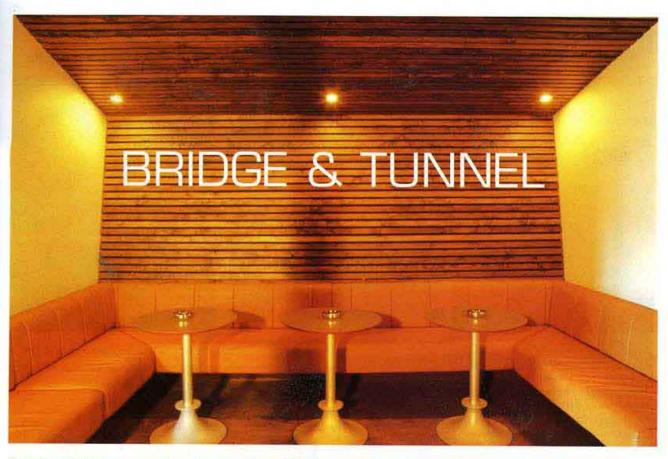
## Night Magazine MAY 2002

Page 1 of 2



## Nuphonic's new venue is another DJ bar with a dancefloor and a difference...

Shoreditch High Street, a new generation clubbing gem emerged from the gloom. Bridge and, Tunnel is dance music grown up; the result of five years of searching for the perfect venue, and Nuphonic record label's return to its roots.

Nuphonic's famous association with Hoxton's Blue Note drymarked the label in to the cultural history books. After two successful years building one of the capital's most significant musical venues, in 1997 some key members of the Blue Note team resigned to concentrate their efforts on their developing record label. Their intention was to build and expand the label, working with music they love, but they also longed for their own venue. "After the Blue Note I really started missing the live aspect - that's what really drives me," says Nuphonic boss Sav Remsi. "The direct response you get from the dancefloor, watching how tunes go down. That's what it's about".

2002: DJ bars are de rigeur. Anti-superclubbing makes for intimate, musically diverse, super clubbing. Experimenters and innovators, you'd expect a Nuphonic venture into club ownership to be firmly at the front of the anti-corporate backlash. And you'd be right, then some.

Significant renovation has converted the former bank into what's shaping into one of the more interesting venues in London. Bridge and Tunnel ignores the Shoreditch rule that all bars must have a random selection of soft furnishings and ironic 70s wallpaper. Instead, it embodies a pared down, functional aesthetic which has sound quality at its core.

Designed by architects D'soto, the two floor space has been subtlety treated to create two intimate rooms, each with it's own bar and sound system.

The ground floor provides 'the refinement that we all deserve': namely table service of drinks and classic cocktails, plus a daily food menu of fresh home cooked foods and a studio quality sound system and dj booth. With its 4ft thick walls, the converted basement vault underneath is perfect for rough and heavy sounds, and is reminiscent of the brilliant, sweaty dancefloor at the mid nineties Blue Note. Highly-specced DJ booths, huge amp racks and powerful

Funktion One speakers characterise both rooms. There's no bar / restaurant / club split: it's truly hybridised, genuinely multi-functional set-up. Depending on the occasion, the basement can be run together with the ground floor programming or as a separate event. The basement also provides the stage for occasional live showcases and exclusive DJ presentations.

"We set up a team to put the club together," explained Sav. "We really built the place around people's expertise and knowledge, and took on board their particular field - from sound to security - incorporating it all in to the design". Crucial to this dynamic was John Trottor of Electracoustic, whose brief was to install 'the best sound system in any bar anywhere'. If music's your mecca, you want your place of worship properly specced.

"I want a club programme in a bar format so you don't have to pay to get in," says Sav. "We spoke to our mates and asked them to DJ, and promised the best equipment everywhere. This place is about the music. I didn't want any corners cut, and I've known John a long time. I knew he was right for the Job".

No corners cut means a big budget and lots of quality. A lot of money has been spent behind the scenes: spend that won't necessarily be noticed by customers, but that will ensure the longevity and licence of the place. Despite the £540k budget though, costs haven't been passed on to customers. Food and drink is reasonably priced, and even the cocktail list rarely breaks £5 a drink.

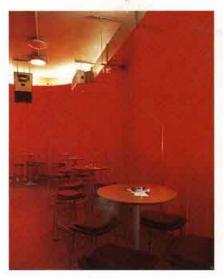
"We've created a space where we can cater for an older generation of clubbers," says Sav with a smile. "People who want good music but without the rigmerole of traditional clubbing. We want to provide grounded and rooted people with the respect and service they deserve".

Bridge and Tunnel's relaxed and undemanding vibe makes it an instant winner with DJs. It's a home from home, but better, cos who's got CDJ1000s in their lounge?

"We've created a home for artists and DJs to play - they're liking it cos the pressure of the dancefloor is relieved here," says Sav. "They don't have to get the floor going, so they don't have to play the tunes that are obvious. They can be really experimental and play what they play at home really - we think our

## Night Magazine MAY 2002

Page 2 of 2







audience want to be stimulated by the music".

Nuphonic haven't advertised excessively, haven't put huge signs up, and they're not promoting like crazy. Instantly, they're part of the community, fitting in and enhancing the musical, social and even cultural offering of the area. Its specialist programming and distinct vibe are already bringing the right groups down.

"Friday morning this place was a building site, and by the evening we were serving people," says Sav. "We turned a non-entity into a space that people go to. Already we've got regulars. A whole new sub-culture is springing out of nothing. It's kind of, what's the word? Profound. Being responsible for that is kind of humbling. It makes me proud".

HIGHT



## ELECTRACOUSTIC @ BRIDGE & TUNNEL

eigned and antalled by Portier's Electracoustic List with input. Irom Nijohanic and Funktion One Beidge & Turnel's sound system a supersave. The ground floor system accounts of Funktion One Resolution 2 and FTIS loodspeakers in the main balance with PMC studio monitors in the acoustically treated anothery by Canadian manufacturer Bystem utility a das fronted air conditioned rack cabinet on view to the public after all sound equipment is besuming XTA DP series controllers and DBX valve commercion are also in the signal criain. The downstains system is a five way Funktion One system arrayed like a grant hi-Fi at one and of the room and compruing Resolution 4 flows loudspeakers. FI IR bass

4 flown loudspeakers. Fill these enclosures and the new Infra-Bass sub-lace enclosures. Res Two mid-ligh infiles are used at the other end of the moon. This floor a powered by MC2 amplification throughout, with XTA DR series controllers, and the Empirical Laboratories. Fatter compressions

Sath floors are equipped for DI use with full links between them.

The new Formula Stand PM-100 decathleque inserva de Installed and a lot of consideration has been applied to the abono route at the pleas in till very any based The Technics det is are mounted on acoustic mats on too of concrete allabs, which are in turn necipiene Bolated from the controlle and steel surround The Share varindes pass through estimate phone stages by Cerman his manufacture. Concrete the property of the property

Jon Trotter comments This installation was a pleasure to do occase of the enthusiam and commitment to sound quality of Sas and David [Hill Says partner in Nuchonic] and their fellow workers. We have tried to take the best principles of high end nifl and combine these with the frees pro-audic products available to create a really special result. We are now at the stage of adjusting and fine turning the room accustics on both levels to let the sound equipment really shine and this involves constructing and hinging custom accustic panels and drapes. When this work is complete this verse, is soint to be really something interesting this





the world tource was so clearly repense to the CD program from the very liest when finally we have to confront the noise emission cause which every installer will be familiar with unit in the time of most bondon venues rewarday. As the venue in man old bank we have the sense in an old bank we have the sense in an old bank we have the sense in all of three lost thick, with the builders have carried out comiderable noise light from the street is absolutely manned.

CREDITS

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