

Kate Wax is the alter ego of Aisha Devi Enz, the Swiss-born, half-Tibetan, totally-driven, self-producing avant-garde singer-songwriter whose debut album missive 'Reflections of the Dark Heat' was delivered up by Swiss ambassadors of cool Mental Groove back in 2006. After a natural break for baby-making and subsequent months spent holed up with her beloved machines in her cosy studio cave, this singer-producer all-rounder is now ready to dust off her Kate Wax persona, teaming up with Border Community to unveil a bold new collection of dark, unconventional vocally-exhilarating electronic post-pop going by the name of 'Dust Collision'.

Aisha Devi Enz was born on the shores of Lake Geneva to a mother with Old European roots stretching deep into the Austro-Hungarian empire and a father she has never met from the defiantly independent Tibet, and raised by her globe-trotting Swiss grandmother, following her to exotic corners of the world from an early age. Her eclectic background coupled with a childhood characterised by constant upheaval initially cast the teenage Aisha as something of an outsider back in her native Switzerland, driving her first towards art college in Lausanne leading on to a fledgling career in graphic design as an early bid for self-definition. But soon her creative tendencies were diverted towards a more musical destination by signposts left by the likes of Aphex Twin and Autechre: here she was to discover a magical secret world of machines and computers, opening up a new forum for self-expression, a playground where her earlier soprano vocal training could be bent to her own innovative electronic ends.

The first subtle hint at the diverse potential of her schizophrenic vocal abilities was delivered via a pair of guest vocal outings on Felix Da Housecat's 2004 'Devin Dazzle' album ('Romantique', 'Let Your Mind Be Your Bed'), but it wasn't long before the dark internal world of Kate Wax took on an idiosyncratic musical form with her own autocratic solo releases. Her debut 'Black Sheep EP' (a reference to her perceived status in her fragmented family) for admirably eclectic Swiss label Viking Music was soon followed by singles on fellow Swiss bastion of music-and-design-cool Mental Groove and their UK counterpart Output (RIP), eventually feeding into 2005's fully-fledged artist album 'Reflections Of The Dark Heat'. Forged entirely by her own fair hand – written, recorded, and produced using the beloved collection of machines that function as her home studio – the Kate Wax album debut was an ambitious proposition, distilling production influences from all corners of the electronic cannon whilst parading her powerful, penetrating voice through an extraordinary range of equally experimental vocal delivery styles. As the venues of Europe beckoned, the commanding stage presence of one truly in their element enabled Kate Wax to transfer this vocal versatility into the live arena, transfixing the unruly club hordes in the process.

These promising beginnings of the Kate Wax touring career were however to come to a temporary hiatus when Aisha suddenly fell pregnant, retiring from the live circuit of airports and clubs at the seven months mark to focus on her new family life. This enforced time at home also provided the perfect opportunity to begin work on her second album-baby, to which end a frantically nesting Aisha made sure to finish soundproofing her new tiny cosy studio room with a DIY bricolage of cardboard and foam just moments before she went into labour. Squirrelled away in this domestic bubble over a period of two years, Aisha would regularly retire to the sanctity of her "cave" to give free rein to the darker side of her innermost poetic visions, "hidden in the dark, like a pagan monk with cigarettes, a Mac and some machines", striving to tame her demons into a musical framework that is intricate yet raw, intimate yet wild, controlled yet soulful, all at the same time. "I place some notes in space, I sing in a whole body vibration," she explains. "At that precise moment, the pain breeds grace, I am rescued from myself. Each sound is an echo from my abyss."

Taking its name from the scientific experiments currently taking place at Switzerland's world leading Large Hadron Collider (where her grandfather once worked), the big bang of Kate Wax's resultant fully-matured second album 'Dust Collision' expands to reveal her own magically realistic cosmology of witches, demons, dreams and ghosts, guiding us like a disco Sherpa through the peaks and valleys of human experience. Colliding with the percussion's industrial-edged grit is a voice that possesses the raw, unadulterated feminine power and

expressive versatility of a PJ Harvey, Kate Bush or Karen O, at different times soaring, harmonious, powerful, ethereal, gentle, childlike, yelping, demonic, breathy, controlled, close or broken according to context, and at other times modulated as if it were a favourite synth in Kate Wax's ultimate act of communion with the machine. "I wanted to keep the dust in my music, the mouth noises, the errors and the intimacy of my singing without processing too much," she explains. "As I only have one voice, I pushed it in every possible direction, to incarnate every spectrum of my emotions. I wanted to go beyond the notion of singing or performing like Arthur Russell, and took a lot from the Buddhist mantras as the highest form of trance." Lovingly woven together by our determined autocrat at her kitchen table and in her cosy music-cave-box-room in Geneva, then mixed in sensitive harmony with her new friend James Holden in his London studio, the secrets of the Kate Wax musical universe are now now opened up to the outside world with the eager unleashing of her own 'Dust Collision'.

This collision of particles may also be witnessed in the flesh as the reincarnation of the Kate Wax live experience begins to be rolled out across Europe, juxtaposing the full playful, confident diversity of Aisha's free-range soprano over the digi-grit emanating from her laptop toys and supporting live bass-boy. Here the former graphic designer's highly attuned visual sensibilities are also in full evidence, draping herself in folds of white material to function as a canvas for the slick complementary interactive algorithmic light projections of acclaimed Swiss designer and oldest friend from art school Niels Wehrspann: "My physical way of singing is conceptualized. I'm the visuals platform, the medium."

As she sets her two year long labour-of-love free, the Kate Wax performer persona is eager to bring the 'Dust Collision' live experience to your local concert venue or festival throughout the course of 2012. But that isn't always practical, and nor is it the full picture: schizophrenic as ever, the club kid in her is also eager to reconnect with the dancefloor by showcasing her own idiosyncratic taste and boundless musical enthusiasm in the form of her new line in highly-recommended Kate Wax DJ sets. ("I'm using other's talent to create a moment of communion," she elucidates. "It's pretty invigorating, actually. Like a cosmic spa.") As we stand at this unique juncture in human history where the boundaries between traditional live and electronic music become ever-more blurred, these twin worlds seem to collide within the persona of Kate Wax herself, and a whole supernova of infinite possibility is born. "That's why choosing Border Community means something and fits this need to explode this never-ending categorization of music," she concludes. "The genres are converging and that's a good thing."

Gemma Sheppard

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kate wax discography

kate wax :	"dust collision" (album) "dust collision" (single) "the holden edits"	border community	2011
	"the dark heat collection III"	mental groove	2008
	"the dark heat collection II"		2007
	"the dark heat collection I" "remixed"		
	"catch the buzz"		2006
	"reflections of the dark heat" (album) "pleasure zone ep"		2005
	"beetles & spider"	output	2006
	"black sheep ep"	viking music	2004

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