can already tell you this is going to be my summer jam. This is a great tease/taste of the upcoming EP "Feel The Zuzz..." (out 03/23/10 on Red Star Records). Tell me more about the sound of the EP? How has the sound evolved since Illegal Space Aliens?

Amy:

I think that on Illegal Space Aliens, we were still getting to know each other as musicians and writers and we were very much in love with the fact that we could quite literally....do it all, which is why the breadth and span of that album is so wide. "Feel The Zuzz" is P/1 and I, really focusing in on a feeling and a vibe, and therefore it's a very COMPLETE musical statement, and man, it's soooo great and fantastic when you say that Lay That Body Down is gonna be your summer jam, because "Feel The Zuzz" overall is geared EXACTLY for that, it's sizzling hot weather music, be you in NYC during August, Lagos, São Paolo, or Miami. It's the EP we wanted everyone to put on to get SWEATY to, and to have a very escapist sort of experience with it. It's definitely HOT WEATHER MUSIC. I'm thrilled that the song is already taking you on a vacation, even if it's only a 4 minute one!

Polarity/1:

Wow -- you're asking about all the interesting stuff! I think you should do all our interviews. The sound is where we individually do what we do. One of the things I have most fun with is imagining a different character that Amy will play. And I'm sure she does that too. That influences what I contribute to the words and sound of the track. And she's astounding at becoming those characters. I feel that that's the point of writing songs. If every song is sung by the same character -- then you're writing the same song over and over.

Our

ultra-modern space age sound comes from our collective pile of musical obsessions. My body is the first thing I pick up on in music. So I have a bias to groove. Each groove has its own recipe. Combinations of funk, hip hop, reggaeton, samba, soukous, mambo or comparsa. We have a lot of the same influences and there are lots of em. I grew up listening to Led Zep, Zappa, Beatles, '50s Elvis, Lieber & Stoller, Paul Simon, Joni Mitchell, Mingus, Coltrane, Sun Ra, Django Reinhardt, Sam Cooke, James Brown, P Funk, gospel era Staples Singers, Muddy Waters, Doc Boggs, George Jones, Hank Williams, Dylan, Willie Colon, samba, Jobim, Olatunji, Oumou Sangere, Bulgarian Womens Choir, classical Japanese, Stockhausen. And the all the styles we're into find their way into the brew. The tracks are built with a lot of little pieces of noise and sometimes standard drum kit sounds, synths; and sometimes I play guitar and live percussion. I like taking little snippets of things that Amy does in out takes and make them part of the track. I hate the feel of quantized tracks so there are always have elements to keep things fresh and funky.

Each song on the new EP -- FEEL THE ZUZZ! has its own world. SPACEMAN is about the stress of being an alien. It's an electro, sci-fi, dance track with a vamp that has some Puerto Rican carnival groove thrown in. LAY THAT BODY DOWN is a recruitment jingle to create a teabagger-like conclave to get together and fuck. It's kind of a reggaeton groove with a bit of samba sprinkled in. GANGSTA is about posing. It's got a retro disco vibe and very electro. GRAB YA is a funky dance track with lotsa samba. BASTARDS IN BAZBADOR is very funky. It's us griping about how we get so much love here on Earth while we're doink back on our home planet -- BAZBADOR which, by the way, is located in the Velfin Spoidioyz galaxy. You have to read SPACE ALIEN NATION  
<http://www.kokodozo.com/KD-SpAN.php>

On FEEL THE ZUZZ! we decided to focus down our direction to danceable groove. So this album rocks much harder and we found a more unified sound -- even though each song is very different.

MeanLittleBumbleBee: Tell me about the experience in the studio (and otherwise) during the recording/making of the EP.

Amy:  
 Some of the songs on "Feel The Zuzz" were started in NYC ironically right at the end of having finished Illegal Space Aliens, getting our footing and really being in the zone. We were writing SO much music at that time, and so some of the music comes right from the original source, P/1's studio in downtown NYC. However, this is the first time that we also did a lot of work intra-studio because I recently moved from downtown NYC to Somerville, MA and opened up my own studio, so while the majority of Feel The Zuzz was done traditionally, with us in Polar's studio writing and recording, some of it was done back and forth between our studios. The experience as always...was intergalactic.

Polarity/1:  
 Up till Amy moved to Boston last spring we did all the recording at my studio. I work on the tracks and when they're developed to a certain point Amy tracks the vocals. Since she moved I send her the track and she does the vocals at her place and ships them over to me. When Rubio was with us he put on some keyboard parts and helped with the engineering and mixing. On FEEL THE ZUZZ! he plays the outer space dinner music therimen on SPACEMAN and bass on GANGSTA and helped with the engineering on those two. Amy played the piano part on GANGSTA. After Amy sends me her

vocal parts I fuss with track some more and then send her a working mix and she makes suggestions. I make suggestions to her about the vocals and vocal arrangements but that's her domain so she gets the last word. And I get the last word on the tracks. Then the tracks get tweaked to death for a couple of weeks before it goes to mastering. The whole thing is done with just the two of us in home studios. The only expense is the mastering.

MeanLittleBumbleBee: Will you be touring?

Amy:  
DAMN I SURE HOPE SO!!! This is our first release for a new label – Red Star- and I think it's going to get a whole new Koko Dozo audience. We're still very much new artists, and we need all the support that new artists need. We're still hoping to catch booking agents who will exploit us for all we're worth and we're hoping that DJ's will take these funky tracks, remix them and keep this party going. We have a really high energy live show, and we'd love to take the show on the road, so whoever is reading this...if you want the funkiest alien duo to rock your party, HOLLER AT US AT OUR SITE!!! We'd love to come to Chicago.

MeanLittleBumbleBee: How's life on the lam on planet earth treating you so far?

Amy:  
Life on the lam here on Earth, has been a mixed blessing of rewarding and confusing. There are still things we just can't seem to grasp, like condiments in tiny envelopes and this thing called Tic Tacs is most perplexing. Escalators are a doozy! The Earthlings however treat us wonderfully, they've been far kinder and fairer than the overlords back on Bazbador.

Polarity/1:  
Earth is a unique and puzzling place. You earthforms are zesty about fucking things up. That aside, I like chocolate a lot. And baseball. And earthform sexual apparatus.

MeanLittleBumbleBee: And finally, as beings from another planet, what are your thoughts on the world ending in 2012? Will you find another planet to hide out in or do you think you'll go back and face the music?

Amy:  
Well you know that old expression "you can't go home again?" We can't go home again, but I do not believe the world will end in 2012. If anything we have neat devices in our spaceship that should it look like eminent danger is upon us, we can encapsulate the entire planet in a sort of gelatinous goo which will make us impervious to bullets, warheads and natural disasters, merely by getting in our funky spaceship and circumnavigating the Earth's surface over and over again. So the plan would be to suspend the planet should anything gnarly go down, kinda like hitting the pause button.

Polarity/1:  
Who's world?

Koko

Dozo's EP "Feel The Zuzz..." will be released March 23, 2010 on Red Star Records.

For more information on Koko Dozo visit: <http://www.kokodozo.com/>

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