

Mixing an electronic environment

Interview – Dimitri Voudouris

By Wanita Briell

Cue Reporter

Dimitri Voudouris is a full-time pharmacist and a part-time composer – the former providing funding for the latter.

"I'm a pharmacist by profession," he says. "But I've had an interest in music for many years, especially the avant-garde movement."

A few years ago, Voudouris turned his interest in music into a practical pursuit. "I'm self-taught, but I've been listening for 30 years," he says, tapping his ear, "The knowledge is here."

Voudouris is organising an electronic musical festival in Johannesburg through New Music SA, of which he is a board member. The aim is to create a sustainable venture to extend electronic music to the underprivileged communities.

According to Voudouris, electronic music is well established overseas, but the "Third World" is becoming a major influence. He sees huge potential for the genre in South Africa because of the affordability of the solo production process, from composing to mixing to burning CDs.

Voudouris enjoys computerised composing, because it allows him to do the sampling, composing, performing and sound engineering himself. His solo production company has produced a series of works integrating African instruments into what he calls an "electronic environment".

In performance, Voudouris

mixes a pre-recorded electronic environment with traditional African instruments to create an innovative, blended genre.

He firmly believes in maintaining focus on the purity of the work and the deeper substance of the music, which he feels is fading away as people become more and more obsessed with visuals.

"I don't work much with visuals," says Voudouris. "They interrupt and water down the music."



Computer composer Voudouris.

pic: Paul Greenway, Cue photographer