

Richie Hawtin

(aka PLASTIKMAN)

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Richie Hawtin is a genuine original. His critical acclaim spans the creative realm of the fine art community to the technological vanguard. Meanwhile, as a performing artist, he is constantly pushing conceptual frontiers, moving things forward, welcoming as many as he can to ideas and experiences that would have seemed pure science fiction when he began his career.

Hawtin is British-born and Canadian-raised. He is the business mind behind the labels Plus 8, MINUS Records and From Our Minds, nurturing a plethora of talent from Speedy J in the early 90s to Gaiser in the 2010s. And, of course, he is Plastikman, perhaps that most of all, electronic musician par excellence, maintaining an underground agenda of avant-garde electronica over seven albums.

The teenage Hawtin was into Detroit techno in the mid-80s, then a nascent underground machine music rather than a popular style. He became a DJ, setting up Plus 8 with his friend John Acquaviva, with whom he would later co-found the online dance music hub Beatport in 2004. He set the techno world alight with Plastikman's 'Spastik' single and 'Sheet One' album in 1993, the latter arriving in a cover that looked like blotter acid. Where Plastikman began as stark techno, it would later bloom into more thoughtful fare such as 1998's strange, wonderful "Consumed" album, leading to fashion icon Raf Simons (now Prada co-creative director) hailing him as "the Kraftwerk of today".

Hawtin's live performances are genuine experiences. From Plastikman's early warehouse raves in Michigan to the iconic 1.5 incarnation debuted at Coachella; the CLOSE and DEX EFX X0X shows to his incredible ENTER. experience

residency at Space, Ibiza, the latter a distillation of his vision, a five-room adventure impeccably designed, boasting all-night ecstatic dancing and, importantly, a Sake Bar. This led to him becoming a fully trained sake sommelier and then the launch of his own ENTER.Sake brand and today the Our Sake Club distribution hub in Berlin.

Hawtin has always changed yet always stayed the same, remaining true to his core ideals but driving forward at speed to see what he can achieve. Nowadays his position as a statesman for dance music is acknowledged. At the CNTRL series of lectures in 2012 and 2015, he toured America's universities, putting the country's electronic dance boom in context. His commitment to education was solidified when he received an Honorary Doctorate of the University Of Huddersfield for Outstanding Contribution to the world of Music-Technology. The year before, the Association for Independent Music, gave him the Outstanding Contribution accolade for his dedication to the sector.

Hawtin led the shift from physical to digital DJing; and consistently pushes the art form forward through technological innovation and singular visual design. Hawtin led the shift from physical to digital DJing through the creation of Final Scratch; the creation of music-technology fund Plus 8 Equities; and co-designer of the highly influential PLAYdifferently MODEL 1 mixer.

Richie Hawtin will, as ever, be revelling in the possibilities of whatever comes next...