

A partnership born from the UK skateboard circuit, where they bonded over a shared love of drum & bass, Rob Smith and Dave Snaddon are Dogger & Mindstate, the London-based duo delivering liquid drum & bass steeped in soul.

The pair met in 2008. Pro skateboarders living at opposite ends of the country (Smith hailing from Manchester and Snaddon from Lyme Regis), when they crossed paths at competitions, they'd spend their spare time between skating listening to each other's productions, sharing their latest discoveries, and wistfully talking about one day making music together.

A decade down the line, now fast friends, Smith and Snaddon got a flat together in London, with a spare room fit for a studio — years-long talk about making music together would finally come to fruition.

Both Dogger and Mindstate were musical from the off — Smith sat in front of a drum kit before he could walk and played in bands throughout his teens, and Snaddon grew up listening to hip hop, later going on to study music tech at college. Their musical landscapes have been shaped by where they grew up. For Dogger, Manchester's foreboding skies and frequent rain clouds mean, like so many Mancunian musicians that have come before him, he connects to music with a melancholy undertone, that's provocative and emotional. And for Mindstate, living on the coast has influenced the chilled, blissed-out and hypnotic aspect of his sound. But while Smith and Snaddon's paths may have varied sonically, the duo both got into DJing, and later producing, on discovering and falling in love with jungle. As such, their two tracks of influence collide, specifically in drum & bass legends Calibre and the late, great, Marcus Intalex. Beyond these two heroes, Smith's influences span David Lynch, Joy Division and Björk, and Snaddon names the likes of Bonobo, Gang Starr and The Pharcyde, as well as Alix Perez, whose label has now released their music — 2019's *Broken Home* EP with a second, *The Time Is Yours*, due imminently.

The pair like their music stripped back, allowing space for the vocal line to shine, and nowhere does this ring truer than on the title track of *Broken Home*. Across the four tracks, singer-songwriter Liam Bailey (Bailey laid down the vocal on Chase & Status' 2011 classic 'Blind Faith'), brings warmth and soul to Dogger & Mindstate's crisp and atmospheric production — with watery pads and bright chord progressions, it's liquid at its most emotive, and its most meditative.

2019 was a promising year for Dogger & Mindstate, not only for their production debut as a duo, but also for a handful of career-defining shows. Sardinia festival SUNANDBASS was a highlight, where Dogger was invited to play on a lineup curated by Calibre, and the duo played the Space Cadet pool party hosted by DRS. Liquid sounds great when you're dancing under the beating sun, but it hits good and different in the club, and the duo both name a show at Bristol club Thekla as being a night that truly went off. Dogger feels most at home in intimate, dark and grimy venues, but dreams of playing large-scale spaces like The Warehouse Project and Printworks. For Mindstate, having lived in Bristol for a long time, playing a show at community

arts space Trinity Centre felt particularly special, as well as east London venue Redon, where he was blown away hearing Bailey perform their tracks live for the first time.

There's no doubt that 2020 would have been an exciting one for Dogger & Mindstate. That is before, of course, a pandemic brought the world grinding to a halt. But the duo have used the time to focus on their production, both together and on their respective solo projects, the fruits of which will come out via Dogger's new imprint, Precinct. Besides working together, they're also working with MC DRS, and Manchester-based vocalist [K S R].

As Dogger & Mindstate prepare for *The Time Is Yours* EP to land, Snaddon reflects on this brilliant partnership. Granted, there's not so much time for skating anymore, the studio increasingly takes priority, and they wouldn't have it any other way.