

France

Ibizavoice_Feature_July_2013

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🔍 Rone: Taking Dance Music To New Dimensions



In the five years that *Erwan Castex* has been making IDM, electronica and techno under the alias of *Rone*, he has established himself as one of *France's* foremost electronic music innovators.

An active member of *Infiné Music's* impressive label roster (which also includes *Francesco Tristano*, *Clara Moto* and *Oxia*), the young producer cemented his reputation in 2012 with his second album '*Tohu Bohu*'.

Informed and influenced by *Castex's* move to *Berlin*, the record presented a nuanced odyssey through expansive electronica and techno, and was rightly heralded as one of the year's best LPs.

This summer *Castex* has released '*Tohu Bonus*', a deluxe edition of the album with a bonus disc of new ambient and downtempo tracks and a new international distribution deal that looks set to get the record into more hands than ever.

I Voice chatted on Skype with *Erwan* from his garden just outside of *Paris* on a warm *Monday* afternoon to ask him why he had re-released the album, when we can expect a follow up to *Tohu Bohu* and what his favourite film soundtrack of all time is.

You've been making records as Rone for around five years now. Tell me about your first forays into musicianship.

It's funny, because I have been making music since I was a teenager, but growing up I had no [real] musical ambition. I started working in production in *French* cinema, but at the same time continued to make music just for fun on my laptop. *Agoria* ended up hearing a track I'd made called '*Bora*' and he really liked it, and decided to include it in his '*At The Controls*' mix. That led to my signing my first EP on *Infiné*,

which was was really the beginning for me.

When you were making music as a teenager, what sort of records were inspiring you?

I listened to various kinds of music: classical, jazz and even some rock music, but not a lot of electronic music! Actually, it was *Warp Records* that [introduced me] to electronic music, artists like *Aphex Twin* and *Boards Of Canada* and a bit later I started to get into techno producers like *Jeff Mills* and *Carl Craig*. I think my sound is influenced by all of that and is why my music isn't really techno but something a bit larger in its sound.

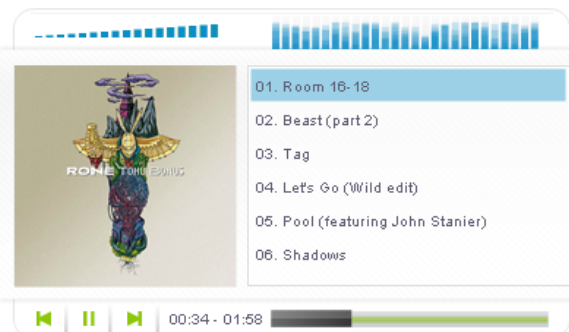
You mentioned Warp Records, I often think that Infiné is like a French equivalent to it. What is your relationship like with the label? Is it somewhere that you will remain in the long term?

Almost all my records have come out on *Infiné* and it is like we have grown up together as I was one of the first artists on the label along with *Agoria*, *Appart* and *Francesco Tristano*. It has been a really comfortable label for me to work with and it's not a cliché when I say that it is like a family. *Infiné* are really open minded and there's not a focus on a single type of music, so I feel I can do anything I want and that is a really precious thing for me.

Last year you released your second album Tohu Bohu, which you recorded in Berlin. I'm guessing the city had an influence on the record?

I made my first album *Spanish Breakfast* whilst I was in *Paris* and it was really easy, because to be honest I didn't realise I was making an album. I was just making music and then one day *Infiné* told me that I had enough tracks to put out an album. But *Tohu Bohu* was a different story, because I had to start [from scratch] and I was feeling a [creatively] blocked in *Paris* because I was over-thinking what I should I do.

So I decided to change my way of life and to move to *Berlin*. Once I was in a new city, I found I had the same feeling that I had when I was making music as a teenager and started enjoying making music again. It wasn't necessarily *Berlin* itself that was so important, as much as just needing to move somewhere new, that is why I don't think I will make the third album in *Berlin*. I need to find another place and another story.



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Do you have any idea where you might move to in order to make the third album?

No, I need to think about it. Over the summer I'm touring a lot and already I'm beginning to work on the new album whilst on the road. I do need to work on it in a studio somewhere, but I don't know where yet.

You have just re-released Tohu Bohu with a bonus disk of new tracks. Why did you decide to re-release the album so soon after its initial release?

It's being re-released as a venture between *Infiné* and *Warp Records*, with *Warp* looking after the album's distribution so as the album has a wider network in the *UK* and *USA*. *Tohu Bohu* had a lot of good feedback on the continent, especially in *France*, and now we want to make more impact everywhere.

Initially, I was a bit embarrassed by the idea of re-releasing the album [so soon after its release] and so I asked if it was possible to do something a bit special, such as a deluxe edition with new tracks. That is how the bonus CD came about, with six new tracks that are coherent with the rest of *Tohu Bohu*.

The bonus CD features a collaboration with John Stanier from the band Battles. How did that hook up happen?

I really like *Battles* and I had learnt through some of my friends that John Stanier had moved from *New York* to *Berlin*. I ended up meeting John at a *Battles* concert in *Berlin* and we started to talk about making a track together.

So, I sent him a melody loop that I had been working on to ask for his opinion and he was really interested in it, so we found a studio in *Berlin* and worked for one day on this track.

Let's talk about your live show. Do you enjoy playing live?

Yes, I really enjoy it. For me, my life is cut in two. There is the solitary art in which I am laboriously working in my studio and then there is the gig side, where you meet a lot of people and there is a big energy and you can reinvent your own music in real time.

Have you brought your show over to Ibiza yet?

I have never played in or even been to *Ibiza*, but I'm really curious to come over and I hope to play there soon!

Originally, you started out in the film industry what is your favourite film soundtrack?

That's a difficult question! There is a *French* movie that I watched when I was eight or nine years old and was totally obsessed with called *Le grand Bleu* (*The Big Blue*), which was directed by *Luc Besson*. The soundtrack is a bit kitsch and not particularly exceptional, but for me it reminds me of my childhood and as such I'm pretty sure it has had influence on my music.

