

## dBass: Biography



dBass are Glasgow's pioneering jazz fusion collective, effortlessly delving into hip-hop, soul and contemporary jazz to create music that is at once pensive, brave and soulful.

The various members of dBass have long been the source of much of Glasgow's live crossover jazz, experimental and hiphop. The product of an assortment of jazz heads, folk-improv experimentalists, and contemporary classical players, the band positively relish their unorthodox sensibilities.

The collective has already cut its teeth at Glasgow venues The Arches, King Tut's, The Art School and The QMU, and Edinburgh venues, The Jazz Bar and The Bongo Club, and at the Knockengorrach festival. They have played alongside Grandmaster Flash, The Herbaliser (Ninja Tune), Calvin Harris, Guru, The Portico Quartet (Babel/Vortex), The Joe Acheson Quartet, Employee of the Month, The Action Group, Boom Monk Ben (Ninja Tune), Live Sciences and Stuart McCallum (Cinematic Orchestra). dBass have also recorded sessions for Radio Magnetic and Subcity radio.

In August 2008 dBass embarked on a 6 date tour with Injuns, culminating with the release of a split single with their tour-mates. *Qoral Reef* (dBass) / *Jake of Monterey* (Injuns) was released as a 7" vinyl and digital download on Kopparberg's Collective label. *Qoral Reef* was described by *The List* as "a platter of off-kilter, late-night soul with a jazzy garnish on top."

dBass' latest EP, entitled *Garden*, was released in a limited edition run in November 2009. The title track from that release was played recently on the BBC's Jazz on 3 program. The band are currently performing in and around Glasgow, as well as writing new material (their members can often be found jamming at the Tchai-Ovna on wendesdays). They are also major protagonists in *Scope*, a jam session where musical and visual improvisation interact. This project includes members of Inspector Tapehead, The One Ensemble and Galchen, as well as artists Fergus Dunnet, Jenny Soep and Justin Eade (Glimpse).

"amazing, creating a sound and style entirely unique to themselves." *Music-news.com*

"The highlight of the night ... a delight to watch ... they displayed an amazing array of sounds that were a joy to hear." *Chris Torres, Bringdaruckus.com*

" \*\*\*\* - Sure, they're jazz, but which jazz? Close your eyes and you could be listening to six veterans of the 70s fusion scene instead of the fresh faced youths that actually occupy the stage. " *The Skinny*

### **Martin Fell - saxes**

Martin is an active jazz / session musician who has collaborated on recordings with Mungo's Hifi, Future Pilot AKA, and Steve Lindsey (Big Dish). He has played with Paddy Flaherty, Paul Towndrow, Julian Arguelez, Ryan Quigley, Euan Burton and Tom Gibbs and is known in jazz venues across Europe. In 2009 he was lucky enough to be invited to share the stage with Kyoko Oyobe (a regular collaborator with Roy Hargrove) on her release of her debut album, *Cooking at Smalls* as well as playing with Roy Hargrove and members of the Wynton Marsallis big band. In the same year and again in 2010, Martin went to India on a musical quest to experience and learn Indian Classical Music, something that lead him to play at top venues across India, from Delhi to Darjeeling.

Recently he has been accepted on Tommy Smith's exclusive BMus Jazz performance course at the RSAMD where he hopes to further his musical studies and development.

### **Stuart Macpherson – bass**

Stuart is a founding member of the Jumblesale Sound System, and formerly of Engine (Brown Punk) with whom he recorded and released two singles featuring remixes by Tom Findlay (Groove Armada). Stuart has studied under Ninian Perry of the Paragon Ensemble and is currently studying under Rick Standley (Principle bassist with Scottish Ballet) and has been the host of Brace, a highly popular weekly jam session for Glasgow's finest folk, jazz, funk and world musicians.

Always eager to expand and develop his musical knowhow and technique Stuart enrolled in 2010 on Strathclyde University's highly acclaimed BA Applied Music Degree.

### **Corey Smith – keys**

Also formerly of Engine, Corey is an experienced soul and funk player and an adept improviser. He is also a member of the Mosa Funk Club. For one The Skinny reviewer, "Corey Smith's spacey soulful blocking recalls 70s-era Chick Corea."

### **Mounzer Sarraf – guitar, vocals, percussion, interesting sounds**

Mounzer is the newest addition to dBass. Belgium born, Mounzer studied at the Maastricht Jazz Conservatoire and went on to play in various professional outfits throughout the country and the Netherlands. A dedicated musician, he put in a lot of effort to become a master of both his instrument and in particular rhythm. In doing so, he developed a technique of musical educational communication that saw him running music projects for UNHCR in Jordan for Palestinian and Iraqi refugees. In Scotland, Mounzer found time to write his book on music learning, and again his talent for music teaching was utilised to great effect in various community projects in and around Glasgow. He has also been revisiting his jazz roots on the Scottish jazz scene.

### **Roy Mohan Shearer – drums and percussion**

Roy has recorded and played extensively with Adam Beattie and The Consultants (Hijacked Records), The Felt Tips (Cloudberry) and Bela (Say Dirty). Through these projects he has worked with members of the Fence Collective, leading to performances at the renowned Home Game festival. He recently completed recording an album with Inspector Tapehead, a much-anticipated three man collaboration with Jonnie Common (Down The Tiny Steps) and Chris Croasdale, to be released on Song, By Toad Records in summer 2010.

A regular player on the Glasgow jazz scene, Roy has also managed numerous small releases, co-produced a series of radio programmes for Subcity radio, and designs and makes his own musical instruments. Roy is also an aspiring tabla player, having studied in India under Paban Bordoloi and Subrata Manna (Mitu). His drumming has been described in the music press as:

"ever-inventive" – *Gig Reviews Scotland*

"raucous" – *Song, By Toad*

"loose-limbed" – *The Skinny*

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### **Guest players:**

**George Murray – trombone**

George plays the trombone and works as a music therapist. He is a graduate of both the Trinity College of Music and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. In contemporary music he has appeared as a guest soloist with Scottish Clarinet Quartet and performs regularly with the Glasgow based contemporary music group Symposia.

George is also a member of Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra through which he has had the opportunity of working and recording with George Lewis, Maggie Nichols, Barry Guy and Evan Parker in a variety of different contexts. He has also recorded in Germany with Saxophonist John Tchicai and Joachim Irmeler on the Klangbad label. George has performed and recorded in a variety of different contexts, his trombone playing antics have begun to attract the attention of critics in the national press including:

"bulbous" - *Mojo magazine*

"Murray plays a splendidly booting trombone." - Barry Witherden- *The Wire*

#### **Fraser Clark – keys**

Fraser holds a MMus in Composition and is a winner of the Macfarlane prize for organ composition. He has worked closely with James Macmillan and the Edinburgh String Quartet and nurtures a lively interest in hiphop as well as classical music. As well as composing, Fraser teaches and produces a weekly classical music programme for Sunny Govan Radio.

#### **Other musicians who collaborate with dBass...**

Steve Boyle – Percussion / Sound Engineer, Andy Baker – Saxophonist / Electronic Soundscaping, Matt Quest – MC / Sound Engineer, Natasha Nixon – Vocalist, Jon Cooper – Electric Bass

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