

Niskerone & SFR - free trip down memory lane

By [Brandon Williams](#)

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South African Drum 'n Bass enthusiasts, and I emphasise the words South African DnB enthusiasts, will agree - no, no - SHOULD agree that this dynamic duo definitely needs no introduction. Yes, DnB is to be written with capital letters not because it's a proper noun, but because it's larger than life. Apparently so is the word "SHOULD" ^.



But here at the G.O.F.U.Y.R.F (Get Out From Under Your Rock Foundation) we believe that discrimination is for pansies and that everyone, regardless of knowledge, age or stature, deserves a bit of background information. So let me be the Jaws of Life that pries you free from your terrestrial tomb, so the winds of DnB may once again generate lift beneath your wings - and you too can climb confidently through contemporary skies.

The partnership between these two internationally recognised artists dates back to 2003. Their divergent musical interests had them embark on a journey that would lead each down his own path. [SFR's](#) passion for production had him become a lord and master of the studio. His army of drum 'n bass records had him conquering labels such as Trouble on Vinyl, Zombie Recordings and Load Recordings. [Niskerone's](#) blazing desire to DJ definitively drove him down a path that would have him perform alongside the titans of the industry, such as Counterstrike, Pendulum, Noisia, High Contrast and even Skrillex, to name but a few. Their paths have once again crossed in collaboration that harnesses each of their individual strengths to create what was promised to be an exceptional EP: The "[Memories](#)" EP - a throwback to their roots within bass music.

"Memories" is a three-track EP supposedly suited to the rave, the drive and chill-out time. In a press release issued to the media, the two extend somewhat of an invitation; or rather, open themselves up for scrutiny (deliciously evil grin).

"It has us written all over it; have a listen and tell us if you notice."

So without further ado, let's take them up on that invitation and start reviewing.

Being at that point in life at which counting carbs and exercise are mandatory. I figure, jogging in that rain? Ain't nobody got time for that! Instead I'll rave in my room by myself like a possessed moron. But I assume raving is not meant literally, but rather as metaphor for jumping and fist pumping.

Forever

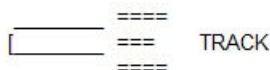
The EP announces itself with a massive bass thunder crash. What then ensues is a melodramatic rollercoaster ride of warm melodic sunrise like synths, subtly reverbed vocal chops and crescendos to the accompaniment of off key 80s' funk synths and rapidly intensifying snare kicks, which usher in the Amen Break DnB drops. And wait a second - "aaaaaaaah snap" is that some grimy wobble bass I detect? SFR you devil you! Now that's cool. Never mind raving, this is a track I can step to!

It's clearer than PG glass that SFR's influence was predominant in this track. The build-ups were big, but the DnB drops were somewhat simple. However, the light seasonings of wobble bass added a fruity fresh flavour to this track. It almost seems as though the track was largely dubstep cantered and the DnB was actually supposed to be the seasoning. Say what you want, everything is better with a hint of dubstep and that's not a bold statement, it's a BOLD fact! For the most part it was pulled off nicely, but the track does become fairly monotonous around the middle of the second drop as it's exactly like the first. I feel more could have been done to switch it up a little and maintain full interest until the end. Even a slight change

in tempo, pitch or tone would have sufficed to make it look like less of a copy and paste.

Lost Memories

After all that jumping, I'm feeling parched so I decide take a drive all the way to the other end of the city to purchase a pint of milk. After all, nothing makes a cup of tea taste sweeter than having to trek for it. While driving I decide to give this track a listen, guess I really went the extra mile to review this one (ba dum tss). Seriously though, that's exactly what I did. After hurtling down the empty, wet, R300 late at night. I can honestly say: Wow! This track was done right! Can you see my fork going into this exceptionally well done track?



I admit, my ascii artwork was terrible, but holy smokes the ultra-smooth liquid basslines, ingeniously synthesised instrumental piano layers, heroic harmonies, and twinkly ambiance, triggered a state of calm and deep focus so great that I every single move I made, each gear shift, acceleration and indication happened entirely subconsciously. By the time I had reached the end of the R300, I had almost zero recollection of how I had got there; I was totally one with the machine. The road was transformed into a runway, and the orange street lights on either end of it, became the fiery glowing wisps that lit the way for my spiritual take off.

The dubstep influence was down played in this track but everything was just so well balanced. This probably sounds like a press release, but I mean it when I say this track is flawless. Lost Memories wins fatality.

Beneath The Sky

Having arrived home safely, thank you God, I figured it was time to chill. Enter Beneath The Sky. This should have been called Beneath The Canopy because Niskerone went full-on jungle cat with this one. The eerie choppy vocals, deep bass booms, fast-paced polyrhythms and drum machine break beats form a rhythmically complex cocktail of tribal transcendence. This track is teeming with switch ups, glitches and varied sounds. Unlike the first track, I constantly wondered what they were going to throw at me next. This is great, but there were points when the sheer "what next" curiosity was what kept me listening, as opposed to actually feeling the beat.

I think the second track already exhausted the novelty of the heroic buzz. This may just be my opinion, but isn't a jungle track meant to make you feel primal and predatory? I ended up feeling like more of Nintendo game character (think pointy green hat) as opposed to a mighty female Amazonian warrior. As a result this track wasn't as impactful as it could have been. Still good though.

This is a fantastic EP. I love the way the 80s' funks and warm synths allude to a bygone time of a much simpler life. Words can't express how proud I am of our local boys. In fact, every time one of our artists produces music of this calibre, I don't just feel proud for them, but proud to be a South African.

Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika!

The EP is available for free download from: soundcloud.com

Get it while it's hot!

www.facebook.com/niskerone | www.facebook.com/djsfr

ABOUT BRANDON WILLIAMS

Cape Town based UX designer, striving to become an apex machine of health and fitness. Passionate about, economics, investing and building business systems.
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