



Digital, Newcastle

North East audio beast

In 1991 the British cultural mainstream was governed by a new cartoon called *The Simpsons*, colour changing Global Hypercolour t-shirts - and the fear that Brian Adams would be at the top of the charts with 'Everything I Do' for the rest of time. Against this cloying hegemony, a well documented renaissance of dance music and counter culture was underway in Manchester: the movement epitomised by Factory Records, the Hacienda and the stereotype of the Mitsubishi eating, hoody wearing New Order and Happy Mondays fan. So entrenched was the 'Madchester' scene in the minds of its fans that it was a shock to find that the movement wasn't ubiquitous, as Aaron Mellor, one half of Stereo Corp, found when he came to Newcastle in '91. The culture gap obliged Mellor to start his Bullet Proof nights at Newcastle's Ritzy's (now IKON) - a move that would lay the foundation for his career in the industry. Bullet Proof, one

of many Mellor-authored nights, paved the way for his Tokyo Industries portfolio, and his later partnership with Rob Cameron - founder of Shindig. This partnership is now the corporate entity Stereo Corp, the operational force behind Digital. "When I came to Newcastle in 1991 to study, I was amazed to find there wasn't the same musical expansion as there had been in Manchester," says Mellor. "Manchester was the musical centre of the world but no one was really doing that in Newcastle. I began my own night to get the kids into the Manchester sounds." By the mid 90s fellow promoter Rob Cameron had established the 'proper' dance night Shindig, with its increasing popularity prompting a move from World Headquarters on Marlborough Crescent to the Riverside club (now Foundation). Cameron and Mellor joined forces as Stereo Corporation (Stereo: in the sense

that Mellor and Cameron represent two musical 'inputs' to the venture) and opened the award winning Stereo in Newcastle. Like Stereo, and Bullet Proof before it, Digital is a bid to redress the lack of music driven clubbing pumped through the best kit money can buy. "Digital is the kind of place that we wanted to put on our nights. Newcastle is a small city and until recently it only had a handful of clubs: all doing the big, obvious, commercial thing. Nobody was doing anything different. Our biggest grievance was that the core of our night was about the music and we couldn't get the kit or the venue to match it. If we can't reproduce the music to our satisfaction then why should we even bother? It ruined the essence of the nights we were trying to do." Finding a venue suitable for Stereo Corp's flagship club was not a problem, gaining the leasehold was harder. Digital was

formerly Trafalgar Leisure's Powerhouse, a club that was enjoying diminishing returns with Newcastle's gay community. With few Section 77s being awarded in Newcastle, Mellor and Cameron ended up paying over the odds for the leasehold, for which they had waited patiently in line whilst continuing to continue their portfolio nights in almost every venue in town. Now, this portfolio has its own home. Bullet Proof and the evergreen Shindig have been bought to Digital on Saturday nights. Stonelove, the uber rock n' roll student favourite that started life at the Hacienda, plays out to the capacity crowds on Thursday nights, whilst a beats and breaks night - Wax:On - mixes the likes of 2ManyDJs, Audio Bullies and Mr. Scruff to the Friday night punters. Mondays now hosts Supafly - a dance and R'n'B night for students - with Lovedough, the 'biggest R'n'B night in the north' completing the

→TEC SPEC

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Lighting and Sound : Blue Audio

Main Room: 4 x Funktion One Dance Stacks, 2 x Res 2 SH Mid/Hi, 2 x Res 2 DJ Monitor, 4 x Technincs SL12010 Decks, 4 x Pioneer CDJ1000 CD, 2 x Pioneer DVJ1, 1 x Pioneer DJM1000 Mixer, 1 x Pioneer DJM600 Mixer

Room 2: 4 x Funktion One Res 4 Install, 4 x Funktion One F218 Bass, 2 x Funktion One Res 2 SH Mid/Hi DJ Monitor, 1 x Funktion One F118 Bass DJ Monitor, 2 x Technincs SL12010 Decks, 2 x Pioneer CDJ1000 CD, 1 x Pioneer DJM600 Mixer

AMP Room: 8 x Crest 9001 Amplifier, 3 x MC2 T2000 Amplifier, 2 x MC2 T1500 Amplifier, 2 x MC2 T1000 Amplifier, 5 x Funktion One X01 Digital Controller, 1 x XTA DP226 Digital Controller

The Other Rooms: Downstairs: 4 x Ohm Moon Mid/Hi, 1 x Ohm Moon Sub, 1 x BSS Minidrive 2 x MC2 T2000 Amplifier

Live Room: 2 x Ohm TRS 218 Sub, 2 x Ohm TRS 212 Mid/Hi, 1 x Ohm CRED Digital Controller
2 x MC2 MC1250 Amplifier

