

Dance Duo Anushka Showcases Latest U.K. Trends

By [Rebecca Hartmann](#)

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The duo performs at Solyanka on Friday in an event hosted by the British Council to showcase new U.K. music.

To round off a summer touring some of Europe's hottest locations including Amsterdam and Ibiza, British electronic dance duo Anushka is set to perform as one of three headliners at the "Selector Live Beefeater Sessions" at Moscow's Solyanka club on Friday. The event has been organized by the British Council and aims to introduce current British music genres to the Russian capital.

Anushka, which will represent electronic dance at the show, blends the sweet vocals of singer-songwriter Victoria Port with heavy electronic bass grooves, drawing inspiration from a wide variety of genres including jazz, hip-hop and grime. The result is a heady concoction of graceful vocals and a compulsively danceable rhythm.

The seemingly Russian name Anushka comes from a remake of a song called "Babooshka"

by British signer-songwriter Kate Bush that the group was working on. The track didn't work out, but the name stuck. "We just liked the way it sounded, and the ambiguity; we can take it anywhere we want," producer Max Wheeler, who makes the music for Anushka, told The Moscow Times.

Anushka exploded onto the dance scene with their first track "Yes Guess" after a meeting one night in Brighton organized by a mutual friend. "Max saw me singing and asked if I wanted to work on a few tracks. We just gelled in the studio, and it really worked," Port told The Moscow Times. Since then the duo has gone from strength to strength, releasing their debut album "Broken Circuit" with renowned label Brownswood in June this year.

Wheeler and Port have taken very different routes to making the music that they do now. While Wheeler arrived through a mixture of working in R&B, dubstep and grime, Port was raised on soul, jazz and hip-hop.

The various backgrounds are reflected in the music they create. Port's soulful voice and lyrics clearly reflect her influences from jazz artists such as Ella Fitzgerald and singer/rapper Lauryn Hill. Wheeler says his main influences are musicians such as British DJ and producer Joy Orbison and American techno-house artist Theo Parrish, who is renowned for his re-edits of soul, funk or old disco records.

The duo works together to create their music, with Port writing the lyrics and Wheeler in charge of production. "We both have ideas about everything. ... We just both want a great song," Wheeler said. Working together has not caused any friction between the pair, though. "We both voice our opinions, but we know how to compromise, it's all about finding a balance," Wheeler said.

Wheeler says that though they may have been out of the studio, they never stop writing. "We have been out of the studio for a while because we have just been so crazy busy touring, but we both have a real deep passion for music. We love finding new sounds."

It will be the first time that the duo will be performing in Russia. "When the opportunity came up to play in Moscow, we jumped at it. Russia has so much culture and history. We can't wait to get out there," Port said.

The event at Solyanka looks to be an exciting mixture of new artists from the British music scene. The other headliners are Boxcutter and Defcon.

Barry Lynn, better known as Boxcutter, is a musician originating from Northern Ireland. His music is often classified as dubstep with its bass-led, two-step structure, but he actually transcends many genres such as U.K. garage, intelligent dance music and "drill and bass," a faster version of drum and bass that often uses beats so fast they sound like a drill.

Boxcutter's protégé, Defcon, will also be headlining the event. Also from Northern Ireland, Defcon is the founder of the record label Reset Industries. He is gaining critical acclaim across Britain for his mixture of addictive hip-hop drum patterns with soul and funk samples, creating a sound that is rich in texture and original.

Anushka performs on Friday with Boxcutter and Defcon at club Solyanka. 11 Ulitsa Solyanka.

Metro Kitai-Gorod. Starts at 9 p.m. Entrance is 500 rubles (\$15) at the door. +7 495-221-7557.

Contact the author at artsreporter@imedia.ru

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