**Luke Abbott** will release his second album *Wysing Forest* for Border Community on 23 June 2014. Check the immersive first offering ‘Amphis’ here: <https://soundcloud.com/border-community/amphis/s-p72M9>

**Artist:** Luke Abbott

**Title:** 'Wysing Forest' Album



**Label:** Border Community

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**Distribution:** PIAS UK

**Links:** [www.bordercommunity.com](http://www.bordercommunity.com/)

[www.lukeabbottmusic.com](http://www.lukeabbottmusic.com/)

“It's always more fulfilling when something enters your radar through word of mouth. DIY by nature, Abbott is a wizard with noise.”

**Hayden Thorpe of Wild Beasts (talking to The Guardian)**

The slow-burning success of his 2010 debut album *Holkham Drones* was something of a dream induction into the world of professional music-making for Luke Abbott. The “game changing electronic opus” stood out as “far and away one of **Drowned in Sound**'s favourite records of 2010” and landed in **Mojo**'s 'Electronica Albums of 2010' list, amongst wide-spread critical acclaim. It wasn't just about 2010 though; far beyond its initial release *Holkham Drones* has continued to win over convert upon convert. Its joyous arpeggios and rolling primal rhythms seduced wherever they were heard, spawning a string of EPs and sustaining an accompanying live touring schedule that has kept Luke and his handcrafted hardware-jams rumbling across the clubs, gigs and festivals of Europe throughout the intervening years.

Finding yourself in the position of having to live up to the expectations of such early promise is a rather less enviable scenario, and it is a bold producer that at this juncture chooses to shun the unending cycle of hype and take a step back. This is just what Luke Abbott chose to do before returning, four years later, with his second full length album ***Wysing* *Forest***,due out **23 June 2014** via **Border Community**.

The follow-up to his two EPs for **Gold Panda**'s label NOTOWN (*Object is Navigator* and *Modern Driveway*), *Wysing Forest* is named after the Wysing Arts Centre in Cambridgeshire where, over a six week period in 2012 as their first ever musician-in-residence, Luke recorded what would later become the album. A genuine, heartfelt live performance (as opposed to the painstakingly arranged computer bound product) lies at the heart of the new record: “The record is mostly made up of live recordings” explains Luke. “Some were recorded at a performance at Wysing in front of a very small audience and some were recorded in a temporary studio I had setup during my residency.” The modular synthesizer, more than just the musical accessory of the moment, allows this type of in-the-moment responsive recording process, serving as the perfect conduit for his improvisational impulses. “There was a large emphasis on improvisation during the whole process,” he adds. “A lot of what has ended up on the record was originally recorded as first-takes or sketches of ideas.”

There is a spaciousness inherent in the record that immediately makes its presence felt, a large part of which comes from Wysing. “It was recorded in the winter, it was very cold and the place is quite isolated. It's in the middle of the countryside, there is no mobile phone reception there and limited internet access. While I was staying there, there were also six other artists in residence, so there were people around some of the time, but there was still a massive sense of distance, like we were far away from the world.”

“While I was recording the album I was listening to a lot of different things within spiritual jazz; Don Cherry's *Organic Music Society* and Alice Coltrane's *Journey in Satchidananda* were the two main records I was listening to. There was a bit of Terry Riley too and some Team Doyobi.” Add to this what sounds like a less Krautrock *Muzik Von Harmonia* and you can start to piece together a beautiful patchwork of sound that helped influence and shape this progressive work. It's not just past influences that are brought to bear on the new record, as Luke's recent remixes for everyone from  Nils Frahm and East India Youth to more dancefloor-led exponents such as Jon Hopkins and John Talabot proves.

The inherent wonk of Luke's boutique analogue synths and offbeat, polyrhythmic approach to percussion imbue his creations with an overwhelmingly warm, human and positively homemade character. “Sometimes there's a human presence in music, I'm trying to get that right.  It's hard to capture that with electronic music because you need to intervene so much more than you're expected to, but you have to in order to create a performance element.  There's something magical about good recordings of groups of people playing together, like in the FAME Studios recordings, or The Band record, or those spiritual jazz records… they are capturing moments.  And there's a kind of majesty in good electroacoustic recordings, things like Denis Smalley's *Pulses of Time* record. There's a level of mastery over technology where it stops being a technical exercise and becomes a human performance.  So I'm trying to get somewhere in-between, where I can capture a moment and forget about the technology.”

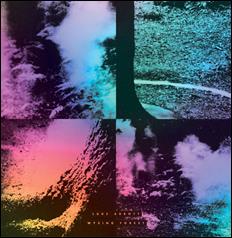
The finished article's 52 minute duration may have been chopped into 9 track-sized chunks but this is most definitely an album which is greater than the sum of its parts, designed to be listened to in one immersive go: edited and compiled after a period of after-the-act reflection into one rapturous movement. “*Wysing Forest*”, says Luke, “has a very particular arc to it and the tracks only really make sense in the context of that arc. It's a lot more centred than *Holkham Drones*, it has more deeply considered themes and motifs, and it's been constructed to produce a more focused and involving listening experience. Structuring the album to work as a whole was quite a challenge, almost more of a challenge than making the music but I think I've ended up with something that has a kind of internal logic. I hope that it's a record that people can keep discovering more layers to.”

As much an exploration into texture and tone as anything else, *Wysing Forest’*s layers do indeed reveal themselves gradually - beginning with the synaptic indulgence of album opener 'Two Degrees.' The Conrad Schnitzler-esque abstract explorations of 'Two Degrees' or the radiophonic foreboding of 'Snippet' that follows later could certainly stand alone as a synth-driven artistic exercise but they are soon imbued with a deep connection to the rest of the record as they merge imperceptibly into the elegiac pastorals of 'Amphis' and 'Amphis (reprise)'. This is where Luke's retro-futurist hardware takes on the handed-down-through-the-ages proportions of a rural community's much-loved church organ producing warped, submerged cries that scale Sigur Ros-esque divine heights with a majestic restraint.

'Free Migration' with its bubbling synths and quickening pace forms the subtle peak that marks the mid-point of the album alongside the fluttering glitches of 'Highrise'. Both tracks certainly approach *Holkham Drones* idiosyncratic danceability, but it is thanks to Luke's perfectly judged elegant transitional dynamics that neither piece – although as dancefloor-directed as anything he has ever done before – ever feels out of place amongst the new album's more mellow moments. The softer edges of 'Tree Spirit' and 'The Balance of Power' mark *Wysing Forest*'s denouement - their more melodic, less beat driven cores returning us to the left of centre territory found in the album's opening moments before aforementioned numbers 'Snippet' and 'Amphis (reprise)' bring us full circle. “There's a kind of symmetry to it, and there's an attempt to present the music as if it has a natural life cycle” Luke says “it comes from silence and it flourishes until it becomes organised and functional, then it begins to dismantle itself until it plateaus and eventually stops.”

And even though *Wysing Forest* does see a return of sorts to his electroacoustic roots, Luke's intuitive arrangements ensure that the full scope and variety of his electronic tastes are in no way at odds. As Luke says himself “I think music is like hand writing; whether you intend to or not, you have a natural and identifiable style that you can't escape from.” It may have come from an improvised selection of live recordings but that is not to say he has any intention of giving up on playing to a club audience; the adaptability of the album lends itself to two complementary touring strands. Ever since his earliest forays into the live performance arena the unique hedonistic freedom of the club dancefloor has provided an unusual – but inherently open-minded – sandbox testing ground for his improvisational impulses, and in this context the thudding heartbeat at the centre of *Wysing Forest* may readily be fleshed out into something of a more club-friendly danceable nature. It's not strictly dance music but rather, as Luke's always said, “Like the second-cousin of dance music. Once removed. You can dance to it if you want, but you don't have to.

Album Artwork:



 Track Listing:

Two Degrees / Amphis / Unfurling / Free Migration / Highrise / Tree Spirit / The Balance of Power / Snippet / Amphis (reprise)

Praise for Luke Abbott:

“It's always more fulfilling when something enters your radar through word of mouth. DIY by nature, Abbott is a wizard with noise.”

**Hayden Thorpe of Wild Beasts (talking to The Guardian)** “Electronic music that is at turns subtle and soothing, intense and challenging. You can trace its lineage back through Boards Of Canada to Aphex Twin and beyond to Eno. A richly rewarding experience” **Mojo ‘Electronic Album of the Month’**

“If Border Community were taking over the world very slowly, Luke Abbott would be their newest lieutenant.” **Pitchfork**

“Modern Driveway then, sees Abbott join an elite club of producers who are equally as rewarding in quiet bedroom contemplation as they are on a starry-eyed night out” **NME**

“Warm, intimate arpeggio-driven techno from this excellent producer” **Time Out** “*Holkham Drones* should stand side-by-side with the masterpieces that Kieran Hebden and Dan Snaith have put out this year.” **9/10 Drowned in Sound**

“The future is pulsing, with likes of Luke Abbott, releasing graceful, submerged, ambientish dance albums that are inspiring shifts on a tectonic level” **Sunday Times**

“By learning from the masters, Abbott informs his own work, then twists it with stunning results” **Mixmag**

“Luke Abbott has that rare gift of being able to produce something that sounds incredibly comforting with only the most cold and mechanical of tools” **8/10 The Line of Best Fit**