

WHAT IS LOVE

New love is a reel of magical snippets: kissing in the candy aisle of a convenience store, waking up first and thinking someone's shoulder is the prettiest thing, making out on your shitty couch in your shitty first apartment.

U.K. electronic artist and producer **Mura Masa** (Alex Crossan) explores stories of love and life beyond Cinderella-esque rhetoric with his stunning music videos and consistently fresh tunes.

"I wrote off electronic music as being entirely centered around dancing and mindlessness," Crossan says, "which wasn't something I could relate to growing up in a place with almost zero club culture."

By the time he was 15, electronic pop icons like James Blake proved to Crossan how malleable the genre is, and how it's a tool to weave stories deeper than getting wasted until sunrise.

Crossan's career has reached astonishing heights since his first album, *Soundtrack to a Death* (2014), and he has racked up hundreds of millions of online streams and collaborated with big names like A\$AP Rocky, NAO and Yoni Lappin.

His most prevalent theme is love — not the kind of love regurgitated in romantic comedies, but that which is swollen with real life yet kept behind the scenes in big media. We're talking queer, melanin-rich, fluid and constantly moving love.

"We're not going out of the way to patronize and wave those stories in people's faces," Crossan says. "It just happens to be at this moment in time that those are the stories that need telling and demand our attention. If the videos just told straight white love stories, then what are we doing with our art?"

Between the his stunning music videos and the wide array of melodies, Crossan spins relatable narratives that answer the age old electro pop question, "What is love?"

Mura Masa plays 9 pm Thursday, Aug. 30, at WOW Hall; tickets \$25 in advance.

— Kelsey Anne Rankin



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