

Name: Joe Jeavons Golding

Date of Birth: 1989

Place of Birth: North London

Date of Interview: 16th November 2017

Interviewed by: Moss Bancroft

Duration: 00:23:13

(00:00:00) *So, for the record can you give us your name, today's date, your year of birth?*

I think it's the 16th November 2017. My name is Joe Jeavons Golding and I was born in 1989.

So, when and why did you first move to Milton Keynes?

I was born in North London and my parents moved down when I was ... must have been two, yes. Milton Keynes.

So, what did you think of growing up in Milton Keynes?

What did I think of growing up in Milton Keynes? It's...there's quite a lot to do. So yes, I enjoyed it: there was always football, I used to play football when I was growing up: so there was always football teams going around. It is quite a leafy area, quite a green area, so there is always something to do as a kid, running around, maybe...I lived in Wolverton growing up so there was always back alleys to run around in and things like that...like cruise around on your bike; so, yes, I enjoyed it, it was fun.

Where there any other places you'd like to go when you were a kid, other than play football.

I was quite an adventurous little kid; I liked to climb trees and things like that so any parkland and anything like that was always fun, yes.

So did you have any particularly good memories of when you was growing up, like was there a certain amount of venues maybe when you get into music, or...?

As I started getting a little bit older?

Yes.

Me ...the venue for me that was really like the main one, I suppose was Saks, so just where the bit...in Wolverton, as I say, growing up in Wolverton it was kind of like my home venue and it was, yes, it was a small capacity but upstairs and downstairs and it was where I got my first set and I was only 15 when I played in there. So I imagine a 15-year old going in where alcohol was being served and I always loved that. I was in my element! So, yes, it was amazing and for me that was the venue, I think, the one that stayed in my mind for a long time.

Although there was Empire, which was kind of like the big club which has shut down. Yes, I suppose it was Zaks and Empire because that's when I saw, like, a few acts at the Empire when I'd gone in there. It was good.

What was it like doing your first set at Zaks?

I don't know, it's like that typical question, 'What's it like ... what's the feeling like?' and I suppose it's euphoric at times when people are coming up to you and sort of, like, "Great set! Great Set! Yes - amazing!" the best feeling and which is why I carried it on sort of thirteen years later, I suppose.

But, em, yes ... no! Being under age in any kind of club environment is scary but at the same time it's just amazing, isn't it? It kind of set me up for being my sort of career in music I suppose, yes?

Well, is there anything you didn't really like about growing up in Milton Keynes?

There was always...well...things like music and that sort of stuff you was always having to go outside of Milton Keynes to go and see it so there was no real big concert venues where ... I mean, when Sanctuary shut down, for me, well right now if Sanctuary was still around it would be amazing because it's one of them big clubs that ... high capacity ... that, for me, right now if I would still be able to do 'Driven' in somewhere like that it would be amazing! But the going out of Milton Keynes and having to do them kind of sort of concerts and look to go to see big shows in Birmingham or whether it be London, sometimes they would be in Manchester, that was a bit of a pain and there was also no record shops here as well. So when I first started DJ'ing, I DJ'd on vinyl and then I had to go to Northampton or London to buy these records, or order it online and ... yes, I suppose going outside to do things, vinyl shopping or music concerts when I started getting a bit older, sort of 18, that was a pain!

So, with the kind of music you wanted to listen to was there not much available?

Well, no...well, yes, there was, there was and there was a lot of venues doing things at that time...it's just, at the time...I've always kind of liked quite 'meaty' music so when I was growing up I first started on UK Garage and then moved to Grime and Grime was always quite an aggressive genre of music, which it is not so much anymore because it was sort of tarred with the wrong brush, I suppose you would say.

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But there was nothing really going on in terms of venues and nowhere for doing anything big. I mean, you had The Craufurd, that had always done stuff...MK11 would back then...I can't remember what it was called back then...Kiln Farm Club was what it was called. They used to do a few things but...no, but for what...the music I used to like growing up, there was nothing around here, apart from Zaks.

Oh, right! Cool. So...in, [click] Cool! [laughter]. Can you tell us why you set up Driven here and its sort of connection with Unit 9 overall?

So, can you tell us about why you've set up Driven and its connection with Unit 9?

The reason I set up 'Driven', I came back from university, from London and I DJd myself, personally, so when I came back there was no one booking me, so I didn't actually set it up here. This is where I've taken it to the next level, Driven, that being. I set it up in my local pub; I used to run it as a day event, in The North Western, just on Stratford Road. I used to do day events and I'd done it for about three years and it got more and more popular so I was looking for the next step to sort of push it and take it to the next level. And then my friend Jamie, who I used to play football with, back in the day...he was the...he's the general manager here at Unit 9 and I contacted him and said, "Look! We're looking to grow my event are you able to help?" I came in here and as you can see by the pictures and stuff, it's a cool venue, with the graffiti away across the walls and high ceiling, which has kind of got a warehouse effect, which is kind of what I was after. It really helps with my brand and Unit 9 as well...it kind of...they fit well together.

So that's the reason why they're money earners and at the moment they're the only people in Milton Keynes with a venue doing this kind of music that we do, so House and Techno, I suppose you can call it, Rave...sort of dance music, late night

dance music events...is where Unit 9 are really specialising in and it's really like a niche in the market that they've kind of found and sort of took it upon themselves to kind of...to be the best in what they are. Yes.

Ok. Is there anything else that makes Unit 9 really good for Driven, apart from what you've mentioned?

Well, late night licence, the location...well, we started in Wolverton so the location of the venue is quite good because it's just round the corner from where we originally started. But in terms of...I mean, it's a cool venue...it just so happens it was on our doorstep. We got a bit lucky really I suppose and we...I was the first promoter and band to do a night out of here. So I think the venue didn't plan for it to be dance music orientated. It's not ...well, actually, it's not really dance music orientated but they do have a lot of dance events coming out of here.

But I think I kind of paved the way...Driven kind of paved the way to, should I say, to kind of find that niche for the venue. So I think they've kind of took it upon themselves to go down that route, rather than live music where other venues like The Craufurd Arms and MK11 are doing quite well anyway.

And then they sort of do different style of music.

Yes, yes, yes.

Do you think between Driven, Unit 9 and the other events that you're putting on are you building a kind of communion around that music?

Yes, there has always been...that's the thing with Milton Keynes, there has always been a nice community around the music, whether that be genre based events, whether that be House events, whether that be Grime, Garage...whatever? You name it! There is always a community there and it's just a shame that there is not enough venues, (independent venues I should say, really) that do things like Unit 9 and MK11 and Craufurd because if there was, then Milton Keynes would be able to thrive a little bit more because there's a good scene.

And what do you think of the state of the Milton Keynes music scene as it is now?

I think it's a good scene, I think it's thriving but I just think there's a lack of venues, so...well, we've got...this is a sort of medium to small size venue and there is a massive gap for a sort of a larger medium to large size. So if there's a 500 capacity venue

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in Milton Keynes, which there is not, unfortunately, it would allow bigger artists to come in and the scene would be able to flourish a bit more, in any genre, so, as I said before, there is about Sanctuary and Empire, they all shut down and I know Planet Ice are starting to do stuff but they are a big arena so they're talking like thousands and then for sort of smaller promoters like myself and others that run out of Unit 9 here you need to go to the next level. So at the moment we're like filling 300 people, 200 – 300 people at an event and so the next step I suppose would be your 500s and two rooms as well, so two rooms you can kind of put local DJs as well as big headline acts as well, so you kind of pull in a bigger...big crowd.

Do you think you know any reasons why the big events might shut down here?

No, is the answer. There is no reason why they would or they could be shut down. I mean, it's...there is a lot of corporate...I think Milton Keynes attracts kind of a lot of corporate businesses and stuff...Nando's for example? You've got ... what, five in one square mile. You've got the most Nando's in a square mile within the country. It's not such a bad thing I suppose if you like Nando's. But there is no reason why they shouldn't because as I say, it's a good music scene. There's enough people doing stuff in Milton Keynes for it to be able to work. It's just...yes...so if anyone's listening out there, get a music venue.

Have you found any barriers yourself to grow in the music scene ...might be driven from where you are now? Are there any barriers like, if you want to find the capacity, what's stopping you from doing that? Is there anything stopping you from, like, specifically?

Well, there is nothing stopping anyone, it is just there is nothing around. There have been a lot of places you have done things before so you had The Buszy; that was quite a nice little venue. They all just seem to get shut down and I don't know what it is. Maybe it's authorities or something along them lines. But a lot of venues get shut down and so therefore it leaves a bad taste in people's mouths to try and venture to do something. So that's why I kind of appreciate what Unit 9 are doing because they are trying to push what other people have failed to do as well and it's no fault of anyone else's; it's just...it seems that everyone is getting shut down by the council or the police...noise abatement and stuff.

So yes...I mean, there is no reason why they shouldn't be in if...it just needs someone to take that plunge, I suppose, because obviously there's a lot of money involved and things like that.

Apart from just venues size, is there anything else you'd like to see happen in the music scene, apart from just getting bigger venue size? Like diversity of music or...?

Yes...well, come more venues will come more events and different genres of music and things like that. So ... yes, obviously...there was always something to do in Milton Keynes I suppose like now. There was...a nice mix. so...but yes, if there was more venues there would be more things to do, the more variety of music to go to, unfortunately there's not...so it's just venues tend to get over-saturated because it's the same venue, so people just get bored with going to the same venues week in and week out. So ... yes, yes.

So, when you came back to Milton Keynes from London, how did the scene here compare from there?

Very different; the scene was very different. The music scene in London ...

Before you start on again...I would rephrase the question a bit, like...you say like, "When I came back from London," sort of thing...

Yes, when I came back from London to Milton Keynes, obviously the music scene in London is fine and it has been for years and years and years! So, in fact, when I came back the music scene was all right in Milton Keynes because there were more venues doing stuff and pushing things...even had 'Slug and Lettuce' that was doing events out of The Top, there; you had...even places like Revs, that was pushing nights as well. So, when I came...that's why...when I started...because I wasn't getting booked as a DJ I struggled to find venues because everyone else was doing something in there, so the scene was good when I first came back from London. It was just I didn't have space to push the event that I wanted to do because everyone else was doing something.

So, that's when I started in the back of the local pub there and when Unit 9, this opened, I was able to do something. But yes, to answer your question, going back to it, (I went off at a bit of a tangent there), the scene was completely different in London and the reason being just because it's got a base and it has done for ages, you've got massive clubs there, you've got massive venues there, renowned for doing stuff.

(00:15:00)

Yes, I mean, Milton Keynes has only got 50 now so there is plenty of time for it to be there. London has been going for years and years and years. You've got to start somewhere I suppose and it's not a bad place to start.

Well, so you said it's been going for 50 years, I mean, say another 50 years from now, like, what kind of changes in general do you want to see in Milton Keynes, aside from maybe just the music side? What other changes do you think there could be?

I would love for Milton Keynes to have a few more independent...like, everything. Really, living in London there is a lot of independent...even just little restaurants, little shops...I would love Milton Keynes to kind of take influence from that and push and let independents flourish...in a...because Milton Keynes is a cool place to live...yes, there is a lot to do and yes, apart from music, little shops and restaurants...I like to...so, restaurants would be good, rather than just your typical...your branches and your chains and stuff. That would be nice to see in Milton Keynes, to bring in...

So, you still see Milton Keynes as quite corporate?

Yes, is the answer; I do see Milton Keynes as corporate. There is...it's improving and places like Wolverton...so you've got quite a few little independents, so you've got ... just start, well, from restaurants we've got Marati's, a little pizza place next to a car wash place. This is pretty cool – you feel like you're abroad over there and then, as I was saying, you've got the Craufurd which is already doing pretty cool things. You've got the street food stuff they do there. They've just got a few little independent restaurants and stuff in Wolverton. I mean, if that was to kind of go a bit further out it would be good and people are sort of taking note. It kind of feels that the City Centre is now kind of like corporate and then you've got your outside places. Even in Bletchley you've got Pink Punters. Again, they've been going for ages and they're independent and they're huge now. It would just be nice to see a few more...less corporate things opening here there and everywhere.

So, do you think Milton Keynes has been a success...a failure, so far?

Well, it's done all right...it's still going! I enjoy living here. As I say, I lived in London for a while and I moved back, so there must have been a reason why I moved back. I suppose, it's where I call home, I suppose, which is always nice. I've got my family, I've got my friends here so, yes, it's...yes, if they could add a little few more things; not pushing so much corporate, it would be good.

Ok. So, it might seem a strange question but what does Milton Keynes mean to you? What's it all about?

Well, I must admit...whenever you say to anyone else "I live in Milton Keynes"; "Where's Milton Keynes?"; "It's just north of London!": it's not really just north of London, it's kind of 60 miles north of London, really. But I suppose Milton Keynes is home to me; I was born here, I was bred here. As I say, I've got my family and my friends here so I enjoy living here. You've got quite nice roads ... [laughter]. It's quite easy to get around; whenever you go somewhere else it's all one way systems. It's quite easy to get around so yes, ...what does Milton Keynes mean to me? I suppose it's, as I say, 'home'! It's just 'home' I suppose. We'll go there!

Do you think you'll stay here?

Well, I've stayed here 28 years now so yes! It's not that ... well, it's quite a nice place to...they've got good schools here so it would be quite a nice place to build a family and...so, yes...I think...I would say...yes, if someone questioned me, I would stay; I would stay.

Cool! You going to put any other questions?

(female voice)

I'm really happy. Are there any things you'd like to say about the night Driven or...?

(00:20:00)

Further discussion as to whether to proceed with any other questions.

Why do you think it's important setting on nights like Driven?

Why do I think it's important putting nights on like Driven? Well, the music I love, so, House and Techno music...massive scene across the UK and Milton Keynes; I think it deserves to bring in artists – so that's a massive artist scene actually! We had Zed Bias, who's a kind of pioneer in the dance scene and also put in some up and coming DJs like Jeff Butler, who is absolutely tearing up places like Ibiza and across the UK and the world and next to them we've got Art Work, who is a massive pioneer in the UK dance scene and has been in it for decades and I think Milton Keynes deserves it just to have...rather than travelling up to London or Manchester or Birmingham it just deserves somewhere to go to have a good night and that's why I am trying to push the nights that we are doing...and for my own self personally, for enjoyment to be honest with you, so that I don't have to go elsewhere, I can just go find somewhere on my doorstep and party the night away, so yes...that's the main reason I do it.

You said before about your first night DJ'ing, do you think you can provide things like that for people?

Well, yes, I'd like to. I mean, that's another reason why I do it – to see other people DJ'ing and flourishing in a club environment. So, I have a group of residents that play for me sort of month in month out but we also invite other sort of up and coming DJs in, sort of like friends as well, so we do a night dedicated to friends and residents, so we really don't book big headliners. We just bring in sort of people that maybe don't get their chance to play out a lot and we kind of give them that platform to do so and I mean, I've had nothing but good feedback from everyone so everyone that plays... "I loved it! I really loved it!" and it's just nice to see that you're able to give someone the opportunities. Yes, it's good!

So... 'cos I know you've got some footage that we might be able to use...

Yes, yes, yes.

How would you describe the vibes on a night here when it's all packed and full?

Well, it's funny you should say and use the word 'vibes' actually, 'cos our little slogan is 'Nothing but vibes'! So it's...it's a nice community feel so everyone knows everyone. There's never any issues or any trouble, it's always just a good feeling, everyone wants to dance and have a good time and that's kind of like, the angle we're going for.

I mean...yes, it's just good! I can't really...it's hard to explain without you really coming to an event but it's...you know, it's nothing but vibes, I suppose you could say! It sounds 'cheesy' but yes, it's...it's just a good band and community feel when people come and you see the same faces week in week...month in month out, I should say. It's nice here and I'm having a good time!

Right, that's a run! [clapping] Yes, sweet! You happy with everything?

Yes!

Cool! We can cut that!

Cheers!

END OF TAPE (00:23:13)