



*Now and again an album lands in your inbox and completely takes you by delightful surprise! Such is the case with [Outsider](#) from ^L aka Luis Fernando, a Brazilian producer/artist based in Brasilia. Releasing on the German label [Antime](#) and soon to embark on a German tour, Luis talks to us about the challenges of making music with Aspergers and depression and what inspires some of his 'Outsider' thinking.*

**CGNY:** Bom dia Luis! Thanks for taking the time to chat. Congratulations on the album – truly a memorable one and as you know by now one of CGNY’s best releases of last year (even though I know album was released in 2015!) I only heard it last year! So I think before I listened to it - the first thing that struck me was the song titles! Phil Spector, Locked In Syndrome, Too weird to live too high to die etc. Who isn’t going to tune into a track called “Phil Spector”? Was that your jumping off point for the start of the album or the titles came later?

**LF:** Thank you! About the names of the tracks: I compose the tracks with the idea (name) in my mind ... I think of the situation and I'm composing. I do not feel influenced by time. I try to be impartial. My method of composition is completely random. I never start producing some range thinking "this will be a house" or "this will be a techno". I just start playing randomly and at the end I see if the material is good, because of course not every time does the randomness result in something good. In fact, my method of composition is completely spontaneous. Things are going through the improvisation. I just have an idea in my head, a "theme" and I'm recording, composing until I decide "that's it".

So, I consider myself an outsider, yes ... out of the system - as much as it is a cliché. Nobody tells me this, I just feel. But usually it is not just a nomenclature that you adopt and begin to follow. It is more a state of mind, a behavior. I consider myself a nihilist and this is reflected in the way I express myself, such as titles of the tracks and even the textures and structures. If I cannot express myself, I just freak out. I was admitted to a hospital after a mental breakdown. I use prescription drugs and I try to keep myself under control. I always felt anger, which would obviously be sad. So, I use music to express all my states of mind. The track "The Outsider"

presents the only sample of the album: a fragment of an author's speech, David Foster Wallace "This is Water" made in 2005 on the Kenyon College graduation in Ohio, USA. Along with Foster Wallace, the other three are fundamental authors to record the concept: Colin Wilson, whose main work is titled "The Outsider", and Thomas Pynchon and JD Salinger. They deal with subjects such as science, ideologies, fatalism ... and how all this made us into a bubble of solitude and individualism. And this is where the issue arises. "Outsider": as we are slaves of our own irony, how alienated we become. On the structures of the tracks; I just stopped to think about this complexity. Curious this ... I recorded this record in just one week ... all the tracks ... I just "close my eyes" and play all the influences I have acquired in all these years. Yes, there is a lot of rock n' roll in my songs (post-punk like Joy Division, PIL ... Jesus and Mary Chain ... - gothic rock - Sisters of Mercy, for example I started in music playing in bands like noise and shoegaze - My Blood Valentine, Ride, Telescopes. I think, sometimes, that my song is Rock n Roll made with electronic equipment and computers. Despite being strongly influenced by artists like Aphex Twin, Brian Eno (Very), Plastikman, Autechre, Acid Techno, IDM ... And Phil Spector is a big influence for me with his ["Wall of Sound"](#) .

**CGNY:** And the others - Locked in Syndrome which I know what that is!

**LF:** It depends ... usually the names come up first. I compose and create structures and arrangements with the idea (the name) in the head. Phil Spector opens the record because the disc is full of layers, textures - a Phil Spector sound.

**CGNY:** We chatted briefly about the 'discordancy' in that (Phil Spector) track...how did you hit upon that? One expects it to 'go a certain way" because it's got quite a melodic, dreamy opening and then you put these odd chords ( I use that term for me not you!) in there and then it has this great build to it.

**LF:** About Phil Spector: you're exactly the second person to notice this and tell me. Few people have noticed or, if they realized, they must have thought it was a mistake. Yes, it is not a mistake (in my opinion) but a reference to artists who have always used dissonances in their music. I am fascinated by Arnold Schoenberg, John Cage, Stockhausen, John Zorn, Glenn Branca, Sonic Youth and etc ... they are all masters in working with dissonances, "errors" of harmony, different tunings, different structures.

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Locked in Syndrome is probably the heaviest track emotionally. I felt that way when I was hospitalized (after an emotional outbreak). I have Asperger's syndrome and I suffer from severe depression. I take several controlled remedies. By day ... I felt like this.

**CGNY:** Wow Luis that is heavy and yet you make this incredible music!

**LF:** Yes, my music has a lot of anger - which at bottom is still sadness. And this reflects directly on the melodies, the beats ... although they do not have lyrics, they are very personal tracks

**CGNY:** I can totally feel that in it. It does come across. Especially the Phil Spector track which like I said has this incredible build to the end. Can I ask you if you feel that your Asperger's helps or hinders your music production? I know it can be a very creative state for some. Do you feel you make music in a way as a remedy in and of itself?

**LF:** About Asperger's: I confess I do not know if it helps or harms. I was diagnosed as an adult, I started to be medicated since then, but I really do not know how this syndrome affects my work. My process is very lonely. I like to work alone, alone ... I just cannot concentrate if I'm not alone and when I start working, I completely lose track of time, usually being 5 or 6 hours working without breaks. Then I realize it's been a great time. Maybe that's it ... I like to be alone ... I do not like to receive visitors at home; I do not like being messed up in my activities. I work at a time when I do not live with people. I'm too lazy of certain social interactions. When I'm medicated, I can deal with it, even though I'm still struggling. In short: I'm an outsider really. What for many can be a sad situation, for me it's nice. I've always been very shy and I feel better this way.

**CGNY:** This is I suppose I would say has the feel of an orchestral album (if that's a fitting description!) Not simply laying down a bass and a melody. If it had been made pre-electronic music it might be made in a classical way. What do you use to compose?

**LF:** I use Ableton live as software and dryers like TB-303 and Roland 909. But honestly, 90% of my tracks are recorded on my bed, with the laptop and a headset. Then I go to a professional studio band and mastering is done in Berlin. But "estudio" is my bed, hehe ... it leaves the music even more spontaneous, really. Ah, I like to record all kinds of noise, with a tape recorder ... whether it's at a party, riding a bus or in a restaurant ... sound ambient, you know?

**CGNY:** So what inspired this album?

**LF:** When I had this severe depression I had left the music (I worked with music since I was a child). I was frustrated. It had no meaning for me. Completely lost musically. When I left the hospital, my therapist suggested that I come back to record, just for me, as an escape valve, you know? I recorded more than 50 songs and released the first album (Love is Hell, 2014) ... a melancholy, confusing album (just like my mind was). To my surprise, the album was very well received by the local media and caught the attention of a Berlin label ( [Antime](#) ). They released the digital record. Later I did a tour (playing a live set) in Germany. In this period I was already composing "The Outsider", which was released months later, on vinyl and digital.

**CGNY:** Got it! It's the beauty of technology really isn't it? You can make music wherever!

**LF:** I love it... exactly.

**CGNY:** Tell me about the **Thump** pieces? Nice recognition there for your releases!

**LF:** About Thump: both albums had positive reviews by Thump (Brazil) And the second and most recent single from the album ( [Richard Clayderman](#) ) was premiered by Germany's [I hump](#) as well ... the video was directed by [Max Luz](#) (who already directed videos for **Moderat** , for example).

**CGNY:** So who does your music promotion and bookings?

**LF:** I only work with my label ( [Antime](#) ). They are responsible for the release of the album in Europe exclusively. I have no agent. We met in an electronic music forum on Facebook ... at the time, I posted my soundcloud with some tracks and we met there. We built a great friendship.

**CGNY:** I was walking my dog (in Ireland) and when I heard that opening from David Foster Wallace I literally had to stop! I felt like I'd been thumped in the chest! In a good way! There are often vocals at the beginning of a track but this is supremely effective and then you go into the 'booty trip' riff which I wasn't expecting at all. Was that a particular choice as a contrast to the heaviness of the Wallace intro?

**LF:** First ... the samples in the Outsider...

**LF:** So, I use music to express all my state of mind. The track "the Outsider" presents the only sample of the album: a fragment of an author's speech, David Foster Wallace "This is Water" made in 2005 on the Kenyon College graduation in Ohio, USA. Along with Foster Wallace, the other three are fundamental authors to record the concept: Colin Wilson - whose main work is titled "The Outsider", and Thomas Pynchon and JD Salinger. They deal with subjects such as science, ideologies, fatalism ... and how all this made us into a bubble of solitude and individualism. And this is where the issue arises. "Outsider": as we are slaves of our own irony, how alienated we become. This is the outsider feeling for me, you know.



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**CGNY:** Yes and of course I have to dig into his writings now because they seem pretty relevant to all of us. So regarding playing your music out - do you dj or play live sets and how is the music scene in Brasilia? Do have you any plans musically for 2017 - gigs, or recording more music or just life in general?

**LF:** So, I play live set (synths, midi and controllers etc). I like to play live, on time ... like it's a rock band heh. In April I'm going back to Germany and I'm staying until the middle of the year. About NYC: Do you believe I've never been? And this is a shame! Everyone says to me (even my mother) that the sound I produce is the face of NYC. That I'm going to love the city, that I need to know it ... based on that, I'm planning to visit in the second half of this year ... I just need to structure myself and organize myself - money, dates and etc.

**CGNY:** I agree. I think you would love it here....and a very receptive audience for all kinds of music! And in your native city?

**LF:** The Brazilian scene is fantastic ... techno is well represented here ... we have one of the best techno parties in the country (it's called 5uinto) 2/2 day Nina Kraviz will do a show. Other artists like Stephan Bodzin, Ellen Alien, Koyu also play here. Many talented artists ... new, exciting people ... local producers like 5uinto (who also owns a bar, aimed at lovers of electronic music) and Crazy Cake Crew ... these People are leaving the Brasília scene cohesive and established ... here some links: Honestly, I'm proud to be a part of the Brasilia electronic scene ... it's something fresh.

<http://5uinto.com/>

<http://www.crazycake.com.br/>

<http://www.madre.buzz>

**CGNY:** Last question which I always ask in interviews - an alien lands from another world and you have to give him/her an album to take back with them - what is it?

**LF:** Brian Eno - [Apollo](#) and a book, Principia Mathematica by Isaac Newton.

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**^L\_ - Luis Fernando**

Written by CGNY

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