



On their full-length 2014 debut *Voyage*, L.A. duo De Lux learned how to take their influences and create a sound all their own—a beyond-their-years synthesis of post-punk, disco, funk and of course synthesizer wizardry, drawing inspiration from the same combination of agitation and exhilaration that helped LCD Soundsystem and Talking Heads deliver some of the most danceable social commentary ever. And now that they've found their sound, De Lux are creating a story to go with it on their new album *Generation*: "All of these things that they put us through," sings co-founder and multi-instrumentalist Sean Guerin, "I'm writing it down / I'm writing it down."

They first started writing *Generation* in the kind of uncommitted instances that happen so rarely once a new band puts out its first album. Once *Voyage* was released, De Lux found themselves playing and interviewing and touring and remixing—"All fun!" says Sean—but they had to fight to find time to write. A random Instagram of work-in-progress song "It's A Combination" was the tipping point, when Sean and co-founder Isaac Franco realized they'd been rough-drafting for a year: "Let's finish it now," they decided, and that's the exact moment when *Generation* officially started.

They returned to the L.A. practice space where they wrote and recorded *Voyage*, this time with new instruments—like the little-known but sought-after synthesizer guitar beloved of King Crimson's Adrian Belew—and new inspirations, chief among them punk performance artist Karen Finley, whose 1987 debut album Sean discovered at a Seattle record store simply because it looked promising. Her infamously uncensored lyrics made him realize there was more he could sing about, too: "You admire the ambition behind her saying whatever she wants," he says.

So if *Generation* is a darker album than *Voyage*—and it's inherited plenty of the modern urban anxiety of David Byrne—that's because it's a fearlessly honest and candid album, too. In fact, call it a millennial documentary. In *Generation*'s eleven songs, De Lux chart the distance between childhood and adulthood, nostalgia and aspiration and dream and reality, all with unflinching autobiographical detail. (And with a secret nod to the Pokémon theme, too.) Says Sean: "When I write lyrics, I try and be as specific as possible. We think about if someone listens to us in 30 years: 'Oh, that's what was going on at that time.'"

The result is a sort of *Less Than Zero* for the post-Social Network era. Think of it as a nighttime freeway drive that starts with the propulsive "L.A. Threshold" and rides the borderline between feel-good rhythm and artfully sophisticated sentiment. "There's dark moments, but it's still fun," explains Sean. "The first album was just more innocent." There's new space in De Lux's sense of rhythm and groove, says Isaac, for Sean to say what he needs to say: "The song gives him the freedom to be himself."

And so *Generation* is an album about high highs, low lows and the vast space in between. "Center of L.U.B" is a roller-skate jam that starts with a Can-style guitar riff before spinning into an examination of one utility company employee's ennui—you knew this wasn't going to be a love song, right?—while "It's A Combination" is a brooding Italo disco track and unexpected piano piece "Conditions" is like Harry Nilsson or John Lennon suddenly transplanted to Rough Trade Records. Then there's the alternately hilarious and harrowing "Oh Man The Future"—a satirical reading on the shape of things to come, propelled by a bass-and-drum rhythm right off one of ESG's first EPs—to the desolate-yet-funky "When Your Life Feels Like A Loss," where De Lux dissect just what happens when "you think you're special/no, you're not special/you're just an average guy."

In other words, *Generation* isn't a departure. This is De Lux going deeper, not farther away, and the result is surely the most anthropologically daring dancefloor album of the year. That might seem difficult to pull off, but that's why they did it, explains Sean: "At some point we realized creativity is just limitless," he says. "You can do anything. There might be certain people who think, 'Oh, you can't do that.' That's when you say, 'Well—I'm doing it!'"

"The willingness to improvise, jam together and to actively skirt stagnation speaks to a boldness and maturity surprising for such a young band, and foretells a promising future." - *Huffington Post*

"Wowwowwow! That was my reaction the first time I heard De Lux." - *KCRW*

"If you only buy one post-disco album this week by a pair of displaced Los Angelino New Yorkers, make sure it's *Voyage*!" - *The Guardian*

"Joyrides atop a walloping disco beat and furious percussive guitars, headed somewhere between the Rapture, Chic, and Talking Heads, but with a cartoonish giddiness that takes me back to the heyday of Junior Senior and Scissor Sisters." - *Stereogum*

"Rising stars" - *DJ Mag*

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