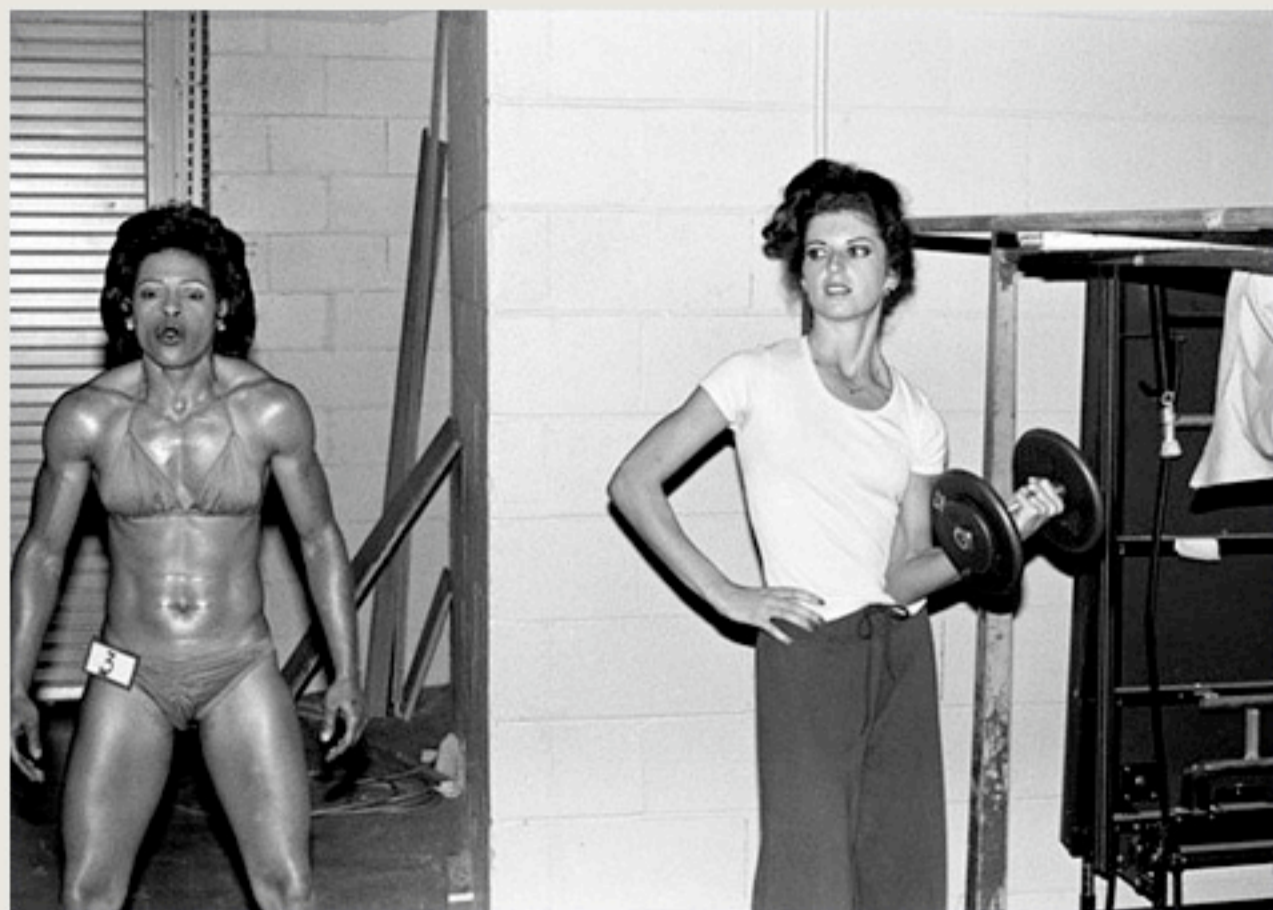


Tobias., *I Can't Fight The Feeling*

June 5, 2008

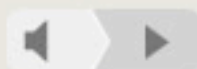


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After nearly 25 years in the music business, some artists find their skills and instincts dulled, often leading to inadvisable collaborations, obtuse vanity projects and waning popularity. Lucky for us, electronic veteran Tobias Freund's near 25 years of experience as Pink Eln and as half of NSI, Odd Machine and Sieg Über Die Sonne continually sharpened and honed his talents. Freund's uncompromising analog sound and solid, steady arrangements made "Street Knowledge" a near instant classic in 2006. Since then, well received remixes for Efdemin, Tampopo and Two Armadillos have only strengthened his cachet with a third generation of audiences. "I Can't Fight the Feeling," Freund's unexpected and stirring debut for Wagon Repair, finds the seasoned producer at the top of his game and offering a near perfect textbook for soulful minimal techno.



One thing I admire about Tobias is his ability to inject just enough inertia into repetitive beats to keep listeners begging for the next bar, and "I Can't Fight..." makes great use of this skill. The shuddering synth line of the title cut oscillates in place with a sultry vocal narrating the stasis, "I can't fight this feeling." Though he only adds a single note melody to the mix after a rhythm-revealing breakdown, the tune's entrancing simplicity is enough to keep dancers gyrating. A similar method drives "Go," whose nail-biting minor progression mutates cyclically as a vocal sample is twisted inside and out and metallic percussion shoves to the forefront. The EP also includes two "Beat Study" tracks, the first of which features Freund's NSI partner, Max Loderbauer (of Sun Electric fame). "One" absolutely sizzles, its analog textures rubbing together in tight patterns over a modest 808 beat and a faraway chant, "the rhythm takes you." "Two" is less intricate and almost mimics artfully sculpted feedback: its deep, grinding beat shifting almost imperceptibly while a fleeting counter rhythm fills in the cracks. On this EP, standing still is the new dancing.



Whereas previous tobias. releases showcased his housier side, "I Can't Fight the Feeling" embraces his hard edged techno side; so while instantly accessible, it strongly courts techno heads feeling left out in the cold in today's house driven climate. But Mr. Freund has lived and produced through many different popularity cycles and survived them all. Another stunning outlier (for now at least) is just par for the course.