



Skatebård

towers over the city. He needed mittens. "When you go to Tromsø, you think of the early techno that came out of there, and it's from this glacial place, surrounded by snow and mountains," says Davis. "Plus they're in darkness for a lot of the year, so they stay in and make music. A bit like in Manchester, because it rains all the time. The music does seem to reflect the environment, but I'm not sure it's necessarily a product of the environment. More important, though, is their sense of society and collaboration. They all support each other, and there's no back-stabbing. You don't tend to get individuals burrowed away in their studios, they often work with each other. They're very influential to each other, particularly people like Pål and Bjørn and Erot."

Erot, real name Tore Kroknes, sadly died in 2001, dealing a huge blow to both the scene in Bergen and the Norwegian electronic scene in general. He'd suffered a heart condition from birth, and it claimed his life at the age of just 23. His prodigious musicianship, however, made its mark, tracks like the shimmering dub disco of 'Song For Annie'.

It was made for his girlfriend, Anne Lilia Berge Strand, the singer with whom he made the blazing 'The Greatest Hit', sampling Madonna's debut single 'Everybody' from 1982. It was the track which helped launch Mikal Telle's hugely influential Tellé label, which in turn would provide a springboard for Røyksopp, who released their first single 'So Easy' on Tellé in 1999. Davis interviews Kroknes' parents for the film, and Northern Disco Lights will be dedicated to his memory.

"It was perhaps the first time they'd talked to people outside the family and close friends about it, and there were tears. They were very much ready to open up. He's a big presence in the film. That was a real jumping-in point for a lot of people, those early Tellé Records and the scene in Bergen. So that's where we decided to start the film," says Davis.

Davis reckons it's always been something of a symbiotic relationship between the UK and Norway's electronic scenes, and not just from back when Per Martinsen was raving it up at Spectrum. The likes of underground house heroes the Idjut Boys, who also appear in the documentary, have been coming to play in Norway for decades, as did DJ Harvey back in the '90s.

"They were pioneers," says Torkse. "They were

paving the way for people like us." Torske also name-checks Tim 'Love' Lee's Tummy Touch label and London producer Glenn Gunner's seminal Street Corner Symphony project as a kind of 'starting point' for Norwegian disco-indebted productions.

INTERNATIONALS

Following that pioneering time in the '90s, it was "Todd Terje, Prins Thomas and Lindstrøm who took that underground disco sound towards the mainstream", reckons Davis. "They gave it a credibility but also a weirdness. It's accessible, but weird at the same time. It bought a wave of Norwegian music which spread across the world. But for me it's Torske's work that sums up the Norwegian sound. I've given my mum, who listens to Demis Roussos and Chris De Burgh, a Bjørn Torske compilation and she loved it. Then my niece, who's a 20-year-old hipster, she loves it. I love it. That's a rare quality."

Since then, Todd Terje has lent his production skills to Roxy Music legend Bryan Ferry, thanks to Ferry's son Isaac, who spotted the emerging 'space disco' vibes coming from Norway, and suggested his dad get on board. Moves like that have upped the ante, garnering worldwide exposure for Norway's crop of dazzlingly talented producers, not merely curiosity from the other side of the North Sea.

"Disco was always a bad word, especially in Norway," says Torkse. "We used to make fun of it. Not so much in a negative way. But we never dreamed of playing it." Times have changed indeed.

• **The crowd-funding site is now live. Visit indiegogo.com/at/NDL to help kickstart the launch of Northern Disco Lights.**



Lindstrøm



Idjut Boys



Ben Prince & Mental Overdrive



Annie



Bjørn Torske



Bill Brewster



Paper people & Rune Lindbaek