Sam Gellaitry views the world through palettes of vivid colour. A C minor scale becomes purple, plum and grape. C-sharp minor is cool and blue. Night time is best evoked in dark F minor reds and D minor induces rich forest green. His music is a journey through experience, circumstance and surroundings, told through hisimpressive, synesthesia-informed knowledge of different musical tones.

For him, songwriting and producing has always connected to a process of pairing and contrasting different tones – “using the notes to create different sensations – like tension or relief in your head.” In practice, this technique has seen him experiment with high definition club music, crisp hip hop production, dabs of orchestral instrumentation and more, via ‘Escapism’ – three EPs released in the mid to late 2010s that cemented him as one of the most varied and visually strong producers of his generation.

Born far away from key electronic music hubs like LA, Glasgow and London, Sam, now 23, grew up in Stirling – an old town in central Scotland that’s rich in medieval history and visually stunning views. Living here lead Sam’s older brother to happy hardcore – a kind of hard dance music born from the UK and Europe’s breakbeat and rave scenes – which in turn lead to Sam learning to produce.

YouTube granted unfettered access to the world’s electronic scenes, with the array of sounds pushing Sam to pick up production in his early teens. He dove into Daft Punk’s robotic space realm where looped up disco samples reigned supreme and LA producers Samiyam and Flying Lotus were early inspirations. But no matter the genre, one thing remained constant: the idea that music can take your imagination on a voyage through colour, place and sound, via combinations of notes.

His first breakthrough song – 2014 single “powder” – bridged the gap between hip-hop and electronica, treading delicately as it glitched between maxi-and-minimalism. It sat in his favourite key too, with its instrumentation diving between hues of blue and green. “It reminds me of being a hyper sixteen year old making music,” he says today. The track took off and sent Sam’s music on a journey, taking him from an unknown beatmaker to a Soulection – and later, XL Recordings – signee.

‘Escapism’ released in 2015, with ‘Escapism II’ (2016) and ‘Escapism III’ (2017) coming after. The series showcased a young producer picking and choosing his way through a lavish buffet of sound and picked up nods from many of his peers in the electronic scene, like Kaytranada and Flume.

Sam has always used instruments to convey voices – high pitched flute sounds to evoke falsetto sounds and female vocals, for example, or top lines made from melodics. But after taking a break for a few years since the release of ‘Escapism III’, he decided the time was right to start singing on his own music. You can hear this for the first time on his latest EP ‘IV’. Produced, written, vocalised, mixed and mastered by Sam, its name is a subtle nod to ‘Escapism’ trilogy and the work he’s released so far. More literally, it’s also called ‘IV’ because it’s a collection of four songs and four emotions.

“Me singing is just another instrument that I can use. I’m at an age now where I feel ready to talk and tell people what I’ve experienced in life. It’s perfect timing in that sense,” he says.

“I’ve done three EPs. I’m at the point now where I’m like – I want all the smoke. Now I’m comfortable singing on my songs, I want to go back to each point in my musical journey and tap into it. I’m using the voice as my anchor, then tapping into other sonics that have influenced me.”

This new era begins on ‘IV’ with “New Dawn” – a bright track of highly saturated blues and greens signaling Sam’s rebirth. “It’s the fullness of everything. On show and full blast,” he explains.

The EP then cruises along from the beginning of one day to the end of another, twisting and turning as it journeys through luscious soundscapes, electro disco, LA funk, open air ambience and a whole load more, all underpinned by Sam’s commanding vocal.

Second track “Duo” hones in on the French house music Sam discovered in his early teens, while “Games” is awash with euphoric yet mellow post dub-step production, moving into darker territory. “The song at the start has its own drop, then there’s a second drop after that. It’s about the false sense of security with someone,” says Sam about the structure of the latter. By the time EP closing track “Assumptions” comes around, the listener is firmly placed in the party – “it’s that moment when you’re saying things that aren’t realistic because you’re on a high,” Sam explains. It’s pure euphoria.

Coming alongside this new phase of Sam’s career is an embrace of both his Scottish heritage and his unparalleled and unadulterated passion for creativity. He’s getting a tartan made up which features the prominent colours he sees in music – the blues, the greens, and everything between. The idea is to feature the tartan on kilts and capes and clothes released via Sam’s new Viewfinder label – a creative venture unifying his love of music (he’s just signed his first artist), photography and fashion.

Ultimately, this next phase of Sam’s career comes back to why he does it all in the first place. He loves creating and playing around with different colours. It’s like a form of magic: a source of respite, release and happiness. “I want all my work to paint a joyful image of the process of creation,” he explains. As he prepares to ready his debut album, ‘IV’ is the next step on Sam Gellaitry’s colourful journey.