



Name: **Lewis Blair-Johnstone**

Course Studied: **BTEC Extended Diploma in Music Technology**

Feeder School: **Royal Manor Arts College, Portland**

Destination: **DJ/producer, events organiser and sound engineer**

“After leaving school I joined Weymouth College on the Diploma in Music Technology. The two year course introduced me to many aspects of music technology and ultimately helped me arrive at the conclusion that carving out a career in the music industry was what I wanted to do with my life. The lecturers had a wealth of industry experience to share and gave me the belief and knowledge to develop my skills and pursue a career as a producer, DJ/performer and sound engineer.

I loved the course and threw myself into every assignment with as much enthusiasm as I could, whether it was spending hours trying to tweak the EQ and compression of a bass synthesiser recording, researching and writing about a particular area of the music industry or mixing the live sound for the end of year music show. It was also where I first tried my hand at DJ'ing and under the guidance of lecturer and ex-Hacienda DJ Andy Cleeton, I discovered the joy of mixing together the deepest house tracks into a musical tapestry that can envelop and move a crowd. Whilst on the course I received continuous help and guidance with my university application and was pleased when I was accepted by The London College of Music to study for a degree in Live Sound Production with music technology as a specialism. University was great because there were lots of modules based in the studio working with bands and artists and recording to a high level (and my lecturer Pip Williams was brilliant)! Those three years helped further develop the skills that I needed. Any degree in the creative industry isn't just about getting the degree, it is also what you pick up along the way that prepares you for work.

As soon as I left University I got a job in a recording studio (I made this happen by turning up at 7am everyday until they eventually let me in the door)! I am now assistant engineer at Westpoint Studios, where I have worked with artists such as Little Mix, Ella Henderson, Fleur East, Emeli Sande (mixing Session) and producers such as Freedo, Johan Carlsson and last but not least Jake Gordon, who mixed and engineered Skepta's chart-topping, Mercury Prize-winning 2016 Album Of The Year *Konnichiwa*. Working with these artists has pushed me forward massively and helped me raise my own profile within the music industry as a respected assistant studio engineer. “

Lewis is also an underground house DJ under the alias of *PlayingWithScissors* and was a resident DJ at one of London's most established clubbing venues, *The Egg* for two years. On top of all of this he co-owns an underground house music events company called *Ballsdeep*, organising secret parties in and around the capital and DJ'ing to a loyal, friendly and energetic crowd. “Our most recent party was in Hackney Woods to 600 people. We have played well known places like *The Waiting Rooms* and *The Nest* but normally look for an artistic empty space in which we create our own unique venue from scratch. A lot of work, but very rewarding.”

2017 will also see the release of his debut E.P. on *HEAVY*, the sister label of Detroit's *Kolour Recordings*.... and with plenty more of his own tracks attracting interest from record labels in London, Manchester and Berlin this is shaping up to be quite a year!

