

FIN CORMACK

Built Through Instinct

Hardware, improvisation and the
productive value of losing control.



FIN CORMACK / SIGNAL 003 / FIRST TRANSMISSION

Editor: Dino Egredžija

Questions: DKTech

Photography: Courtesy of Fin Cormack

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OPENING POSITION

Recovering the immediacy.

“The more unpredictability, the better.”

Fin Cormack's approach to techno is rooted in live performance, hardware experimentation and the kind of unexpected moments that cannot always be planned inside a DAW.

Having first explored hardware in the late 1990s, he still considers himself an instrumentalist at heart. Although recent work has kept him more confined to the computer, his current focus is returning to a live and hybrid workflow, where machines, improvisation and multitrack recording can interact more freely.

PROFILE

WORKFLOW

Live / hybrid

RECORDING

Multitracked hardware jams

LOCATION

North Wales, UK

CORE IDEA

Groove before structure

TOOLS

Tascam Model 12 / Ableton

01 HARDWARE

Away from the screen.

What first pulled you away from the screen and into analogue hardware?

I first experimented with hardware in the late 1990s and have always been more drawn to live jamming. I am primarily an instrumentalist. More recently, I have been somewhat confined to the DAW, but my focus now is to return to live and hybrid workflows.

02 GROOVE BEFORE STRUCTURE

It begins with a strong groove.

When you start a track, do you usually begin with a machine, a rhythm or simply a mistake that sounds right?

I usually start by playing around with an eight-bar loop. The main sounds often come from hardware jams that I record as separate multitracks. Sometimes I will simply experiment with synths in Ableton or use Granulator, but it normally begins with a strong groove that I can then build the rest of the track around.

03 HAPPY ACCIDENTS

Keep the accident.

Analogue gear can be unpredictable. How much of that unpredictability do you actually want in your music?

I love happy accidents. The more unpredictability, the better.

“The more unpredictability, the better.”

PROCESS Start with a groove. Record the movement. Keep the accident if it carries energy.

04 LONG-FORM JAMS

Exploring without forcing a result.

Do you record long hardware jams and edit them later, or build tracks more deliberately from the start?

I go through different phases. Sometimes I work from long-form jams, while at other times I begin with a specific idea and try to recreate it. However, I usually find that the best material emerges when I am simply exploring ideas without forcing a particular result.

“The best material emerges when I am simply exploring ideas.”

05 MULTITRACK WORKFLOW

One machine that changed the process.

What is one piece of gear that has genuinely changed the way you make techno?

The Tascam Model 12 has really opened up my creativity because it allows me to multitrack entire jams. Previously, I would record long performances from individual pieces of equipment. Now I can record everything together while still sending each instrument to its own stem. I have also recently bought the Behringer Edge and Spice. I think those two machines will soon become central to my productions.

WORKFLOW

From jam to arrangement

01 Hardware jam

Edge / Spice

02 Multitrack

Tascam Model 12

03 Edit / Shape

Ableton / Granulator

04 Arrangement

Groove-led structure

CENTRAL PRINCIPLE

Iterate / Discover

EDITORIAL CLOSING

Conditions for the unexpected.

For Fin Cormack, the studio is less about executing a fixed plan and more about creating the conditions for something unexpected to happen. His return to a live and hybrid setup is not a rejection of the DAW, but an attempt to recover the immediacy, movement and unpredictability that first drew him to hardware.

**THE FULL EDITION / CREDITS**

Signal 003 is published by Groove Protocol. Read the story online and follow the artist below.

SOUNDCLOUDsoundcloud.com/fincormack**INSTAGRAM**instagram.com/cormackfin**CREDITS**

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