

# Run\_Return



**n5MD**

emotional experimental electronica  
4096 Piedmont Ave #551 Oakland CA 94611  
info@n5md.com



[www.runreturn.com](http://www.runreturn.com)  
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Contact Tommy at 510-356-3441 for booking details and more information on Run\_return.

## bio

Run\_return is a trio of urban east coasters who have been calling Northern California their home since the new century. The crew formed in a most unlikely place: Santa Cruz, CA in 1999. The reasons were manifold. Essentially, Run\_return has been pursuing a musical body that was conceived back East, but needed room to relax and breathe out West.

Kevin Dineen, a multi-instrumentalist from Long Island, who learned to drum by copying his sister's hip-hop records, transplanted himself to this idyllic beach setting after graduating in 1998. Almost immediately after driving across the country with all belongings and girlfriend in tow, he regretted this decision, but was determined to make the best of it.

Were it not for the stark and staggering natural beauty of the coast and surrounds, he may have packed up and broke out long before he had the chance to contact his friend, collaborator and former bandmate, Brooklyn native Tommy Fugelsang. An email correspondence and a healthy supply of mixed tapes and CDs kept the spark of their former musical collaborations alive. Not eager to rush home to NYC after a working holiday abroad, Fugelsang decided to stop by Santa Cruz and get to know the area.

Upon arrival, they knew they would form a project, that it would be electronic with dubwise values, and that they wanted to start back in the early 80s in terms of gear. They intended to play the music they had always heard in their heads.

Riding the dot-com bubble, they were able to save money to purchase antique machines, like the TR808, SH101, Ms20, and more. They used a 4-track machine and a primitive Din-Synch sequencer to sketch ideas. And they decided on the name Run\_return, the executing command of the Commodore's OS, the starting point of their early infatuation with computer music.

While making music at that phase was fun in the studio, it was a ridiculous ordeal when the duo took it live. Performances were as unpredictable as the gear they owned, and the length of time between songs was often as long as the tracks themselves. The patching and twiddling combined with the margin of error was such a painstaking affair, that they began to see the benefit of going digital. But how?

At a rock show in 2000, Tommy met Raj Ojha, a student at UCSC. Although drunk and in unfamiliar surrounds, the 2 managed to initiate a conversation on music and waxed at length on gear and technique. Raj, a lifetime drummer and percussionist originally from Boston, had been working on a solo project with guest musicians for years based around jazz, breaks, dub, digital processing, and film.

A day later they were playing as a trio in the living room. Over the following sessions, Raj introduced Kevin and Tommy to digital composition, recording, and use of MIDI. The crew began to sell off some of the studio relics and transitioning into the digital domain.

Although the DIY nature of the Santa Cruz scene had led to a few successes for the group, like supporting spots for **Isotope 217**, **Him**, **Mice Parade**, and **Tortoise**, the time had come to break into the urban Bay Area scene. Raj graduated and moved to Marin. Tommy moved to Oakland to be with the girl he eventually married. Kevin remained in SC with his wife for another year, but hastened to San Francisco when the music and work opportunities began to expand.

After shopping their recordings around and performing as often as possible with a host of guest musicians, the crew steadily gained a reputation as a solid, innovative electronic post-rock outfit worthy of attention. The band decided to record an LP worthy of their skills, using a few original demo tracks as a starting point. **Doug Scharin**, of **HiM**, **Codeine**, and **June of 44** fame, helped the band lay down the initial session work in June, 2003. Run\_return continued over the next 2 years to mix, edit, record and re-record a host of tracks that interested many listeners, particularly the good people at the **n5MD** label.

In late 2004, an agreement with **n5MD** offered Run\_return the chance to get their sounds heard around the globe. Mike Cadoo graciously brokered the services of his label to the band, offering first a 7" single of exclusive mixes. Entitled "**Animals are Beautiful People**" after the eponymous documentary they watched silently during the composing process, the single features said track and a B-side track called Mercury Retrograde, a moody lash out against cosmic misfortune.

As of October, 2005, **n5MD** has released "**Metro North**", the trio's first complete LP. Consisting of 18 tracks, the record is designed to take the listener on a ride through the blurry borders between musical genres. Parts rock, post-rock, jazz-fusion, IDM, and ambient, Run\_return, through Metro North, only wishes to share with the listener that which it perceives to be beautiful. There are no deeper subtexts, only references to that which has moved them as individuals and as a group throughout their lives, past and present.

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# discography



## metro north

compact disc

Run\_Return's Debut CD for n5MD references those blurry lines between genres. Somewhere in this washed out space, Future-Jazz, Experimental Electronica, and Recovery Rock all work together to create a focused vision of the future. Flying cars, moving sidewalks, and radio transitions from the moon where the lunar jockey spins flawless mixes of Telefon Tel Aviv, Tortoise, and Miles Davis. Take (the) Metro North and see what we all have to look forward to.



## Animals Are Beautiful People

7" single

The debut single from Run\_Return which features 2 tracks from their forthcoming album. Each is it's own slice of future-retro... Elements of jazz, Chicago style post-rock, and experimental electronica all blended into a highly original and cohesive mix of old and new. A highly recommended teaser release for fans of any style of alternative music



## Sum of an Abstract

compact disc

Before they took the Metro North Run\_return did a little math...Sum of an Abstract is their little known self released first album. Now repressed by n5MD after a few years of unavailability this time around remastered and repackaged complete with 3 bonus tracks. A shining album of "futures passed" still sounding current, relevant, and true to form, galvanizing Run\_return as a band that is as distinctive as it is timeless. You do the math and come up with your own sum...

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Animals Are Beautiful People, the debut 7-inch vinyl single from Run Return (Tommy Fugelsang, Kevin Dineen, and Raj Ojha), features two fine samplings from the instrumental outfit's forthcoming album Metro North. Established in 1999 in Santa Cruz, California, the trio produces a loose, retro-future hybrid of experimental post-rock and spacey electronica that augments digital processing with the natural sounds of drums, vibes, guitars, and other instruments. The title song begins with industrial clatter before settling into a slow-motion, synth-washed lurch of dubbed-out, hazy calm, a minimal bass line the glue holding the piece together, while electronic glissandi flutter, swoop, and writhe over skuzzy, head-nodding beats and an undertow of dark bass burble in in "Mercury Retrograde." Be forewarned: only 500 copies of the gleaming orange disc were pressed.

### **Grooves**

A two-track 7-inch that proceeds the Metro North full-length, this orange slab of vinyl – limited to 500 copies – shifts n5MD slightly away from the Skam-style electronics of earlier releases. While Run\_Return still owes a clear debt to Boards of Canada, the threesome mixes in some live drums, first stomping and then rolling off into a gentle groove on the A-side. The flip-side "Mercury Retrograde" starts out with some SID-cip chattering and flanged guitar before it settles into its wistful vintage-style synth washes and fluttering percussion. If you need a quick fix before BoC drops its new album in Oct, you could do a lot worse.

### **XLR8R**

Run\_Return's dance club-worthy post-rock vacillates between textured electro-nocturnes and a sitcom theme triumphalism as life-affirming as Beethoven's Fifth. The Oakland trio trades off duties on all instruments: vibraphone, retro keyboards and agile drumming, while the album adds phlanged banjo and skittering guitar. There's an odd tendency here to pair instruments with their synthetic counterparts, cellos against keyboard strings, handclaps against synth handclaps, and most admirably in the cut-up interplay between programmed beats and live drumming—trading licks within a single rhythm or a live drum break appearing, *deux ex machina*, in the middle of a drum machine backed song.

### **Trampoline House**

First a note to rock critics: Enough with the Post-Punk stuff, same with Nu-Jazz. Sure, some of the musicians used to be in punk bands. And yeah, it owes much to Post-Bebop and shares a lot, compositionally, with 70's fusion... But instrumental, electronic music is neither of those. What it is, is GOOD. Run\_return is a relatively recent entrant into this category, and they're one of the strongest yet. Using live drums, vibraphone, and electronics, they create organic soundscapes, that are as visceral as they are beautiful—bringing elements of Aphex Twin and Tortoise together to create a wholly new sound. Their debut LP was heralded as one of the Best Albums of the Year, and Run\_return is not one of, but THE best band you never heard of. Tributary is their anthemic score to the perfect day.

### **SF Weekly**

Jazz is endlessly reinventable, it seems. From the staid, upbeat rhythms of swing to the unpredictable nature of hard bop, it's a form that's nothing if not elastic. Local trio Run\_Return takes the genre to an unexpected place—lo-fi and high-tech all at once. The sound melts dirty analog drumbeats into smooth, seething synth washes, and although these guys would happily steal from swing or bop, they adore Fela Kuti, folk, and fusion as well. Of the three free tracks on the band's Web site ([www.runreturn.com](http://www.runreturn.com)), our favorite is "Thoughts Broken by Footsteps," with its deep bass, warm acoustic guitar line, and quizzical synth loops. Does it matter that this stuff is white-hot right now? Nah, course not—we just like it. The Prids and Crosstide open at 10 p.m. at the Bottom of the Hill, 1233 17th St. (at Missouri), S.F. Admission is \$8; call 621-4455 or visit [www.bottomofthehill.com](http://www.bottomofthehill.com).

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Blending lushly filled-out instrumental rock with electronic burps and hisses, run\_return combines everything from electrified free jazz to aphex twin electronica. "Metro North" can serve as both background ambience and an attention-capturing melodic journey. Just over an hour long, metro north is an exhaustive listen that yields.

### lost at sea

Metro North is the kind of record year-end lists were designed for, and I hate myself for having not discovered it earlier. Run\_Return have it all: charisma, technical proficiency, an aversion of pigeonholes, a clear knack for applying that finishing gloss to their mixes, and that extra dimension that mere reviewer-babble eternally wastes itself upon. At this point, with most conclusive analysis on 2005 releases finished, Metro North may be the best record you never heard.

What separates Run\_Return from the world's million-and-one IDM hopefuls is their aptitude for playing IDM. Metro North is not the aural offspring of some spotty teenager whose parents have just bought them Reason 3.0, but rather a focused digital impression derived from a series of jams between three young Americans; and it shows. Though it may orbit synthesizers, hence utilizing a modest degree of programming (which modern technology universally permits), it is fleshed out with vibes, live drums and guitars, and is conveyed with that raw musical integrity that cannot be sequenced or superficially bought into.

To strip Run\_Return down is to reveal an indistinct blurring of genres. Their intergalactic swagger gazes into the future, showcasing the same jazzy swing that thrust Tortoise into the instrumental foreframe. Beyond their post-rock core shimmers an ode to the likes of Telefon Tel-Aviv and Pulseprogramming in the form of the microscopic blip and skitter patterns that line each mix.

Upon embarking on an ambitious 16 tracks, Run\_Return seemingly don't shy away from a challenge, and with "Aerospace Lanes" they don't hang about either. The opening cut is a multi-pronged future-jazz assault, laced with vibes, subtle electronic beats, and anchored by the fattest bass synth this side of Fabric. "OKC dani" carries less weight, largely forming itself around a single melancholic violin track, whereas "Weights and Measures" sits at the lower end of the Run\_Return frequency spectrum, tenderly switching between synth collisions and soporific noise clouds.

Metro North presents an example of those rare recordings that are so crisp and dense that they seem almost physically tangible. It is far-reaching, multi-dimensional, and manages to maintain an equilibrium between busy climatic peaks and moments of light hypnosis. Run\_Return have articulated their designs for the future, and if Metro North is anything to go by, we can rest assured that a future in which Run\_Return feature will transpire for the greater good.

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