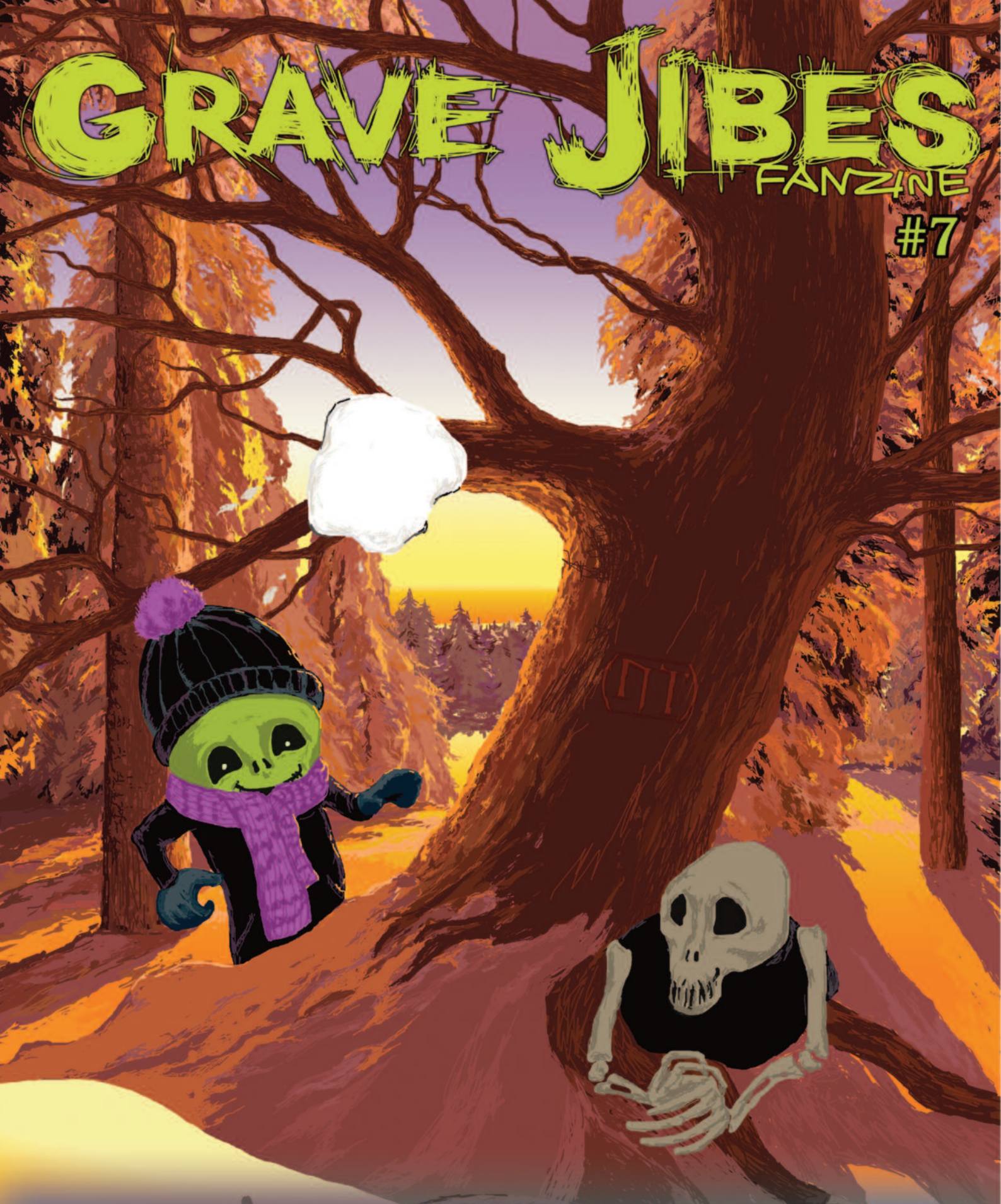


GRAVE JIBES

FANZINE

#7



Geisterfahrer

Exces Nocturne

Charles de Goal

Guerre Froide

Thelema

Katzenjammer Kabarett

Ligne D'hiver

Brett Smiley

Echoes of Silence & In The Night Time

Varsovie

and many more ...

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Radio 88 Ga Ga

Goth, Indie, Oldies, Wave, Deep

&

GRAVE JIBES
FANZINE



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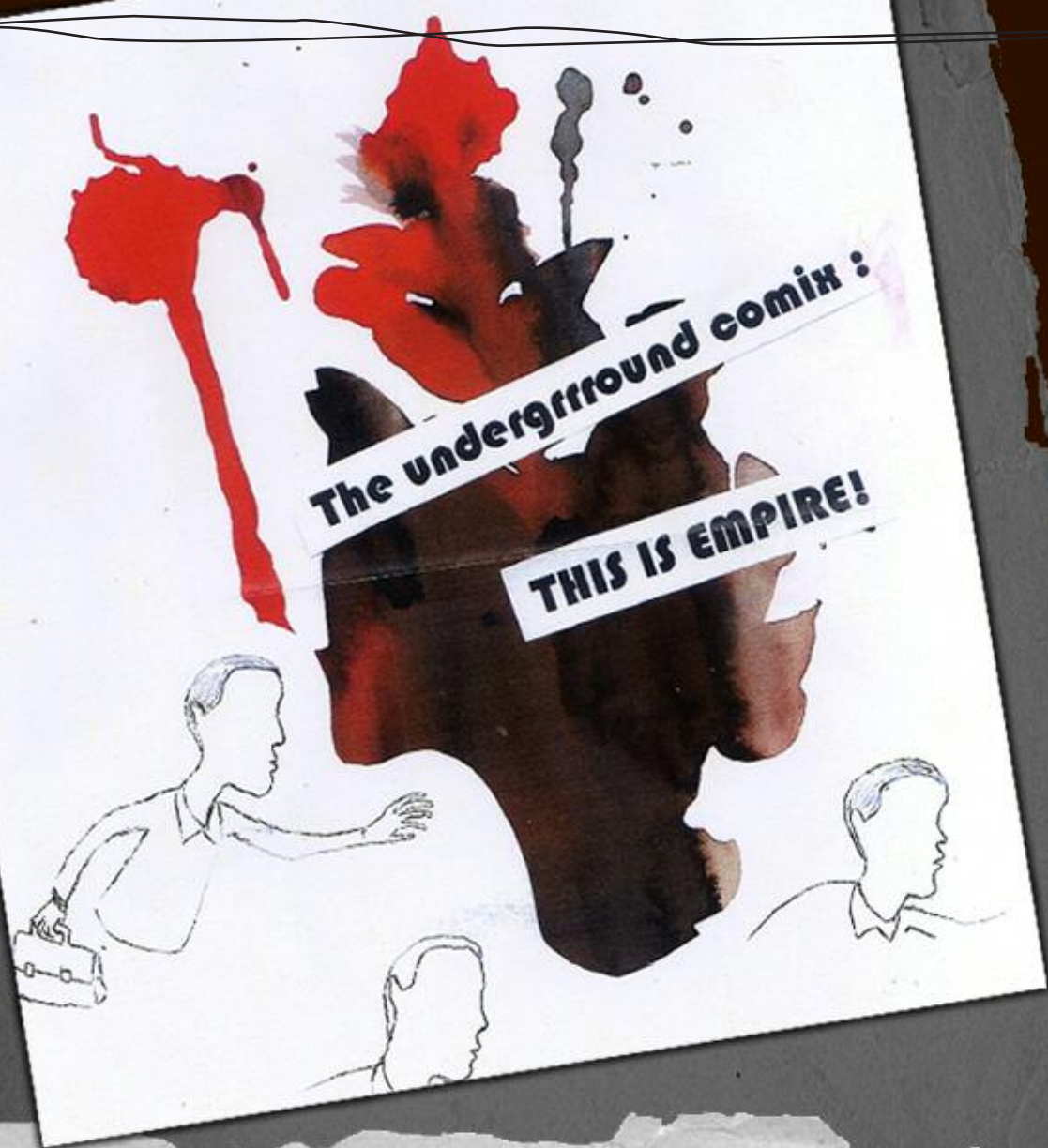
Every second Thursday of month
at 12.00 P.M. & 9.00 P.M. (MSK, GMT+3)

on

<http://www.radio88gaga.ru/>



R.I.P.



“The Undergrrround Comix: THIS IS EMPIRE!” by LAYR – promo advert

I saw a man mutating to the body of an insect
Painfully coming across the corridor of my house.
Incapable of moving. I decided to let him approach me
Without knowing what was going to happen to me...
(LAYR “The Undergrrround Comix: THIS IS EMPIRE!” issue one)

What do we know about the Underground? Of course we may assume that it is a group of different kinds of Art and nothing else. But still, there always was something indefinable that unified the “dissidents” and helped them to find each other in the crowd even without such “hints” as a look. This unifying factor is belonging to one culture. The Underground culture.

“The Undergrrround Comix: THIS IS EMPIRE!” by the French artist who calls himself «L’Homme Aux Yeux Rouges» is a great example of the underground Art which will remind you what the real underground culture is.

The first issue is the first readers’ acquaintance with the main comix’s character, Harrrold and the first trip through his feelings. Almost everything is mixed altogether on the pages of this comix with minimal drawings and surreal stories: fragile characters, love, desperation, searching for one’s own place in this world, dada, surrealism, pop art, post-punk, batcave... and many more. It’s as underground as the Art should be. There can be millions of interpretations of it, as well as of any Art can be. And it’s as individual as any Art is.

The Undergrrround Comix: THIS IS EMPIRE! does invite you to visit the world of the Underground culture - captivating and extremely vivid.

Interview with l'homme aux yeux rouges.

<http://www.myspace.com/readmeagain>

Nattsol: Hello, LAYR. The first issue of your comix is finally out, - could you represent the result?

LAYR: Hi! Yeah "this is empire!" comix is finally out, it's a kind of graphic novel with Harrrold an impulsive anti-hero who is lost between fantasies and daily life.

It's dark, it's poetic... all is mixed with short slogans, dirty colors, tiny frames... etc.

At first, it was a mean of waking me up, to become strong and try to get over the sleeping days. I'm not drawing a lot, and this kind of exercise really helps me to find a dynamic. It's my own war against myself haha.

Nattsol: Who are the comix's characters, - Harrrold, Helen, the Mother...? What can you say about them?

LAYR: In the first issue, we can mainly follow the misadventures of Harrrold. He is the anti-hero, he is fragile, he is... tragic (?) in his mind.

Helen is the seductive girl, the kind of inaccessible girl you would like to follow. She's just a contained... and the mother I like to name her the vampire mother, because she knows that she brings her son into her problems.

In the next issues you will meet other characters like the powder man face,

crow's, the father...

Nattsol: Why do you call your Harrrold an anti-hero? What makes him to be this kind of character?

LAYR: Harrrold is just completely lost, that's the reason. He has a green/red flash on his face, he wants to fight, but from what you can see on him, he is just lost.

Nattsol: Is Harrrold going to be the only central character of the comix?

LAYR: For the moment, the characters are not at the first plan of the comix and they're merely around Harrrold because I'm emotionally linked to this character. I'm not opposed to the idea to focus certain issue on different characters but I've planned nothing for the moment. "This is Empire!" is still something unexpected, I don't know what will happen in 2 episodes, now it's still Harrrold, he's the one who is beaten and I identify myself a lot through him.

Nattsol: Can you call some things which exactly CAN'T be found in your comix?

LAYR: Commercials?!

Nattsol: You did the first issue very (or even extremely) short. Are you going to

improve it for the future?

LAYR: I recognize that some people told me the same thing. The format is short, but it's still a piece of collection. It's very visual and very instinctive. Of course, I would like to make a longer format, but for the moment it's just a few ideas, I would like to make graphic performance of it, colored and dirty, and in a close future to contact some publishers to propose the best of the episodes: a long format of "This is Empire!"

But currently, I've not a lot of money, not a lot of contacts, I knock my comix up in my flat, everything is made in emergency, photocopies cost me a lot and I work very hard on the distribution of this object.

For the next issues, I will make the same presentation with words that hurt and I'll take great care over graphism.

Nattsol: Do you think your comix has some relatives in the world of Art?

LAYR: I don't know. Maybe one day my damaged characters would become fashion thanks to the upper class.

Nattsol: Now tell, please, how and where people can get your comix.

LAYR: The distribution of the first issue wasn't organized (I should solve this) it was distributed in some bookstores in Paris and in Canada.

For the second I'm not going to do a big

distribution, for the moment I can't afford the printing.

Boys and girls you could order "This is empire!" issue 2 on www.myspace.com/readmeagain in February.

Afterwards I'll create an official website.

Nattsol: Instead of paragraph "about author" could you drop a few words about your personality and activity?

LAYR: I'm someone who dreads a lot of things and the daily life.

I'm a melancholic and impulsive guy with an unhealthy life. I take a lot of things out of this to write, draw and compose, my main activity remains drawing. There is the comix that I would like to make evolved on 5-6 issues in the following year then, there will be a second exhibition quite theatrical with many alarm clocks hung, antiheroes, samples. It's an amazing exhibition that I wish to organize in the best conditions as possible.

Nattsol: Thanks for the interview! Hope we'll have a new conversation when the next issue of comix is out. And now your final words.

LAYR: Just have a look sometimes, new material is coming. ;-)

*Questions: Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*

Interview with Verboten Kussen



ID:

Name: Verboten Kussen

Location: Firenze, Italy

Time: 2005-?

Close to: post-punk, goth

Current Label: La Cerchiamo

<http://www.myspace.com/verbotenkssen>

Though the Italian post-punk/goth band Verboten Kussen is young and little-known, the guys certainly know what they do and what they want. With just one EP, the band already got its recognizable style, which comes from their “punk gothique” influences, and also from the individual understanding of the Art and Italian approach to the music. So what is this “band-hermit” like? Now the musicians of Verboten Kussen will tell us its story themselves.

G: Guido

C: Camilla

L: Lapide RIP (Riccardo)

Nattsol: Greetings! Let’s start from the beginning. How have you become involved in the music and in the Art itself? And what are your sources of inspiration in it?

G: My family has always induced me since I was a child to read and listen to all kinds of music, basically to look at the world with an artistic and spiritual glimpse. When I was in my teens I also met people who allowed me to grow culturally.

Anyway, I do think that our sources of artistic inspiration

are different ones: for us playing means basically to give a meaning to our time, we play because we are scared to just sit while our lives are passing by without having felt something true.

C: Uhm... I have always listened to music since I was born. My dad used to play guitar when he was young, loving the Beatles, Velvet Underground, Dire Straits and stuff, so I always had these albums around, and I grew up with ‘em. Then I discovered punk rock that changed my whole life

(thanks). I also love genuine pop music (not the crappy Mtv stuff, right?), and I try to bring this touch in VK tunes the more I can with my instrument, drums.. Sometimes the others two like it, sometimes not, ahah.

Nattsol: Verboten Küssen was born in 2005 as duo of Guido and Riccardo. What were the circumstances it happened under? What was the project you initially wanted to create? Is it far from what you've managed to achieve?

G: Riccardo has always lived in Florence while I was born and I have been living in the north -east of Italy (Pordenone) until my 20es. We know each other because at that time her girlfriend attended my school of art. In that period I used to play with a group called 'Rigor Mortis' and Riccardo, when he came to Pordenone, used to play some songs with us.

Some years later I decided to move to Florence with my girlfriend and Riccardo was one of the only persons I knew there.

Since the very beginning we decided to continue the project I had in Pordenone, so we started to play immediately only with guitar, bass and voice. It was really hard as song did not have a define structure and were constantly evolving!

On the other hand I was pretty sure that such rehearsals would have been important to give to our musical taste the possibility to meet and grow together.

L: We first met in the year 2001 when I was travelling to Pordenone and I brought guitar with me, some friends of mine brought me by chance to the place where Guido and

this former band 'Rigor Mortis' were playing . We played together even if I did not know the lyrics/songs at that time, but while playing I succeeded in following Guido very well and at the same time to enjoy myself.

We used to dream about a band formed by me at the guitar and Guido at bass/voice, but we never thought it would have been possible due to the distance between us. Then, in the year 2005 I was informed of Guido's moving to Florence and so since the very beginning our collaboration started.

The idea was not clearly defined at the beginning, we only knew that we would have based our sound on goth style with experimentations...

Guido perfectly knew my passion for other music genres as well as I knew of all the influences he has in his sound. This is why we were perfectly aware that our music and our songs would have changed throughout time to become the songs we now listen to.

Nattsol: What was that band, "Rigor Mortis"? All I can recall named so is an old Thrash metal band...

G: Yes, I discovered lately that the name was already in use. In my case it was a group composed of me at vocals and bass and a guy named Giovanni Prosdocimo at the drum machine that it was by the way played live without being set! The guitarist changed at every concert, we often borrowed it from other friends' bands that were playing the same night. The aim was to play loud and noisily... we were awful!



Nattsol: The band's name, "Verboten Kussen", - what does it mean? Could you tell its history?

C: It's my fault! Once at a friend's home I listened to a German "a cappella" band who had a song with this name: "küssen verboten". I loved it, and also the song, so when came the question for a band name, I got it. It means "kissing forbidden" and I like it cause in German it sound so nasty!

L: Verboten Küssen comes from the German and means



wanted to have a real instrument... moreover, we were not part of the university/school circuits where it is easier to find people with fresh ideas and time to try to carry them out. We had to find elsewhere among old friendships and guess what? Camilla is a friend of the former girlfriend from Riccardo and she has been advised by her. Funny thing!

L: The goth scene in Florence, people who like to attend concerts and listen to dark wave goth music, are still present, but we are missing events belonging to these genres as well as for other alternatives ones, to be organized.

I think that my city has its musical roots in the 80's and that they have been the starting point of a genre that expanded itself in the years.

It took us 2 years to find a new drummer, and so we played our songs during this period without a serious and capable drummer.

It is very stressing and hard to find out musicians in Italy as well as to find a job....when you are not looking for anyone you find everyone...on the contrary you cannot find anyone...

One day Guido called me saying that we were going to try a new girl as drummer he found out; since that night I immediately realized that she was the one for us in spite of our different musical tastes.

Nattsol: Then it began to go pretty fast, when you became a real band, as it can be noted. Please, tell me what were the first steps you did then, like maybe having live shows, some important support or something like that.

G: When Camilla joined us we gave ourselves deadlines: to reorder all songs and then when we reach a certain and sufficient number of them, to start to prepare the recording and after same time to play live.

We had the possibility after a few time to play in a club

forbidden kisses or kisses forbidden. At the beginning me, Guido and our former drummer were called Soleile Chimique that comes from the French and means chemical sun.

Nattsol: What's the atmosphere about "goth" music in your city? It took you two years to complete the line-up with Camilla on drums... is that so hard there? And how have you managed to get her?

G: Florence was in the 80's the main gothic city in Italy. Fundamental groups for our growth such as Litfiba, Neon and Diaframma all grew up and lived between the Old Bridge and Santa Croce! Goth movement is slightly decreased since that time but is it still alive only a little bit bored... There are still new interesting groups such as Downward Design Research and Video Diva (both great friends of us)so someone who carries out new projects, a kind of new Florentine scene!

When we started looking for a drummer, first of all we excluded the use of drum-machine since we always

inside the Florentine former mental hospital and that was a pretty cool one!

Since that one we had the possibility to play in different Tuscan as well as north Italian clubs/events and we also had different radio interviews.

We are basically alone without the support of important bands and/or music agencies so try to play live is a little bit hard...this is why all concerts we succeeded in playing in, have been a great satisfaction for us!

All the things we try to create are done with our own efforts only, as well as the help and important support of fans, friends and our families!

L: Our first step was to take back the songs me and Guido composed between the years 2005/2007 and rearrange them together with Camilla. The second step was to record them in our first EP and then to find out clubs and events where we could perform.

Nattsol: And 2008, the year you recorded your first EP "E'un Attimo". How had it happened? Could you represent the record itself and the songs of it? Why did it take so long to release it?

C: We had almost 11 songs ready, but we wanted to make a demo before a real album. We took the most important

for us, the very first beginning of VK and put 'em in it. It took so long for a very simple reason... no money!

G: Recording the EP was another deadline we gave ourselves: it seems nonsense to us to spend so much time playing our songs without fixing them concretely. So that, after having earned the necessary money to do that, we decided to give a more professional structure to our work.

The title of the EP comes from Guido Gozzano's readings, a poet from the 900's Twilight Movement.

The recording itself was pretty short and at the same time, funny and really satiscfactory: in 2 nights we already had the songs structure ready, in one afternoon we recorded the vocal part and another couple of days to mix everything.

The delay is partly due to our inexperience with the burocratic part and mastering in general, as well as for the reduced budget...

Nattsol: What was the public reaction on "E'un Attimo"?

C: Uhm... good? Positive? Yeah... whatever.

L: I think a good reaction, for what I can listen to people's comments and what I can read from magazines. Someone is saying that we have to improve, someone that we

are depressing (hahaha) but I do think that also big musicians have such reactions from public.

G: Well, I think that at the present time the world did not change for such a record publishing!

I had big satisfactions thanks to internet: our work is well appreciated in Spain and in Germany where Betto the dj of Radio Corax has positively reviewed 'Una Discesa nel Buio' and had played it in his program.

In Italy it is harder, many people appreciate our work making good comparisons; some right critic.. but at the end I cannot succeed in having a precise idea of it.

Nattsol: In my review of “E’un Attimo” I described your sound as “Bauhaus meets Bohemien”. What’s your opinion about this description?

G: We are very pleased of it! Bauhaus is one of our favourite bands and the Bohemien atmospheres has always fascinated us! Even better, not only we are very pleased of it but we are really exalted!

When we play or we are involved in our group, we succeed in estranging ourselves from our hard reality made of routine, lot of work and terrible realism and pragmatism. We succeed in living in a kind of collateral world, more dreamy but also a more real one.

Nattsol: You sing in Italian only though you know Eng-

lish quite well. What’s the meaning and importance for you in expressing yourself in native language?

L: We started with the idea of the Italian language even if I was pretty fascinated also from the English one, in order to make our song comprehensible also in foreign countries.

However, we like puns and the complicated grammar structure that comes from Italian poetry. Ahhh, I am not the good one in this issue, Guido is the one in the literally field.

C: I hate Italian singing. I want to specificate that the choice to sing in Italian is for the reason that, in this band, we have a dictatorship. Help me.

G: (Ahhahah! I express myself good in English simply because my girlfriend helps me to translate ...).

Well, English for sure is the musical language among the others and the most comprehensible one but it is not my native language!

When I write I need to be really precise in the words to choose and singing in a foreign language has this lack for me as well as I want the public to understand all the lyrics and songs immediately.

Nevertheless our new goal with the third EP will be to start singing also in French and English... this will be the future since now we are going to record the second one!



Nattsol: You seem pretty close to the poetry. So what are your poetic preferences? In authors and genres.

G: Concerning literature I am really omnivore: I read everything.....my first true love was Edgar Allan Poe, then, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, most of symbolists' poetry, Oscar Wilde, Shakespeare, french existentialists as Sartre and Camus, Italian twilight poets such as Guido Gozzano or other great Italian poets as Foscolo or Leopardi, really fascinated me... my love for the French language comes paradoxically from the reading of "Dead Souls" from Gogol. I also really appreciate their Russian writers such as Bulgakov and Tolstoj and this is not considering all the political readings...

Nattsol: "Broken" rhythms, Italian language, curt and cold, but at the same time, passionate vocals... is there a kind of "label" thing for the band? What makes Verboten Kussen itself?

G: This question is really hard for me!

There are for sure recognizable features in our works: the research for simple, direct sometimes schizophrenic, sometimes aching and angry music structures.

Basically I think that the most real thing is at the end the urgency and the strong will to communicate our feelings, our sensations, our points of views of the world, of our own atrocities and our private abysses. The honesty to translate all these feelings and sensations into a song and to play it with as much as strength and enthusiasm we can.

We are very instinctive, we don't plan concept albums and/or sophisticated musical structures; we simply play and write what we are.

I think that these 5 songs can give a partial idea of our musical skills, our basic elements are already presented here, such as melody minimalism, importance of lyrics, the will to use sometimes dirty sounds... but I am strongly convinced that with the new EP our final musical direction will be defined, because it will be much more sung, played, impelled by collaborations and much more experienced than "E' Un Attimo".

Well, we could say that "E' un Attimo" is a good album mainly because of this simplicity and also for its being so direct. These are really features I want to maintain!

Nattsol: In your myspace blog I found your "Dodicianimorto" Live Studio EP, which I found sounding like a kind of "studio bootleg". Could you tell about it? Is it that "new EP which's going to be released by the end of winter 2009", or it's a kind of "preview"?

G: These are actually short rehearsals of new songs that we are going to record in Feb 2010. Quick and amateur





recordings that we decided to publish for our fans previously advising them. Then, we decided to keep the songs because we discovered that we really like the direction these ones take.

L: Ya, they are a preview for our fans, after we finished the first EP we kept on working on new songs and we refined the songs we excluded from it. While working on them we decided to record them roughly and quickly. We hope to finish real recordings by March 2010.

Nattsol: Do you have some favourite VK songs?

L: I like for sure “Una Discesa nel Buio”, “Notte Fuoco Oriente”, “Canzone della mia morte”

C: Absolutely! I like the punk ones, fast and rough (surely cause I have more fun playing them): Sbagliato!, Una discesa nel buio in primes!

G: The best one for me is “Colori” I think it has really effective lyrics...and this means a lot to me, moreover I really enjoy myself when playing it on stage...

Nattsol: And what is “Colori” about? It’s the only song kept without rhythmical changes for the EP, so that makes a sense of something unusual for “Verboten Kussen”.

G: Colori ("colors" in english) really takes realistically a stand on everyone’s own lacks; the same lacks that at the beginning were denied from the speaker, in the refrain are underlined so I find myself singing: “and now you discovered me? so what stays with you now? only dust of nothing...”.

I find myself sometimes cradled by very slow and contemplative rhythms; indeed in our next works there will be more calm songs...It is part of my character and of my dreams. We are often overwhelmed by rage and/or by the will to have fun, to dance or to run until you have no more breath,; but there are rare moments in which you need more dilated spaces, you think about the colors that have sounds, you close your eyes and you let that a small, smooth drop creates a crater inside yourself.

Nattsol: What does the band plan for the future?

G: Gigs, recordings, gigs, to make ourselves known, gigs, hope, gigs...

C: Make a lot of gigs and a llllot of money. Then will come the boys (girls for G e R, of course), the fame, and...you know.

L: We want to go on this way, to write music, to write emotions and sounds always much more particulars ones.

Nattsol: Personally I find Verboten Kussen “the most unknown Italian band I’ve ever known”. And it indeed is

so though your music deserves to be more known. As I see, you don't contact with "Roman scene" and you aren't known worldwide. Why is it so?

C: Buh... I do not know...

G: Well, first of all I think it is because of our behavior: we did not have a constructive attitude yet, we wait as if things happen by themselves...this is not good at all, but the worst thing is the Italian musical business. Clubs really invest little money and space on new bands with their own songs, institutions do not support the development of underground Italian music as for examples nations like France, Spain and Scandinavia in general do. Here on the contrary they try to repress minority music gatherings. Since a couple of years there is a sort of repression against night lives: clubs close earlier (more or less around 2 o'clock)...Let's say that it is not exactly the best place to grow up...

As for the Roman scene, we really know few people there, we know that there are really interesting groups such as Christabel Dreams that I saw on stage and Simon Dreams in Violet as well as interesting neo folk scene. In spite of all this there is not very a tight connection, maybe we are not in the position to create them or maybe we did not have the opportunity yet... for sure this EP is only the beginning for us, we do really want that as much people as possible could know our works, we would like to share our sensations and our vision of the world in a more and more effective way. We would like to ground our work on constance and on improvements... thing are already changing now...

Nattsol: If you had the opportunity to visit a gig of one band, no matter when it happened, is it active or not and so on, - which band would you like to see live?

G: After having seen bands such as The Cure and Bauhaus, ours Vinicio Capossela and Giorgio Canali (a living myth) I would like to have seen the Joy Division and the French Lucie Cries. They would have been both 2 unforgettable concerts, I am sure of it!

C: Bloody hell, how can I decide... Ok, ABBA! Just kidding. Blondie, absolutely.

L: Uhmhhh I would have to think too much about it and I could not give you a reply, maybe I listen to too many groups and music genres.

Nattsol: For now, do you have any particular purposes? Like being signed by a particular label, play at a particular event or so on?

G: We are sending our material to different labels and we are pretty sure that at the end we will have a positive feedback! As for concerts we are trying to pass Italia



Wave selections that is a very huge festival here in Italy. Moreover, concerning live concerts I do have a dream, but I will tell you when it is not a dream anymore....

Nattsol: Thanks for the interview, guys; I really hope we'll have reasons to collaborate again in spring 2010! And the final words are yours.

G: Thanks to you Nattsol! It was a great pleasure for us as well and at the same time a really intense inner examination. This interview really gave us the opportunity to better focalize the point in which we are with our project!

*Questions: Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*



Verboten Kussen – “E Un Attimo” EP review

Oh, these Italians. Apart from the “Roman scene” and “In The Night Time Records” universe, in the viewpoint of foreigner the situation with post-punk music in this country now may seem quite close to the situation in France in the 80's. I.e. even with internet and the means of communication, there's no wave, like coldwave or goth, which could represent the scene even in an illusively unified way. So there are many hidden musical pearls in this country, and Verboten Kussen from Firenze seems to be one of them.

If the transmigration of souls theory would have been applied to musical bands, it could've been assumed that Verboten Kussen got the soul of the early Bauhaus. No, it doesn't seem that they try to copy the Bauhaus style, not at all. Verboten Kussen is the child of its time and its country, but it has the same tendencies as Bauhaus had. Artistic approach, which is also reflected in love to German art movements of the beginning of the XX century (which turns obvious if only to have a look at the “E Un Attimo” cover) and the desire for making post-punk with unconventional avant-garde approach. In common, the EP has left quite contradictory opinion, and let's start with the positive side, which is the EP's contents. There're five songs, four of which are very moody and reflect themselves from very different sides. The sound and general mood could be described as “Bauhaus meets Bohemien” but it's not as obvious as it might seem. The song struc-

tures are fragile and full of surprises, which can offer almost everything: from thoughtful gothic melody to tense expressionist - goth hit. For the negative side, it is work with the sound itself. It is done quite clumsy and it's obvious that the band should get more skills to produce more careful work with its sound and to expose all the songs' potential which is more than just promising. Actually, if we accept pretty minimal sound (mostly reflected in very poor drum lines) as the band's desired one, this sound approach will remain the only aspect which really can harm the record. It is the “culprit” for why “Colori”, the only EP song without these mentioned “label” rhythmical changes sounds more boring than atmospheric, the rhythmical changes of “Di sangue al tuo fiancoe” seem very artificial and not fluid and so on.

But even apart from it, this EP really has objects for admiration in its music. Foremost it sounds fresh and powerful. And the songs like “Una Discea Nel Buio” really are treasures for every listener, goth compilation or DJ set. So, generally, this EP can be called one of the most promising releases of the recent time, because if the band develops its potential in the correct way it can become one of the bands which determine the post punk music in the new century. And even though Verboten Kussen is much more than in one step from it, why should it be impossible after such a powerful start?

Grade: 8/10
Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'

KATZENJAMMER KABARETT



Interview with

ID:

Name: Katzenjammer Kabarett

Location: France

Time: (released since) 2004 - ...

Close to: deathrock cabaret, avantgarde

Current Label: Projekt Records

Katzenjammer Kabarett is one of the recent most impressive phenomena of the scene used to be called as “dark/deathrock cabaret”. Yet, it is rather such a formation which it's practically impossible to attribute to any of the styles. What is more, KK don't need any stylistic classifications. A bit of deathrock, some electronics – not to forget about jazz and even pop – give as a result a quite individual cocktail whipped with creative freedom and boldness.

Here are light-minded and touching stories wrapped in “humour noir”, sarcasm and mockery; a twist of absurd artistic movements, irony towards the art and speculations about it – and, at the same time, true art in all its irony and independence.

An entertainment for the sake of entertainment, or, more exactly, for the sake of intoxicating liberty and unbridled imagination. So, here you are - kabarett!

www.myspace.com/katzkab

Alice: For a start, tell me please, when and how did the formation of Katzenjammer Kabarett take place?

H.K...: As far as I can remember, it has always existed. I recently read a manuscript found in the Gulf of Gascogne, presumedly, written by a shoemaker on his way back from the crusades, that dealt with a group of 4 minstrels who used to trade songs in exchange of cheap alcohols and there was at the time a saying about them that declared that "avec Les Quat'sous jamais godet reste", isn't it a proof?

Mr Guillotine : Well, that's a good story (and it's true)!

Alice: What were your original aims when you have started as a band? Since 2004 you have participated in a few compilations, beginning from New Dark Age to Dark Cabaret, then you have released two albums, and at the moment, when talking about dark cabaret and death rock scenes, you certainly can't be passed over. Could you say that you have reached your initial purposes?

H.K...: Had we done so, would we still do it?

MrG : I don't know if there was a real aim at the beginning, only the need to make music. But i must admit that i don't feel very close to the "dark cabaret" or "death rock" scene. And, to answer to your question, as HK said, when we'll have reach our aim, we'll stop and do something else.., The only question now is to find this aim ;-).

Miss Mary K: Without pretending we have reached initial purposes, for it's true we started without really defining them or being aware of them whatsoever, we still managed a few accomplishments throughout the years. Touring, and with one of the bands we love the most (the Deadfly Ensemble) for instance, felt like some sort of achievement to me. Same goes with Cinema Strange, if you had told me we'd share the bill with them and become friends when we started the band, I would never have believed a word of it. Small accomplishments are precious, though I have to say we'd love to be touring again and well we never stop looking forward to what the future holds. It's true we had no precise goal when we started other than entertainment.

The idea of achievement in itself is dangerous, at times it prevents you from evolving.

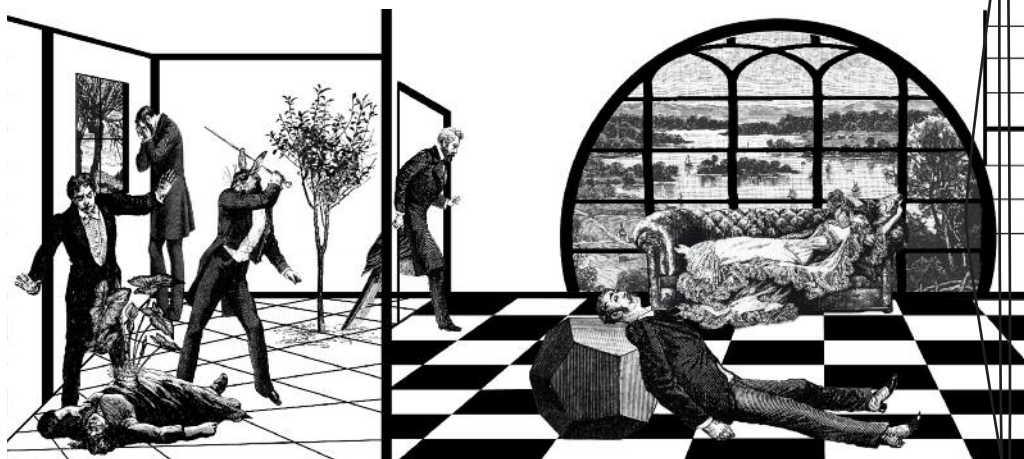
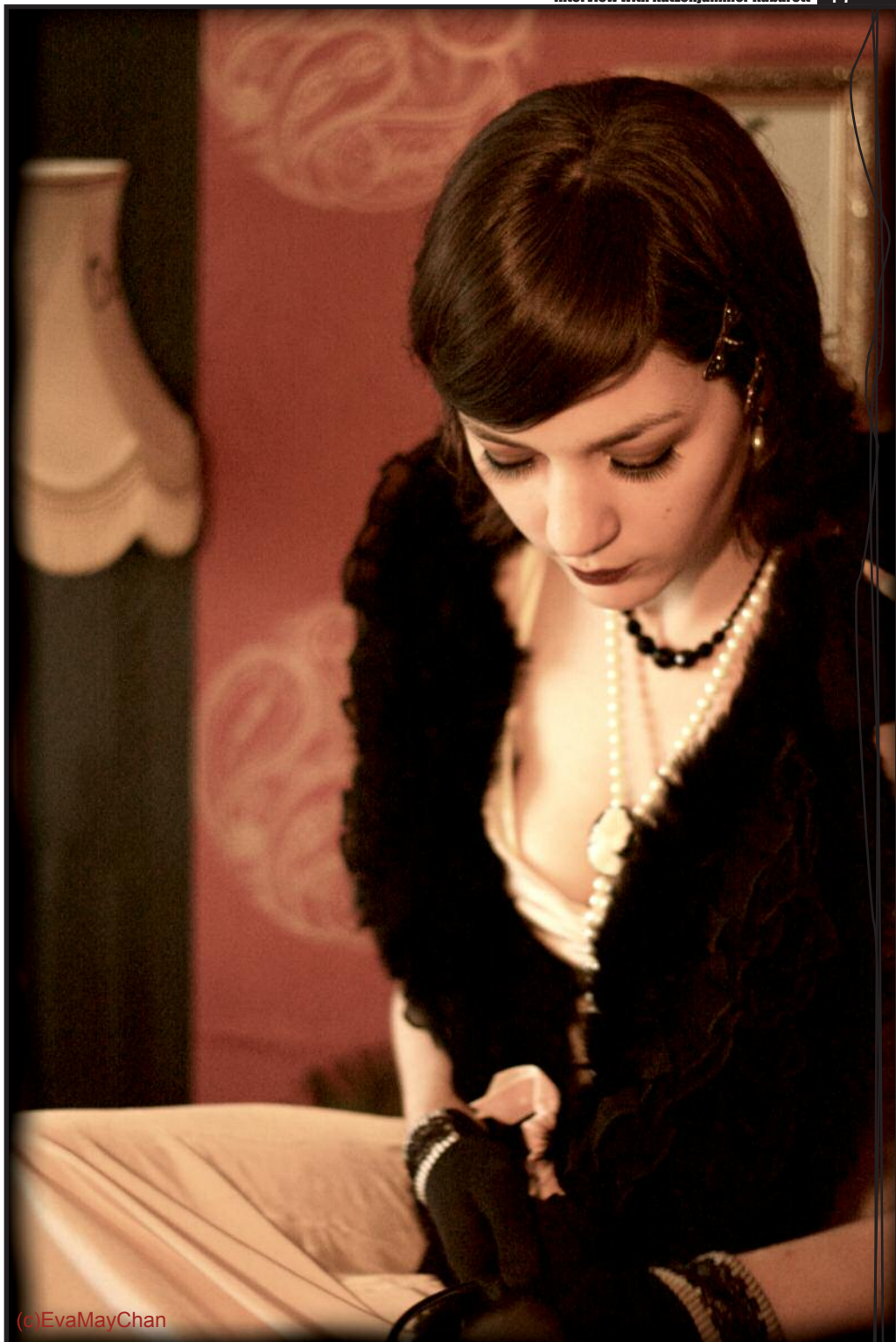
Alice: Referring to the "scenery": how do you like the current state of underground scene?

And if to speak about already mentioned "dark cabaret", this trend actually appeared just a few years ago... Why such a surge of interest to this genre right now, do you have an idea?
M.M.K: I always have a hard time with the word "underground" because it's kinda vague, I mean it's really too abstract for me (but then again that's just me). As for the dark cabaret trend, it's not a surprise. Fashion runs in circles, and so does music. Innovations become influences, and influences of influences. In my opinion it's practically impossible to create something completely unique in 2009, so people make new stuff with oldies and call it post/neo-whatever. It doesn't take away the abilities they have as composers or musicians, but no one can write something that's never been done before nowadays. I like to think this renewed interest is fortuitous and could have been dealing with anything else.

Alice: KK is distinguished on the music scene by the mix of styles which can't be restricted within any genres: from cabaret, jazz, electro to death rock. What performers have influenced you, did you have any references?

H.K...: Frogs! When they get awoken in the early summer morning by construction workers, mainly... But it only influences me during the summer, so in the fall, winter and spring I look for musicians who can reproduce such a lovely melody.

MrG : I never know what to answer when people ask our references... I mean, when we are working on new tracks, i just try to find something working with the song, but one would say that we are unconsciously influ-





enced, so the better is that people find these references by themselves.

Ms M.K: I grew up listening to my parent's records, so I was soon fond of The Beatles, The Shadows, Fats Domino, BB King... When I was old enough to steal away my brother's records, I found out about bands like The Cure, The Clash, and lots of French punk bands (Ludwig von 88, Bérurier Noir, to name only a few). I went through lots of different periods when it comes to my taste in music (from heavy metal to lo-fi stuff to new wave to reggae) so it's always tricky for me to answer that question. I agree with Mr Guillotine when he talks about the composing process, I never have something specific in mind whenever I try to adapt my singing on a new track. And everybody always ends up finding whatever he wants to, saying Band X sounds like Band Y etc. Still, if I should ever name one performer, the one who impresses and affects me the most would probably be Billie Holiday.

Alice: The question about the band's name: why Katzenjammer Kabarett? What does the term "Katzenjammer" mean for you from personal and creative points of view?

H.K...: Please refer to answer 1...but some have said that the term comes from a book by S.I. Witkiewicz, who claimed there was no word in Polish to say "hangover" and that he was to use the German word for that. It must be the same in Russian, mustn't it?

MrG : It could also have something to do with drunk kittens dancing in a cabaret...

Ms M.K: ... and making an awful racket. MEOOOWWW!!

Alice: Well, this term actually sounds good in Russian too :-) Do you think it's an essential part of cabaret as an approach itself (I mean, alcohol and elation it can bring... together with all

that accompanies it :-))?

M.M.K: Oh, you'll have to ask Klischee. :-D Seriously, of course it's important. It's not necessary but it can change the course of a show for better or worse, from both performers and audiences' points of view. Some people even need elation to create better art. I mean no one wants to see Tom Waits sober on stage, for instance, as cruel as it may seem. Cabarets were places where people just left whatever troubles they had at the door, so of course they got pissed. I never think of cabaret as an approach in itself, unless we're talking of entertainment.

Alice: You've mentioned in the biography on your site that your atmosphere and sound could be described as "an old-fashioned lieder". What meaning does traditional Kabarettlieder have for the music of KK?

H.K...: For the music, apart from the mixing of different popular musical elements, I have no idea. For the lyrics as in Kabarettlieder, they deal with events, sometimes tragic, real or unreal, in a light way, just to enjoy the audience. I hope they give access to an impression of non-conformity, of unheimlich, the spicy and improper places where life can become mad etc etc... However, contrary to brettlieder, they don't deal with politics and the news.

Ms M.K: That's right, they never do. Still, I'm pretty sure we could write a song about a stupid, cupid dwarf falling in love with a really bad singer.

Alice: How does the process of composing take place within the band?

MrG : Klischee writes the base of the song, with drums, keyboards and weird instruments, then we add bass & guitar, and at the same time, HK writes lyrics and Mary tears the lyrics apart to fit them into the song. :-D Well, that's a quick note, but most of the time it happens like that. Some-





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times it's hard, slow or even creepy, but it seems to work!

Alice: What inspires you most of all in the different kinds of art?

H.K...: I would say that all the creators, that have shown the limits of the domain in which they worked. Art is now an old concept, it might be hard to acknowledge, but it has been killed last century. At least, it survived a few decades more than god.

Alice: I'd like to talk more detailly about the conceptual side of your music, as it's quite significant. Your lyrics are complete stories, often developping the whole plot, the other time being surrealistic. What are your sources of inspiration when writing? Are there any influences from literature?

H.K...: Most of the time it starts with a single short sentence, then depending on what I'm reading, either the idea of a story, or of a method comes out of that as tools for putting it down on piece of paper. My influences could as well be found in Alphonse Allais' stories as in Dada or William Burroughs (through Lettrism, Oulipo, Fumisme and even decadantism (but this is also fumisme))

Alice: On the whole, the lyrics of KK are full of witty irony, sometimes cynical laugh and the tint of cruelty; the heroes are often from lower society. Your cabaret with its characters – is it the inner fragility, feelings which are concealed under the mask of sarcasm? Or is it something like total irony, the mockery at everything?

H.K...: That's a question! Unfortunately my psychoanalyst went to the Bermudas, but I'm pretty sure he'll be glad to help us solve that question when he returns. BUT, to satisfy the reader, here is my answer: "A bit of both...probably"

Alice: Let's refer to your first album, "Katzenjammer Kabarett". Could you tell me, what atmosphere you tried to

achieve on it and what influenced the making of the album?

H.K...: We were just tired of the romantic, depressive aspect of goth, I think, albeit we loved the music (and it was the easiest to play).

Ms M.K: I can't remember exactly but I guess I was in a rather tormented period back then, that's the only explanation I have for the way I sang. Almost emo. :-D

Alice: A very curious thing about the album is the heroes of the songs: we can see among them dolls, mannequins... What importance does this "dollish" aspect have for you? It also seemed to me that english dandyism appeals to you, is it so? (the song "8&9" about a crazy young man with the knife in his bosom who was concerned only about his suit). There is also a prevailing hero, Percy – what's the background of this character?

H.K...: I think the human being should reconsider its place in the world. We've just been created to look good, in order nice clothes can be worn. And as far Percy is concerned, if I remember well, I think its first background was an empty pack of cigarette, for I had nothing else to write on, then I moved him to a white piece of paper, which is more convenient for Mary to read.

Ms M.K: It's true Percy's a recurrent character in our songs, and while I'm at it, thanks for actually paying attention to the lyrics and asking us about it (I think it's practically the first time it happens in ten years :-D). Percy's a painter who was more of a violently romantic, fire-blooded lad in his younger years. He somewhat achieved a form of artistic achievement after bringing one of his paintings to life, and after having his house burnt down by nosy, angry mobs he disappeared for years. The story of how and why he returned is told in one of the songs of "Grand Guignol et Variétés". The longer, uncut version available for

proper reading is even up on our website, in the lyrics section!

Alice: The name of your second release is quite remarkable: "Grand Guignol & Variétés". Why have you decided to refer to the french horror theatre? What are the changes in the conception of music, in comparison with the first album?

H.K...: Because it perfectly reflects what it is. A cocktail of love, madness, death and variété

Ms M.K: I don't think we changed anything really, if you except the rather minimal aspect of the first album. It's true "Grand Guignol & Variétés" has richer arrangements, lots of strings and horns for instance. And I guess we also took the liberty to explore our influences more thoroughly than we ever did, especially as far as pop music is concerned. As for the French horror theatre references, they're just here for the sake of storytelling. Katz likes to write gruesome surreal stories in a very lighthearted fashion and it suits the Grand Guignol perfectly so it all made sense when he came up with the record name.

Alice: What is special about your live shows: are they more rock-orientated, or aimed at the atmosphere of cabaret? What kinds of festivals do you play at?

Ms M.K: As much as we wish to have a full scenography for the shows we haven't managed to achieve that yet. When we started playing shows we started working on that though, we had written a scenography but it wasn't so good, and on top of that things are difficult to handle technically when everything is written and planned (as far as decors and people are concerned). I like the spontaneity of rock shows and the outburst of energy they generate. That's what people should expect when they attend one of our shows. As for the festivals, well we always get booked at goth fests, even at



electro-oriented fests at times. As much as I wish we could broaden our audiences a bit, well I was seldom disappointed in playing festivals. You always meet a good lot of people and it's fun to play, in spite of all the technical restraints that often go with it.

Alice: Now the question about video. You have got only one clip at the moment, though your songs, with their stories, just "demand" for visualization, - why so? And some words about the clip "The Crowd Around": where is the picture taken from, what is the idea of it?

H.K...: Actually, we have no video at all, we can't even manage to make band pictures. The video you mention, is just an exercise, as I did, for Noli me Tangere (sorry guys) or other pieces of music. And to be honest, I've cut so many movies for so many years that I could hardly remember what I put in there. Probably, a lot of expressionist and constructivist movies. It is one of the worst I've made. But recently as we were working on a new song, the idea a making a video came as an urge. So we might try to make one someday.

Alice: Are there any intentions of collaborative projects with other musicians?.. Or comedians, movie-makers? or anything else, maybe?

M.M.K: We haven't talked about it but we're open. Anything but routine, you know.

Alice: What about your plans for future? Can we await for the next release? Should we expect the same distinctive sound, or you intend to intensify some of the style elements?

Ms M.K: One thing for sure, we can't give you precise dates. We're sorting out new songs but there's no homogeneous ensemble for now, and still a rough work in progress.

Alice: How much does the music influence your daily lives? What role does it play for you personally?

H.K...: It helps me sleep, that's why I tend to avoid speakers between 12 and 03:30 A.M. Because I tend to over-analyse what I'm listening to, it exhausts my clothes hanger brain.

Ms M.K: Music fills everything. I have lots of side projects besides Katzenjammer so it takes most of my time. You could say without lying that I'm a musicaholic.

Alice: To round it off, I'd like to thank you for the portion of fascinating madness you produce! And maybe you have some final words to say to us?

KK: Thank YOU for the interview! And hopefully one day, we'll make it to rock Mother Russia. Большое вам спасибо!! Надеюсь скоро вас увидеть!!



*Questions: Alice Malice
"Grave Jibes Fanzine"*



www.myspace.com/murnausplayhouse

Interview with Murnau's Playhouse

ID:

Name: Murnau's Playhouse

Location: Tampere, Finland

Time: 2007-?

Close to: goth rock, post-punk

Current Label: Spider in a matchbox

Murnau's Playhouse is a young band, but it proves again that Finland can be known not only for its metal scene, but for goth/death-rock too. After the successful debut on Zorch Factory records, they have recently released their debut album, called "Sanity Show". And of course we couldn't miss the chance to discuss it with the band.

Nattsol: Hello there! I usually start interviews with a "free" question. So give this interview introduction, please, whatever you like.

Murnau: Hi everyone! It's really nice to see that there are people out there who like our music. The good response we've had has been something of a surprise to us, truth be told. We're guessing that you can hear the fun we had while writing and playing the songs on the album.

Nattsol: Tell me please about your musical backgrounds and preferences. How and under which circumstances have you got them?

Murnau: The shortest answer to this is that everyone is basically self-taught in their instrument. Arttu and Sari have had some training with the

piano in the childhood days, and Arttu attended a musically oriented primary school. But that's it for any formal training. Marko has been playing in various punk and post-punk bands all the way from the mid 80s. Kontra also has a lengthy band history in a number of punk, oi, psychobilly and rockabilly bands.

As a band we feel lucky, because our musical backgrounds and tastes vary quite largely, but we still have significant overlap in our favourite bands and such. This results in diverse ideas when writing songs while still maintaining a unified focus on what we're doing. One defining starting point for the band was to play the kind of music we ourselves listen to and could imagine dancing to.

Nattsol: Have you had any previous experience of playing in a band before "Murnau's Playhouse"?

Marko: As mentioned earlier, I've played in several bands since '86 or '87. My first band, Vapaa Ajatus, was traditional '82 HC punk with a d beat. At some point I traded my rebellion in for some black hair dye and moved on. Post-punk and goth rock bands followed, and those worth mentioning are Dancing Golem, who were active around 92 through 95, and Phantom Leaf, who have been together for the past ten years and are still more or less active.

Kontra: I bought my first drum kit around '86 or '87 and haven't looked back since. The first band was musically based in punk and psychobilly. In the early days, the desire to play was incredibly high. The rehearsal space was an old hog lot, which had later been converted into a school building. Every time we rehearsed, we had to go and pick up the instruments from a storage and set them up. And after we were done, we had to pack it all back up again and move the desks back into place. After these wild early years I've played in various punk, oi, psychobilly and rockabilly groups.

Ville: I played for a little while in a short-lived band with grunge influences at the turn of the millennium. After that, playing music was on hold until I moved to Tampere, and Marko encouraged me to pick up the bass again.

Sari: For me this is the first band ever.

Arttu: Yeah, same here. As you can see, all in all Murnau's Playhouse have a strong punk background. There's experienced musicians as well as fresh faces. In a way we feel this also to be one of our strong points. On the one hand there's the experience and skill that's always required, but on the other there's the freshness and youthful excitement.

Nattsol: Tell me, please in your own words and from your own viewpoints about the foundation of the band? How did it happen for you?

Ville: We often ran into each other with Marko in the Tampere nightlife, and as one might guess, we were soon talking music. It came up that I had played bass before, so Marko told me to drag myself over to his place for short jamming sessions. It didn't take too long before we started feeling we might like to have a full band around us.

At first we decided to start playing simple, no-nonsense gothic rock, and began looking for a vocalist. We already had our eyes on one guy, when Arttu suddenly appeared somewhat unannounced. Which was good, obviously, since we now had a nice guy in the band and he could also sing to some extent as well.

Arttu: "Some extent?" No comments there. Anyhow, I had been looking for a band to join for quite a while. Or at least being in a band had been a dream of sorts for quite some time. Then I heard these guys talking about forming a band and I jumped the chance. It was definitely one of the best jumps I've ever performed. I just basically barged in on them at a goth club one night and before they could overcome the shock, I had sold myself as a vocalist. Or something to that effect, anyway. Regardless, I was in the band now.

The three of us began rehearsing by playing a sorry cover of the Sisters' Alice, but after a while we felt we needed something more to really get going. We began looking for a drum machine on sale, but before we managed to buy one, we ran into Kontra. Much like myself, he was found mostly by accident.

Kontra: To me this came as a total surprise, I didn't ask for it. We were introduced through a mutual friend, and one day we just got together to play.

Ville: This opened up quite a different direction, and things really started rolling. We began developing the song ideas Marko had in his back pocket, and once Sari joined a few months later to play the keyboards, our own sound was finally cemented.

Nattsol: The meeting with Arttu happened in a local goth club. I absolutely can't avoid this question - Finland is known foremost by its gothic metal stuff, but how about that initial gothic punk approach? What's the atmosphere about it in your country and city in particular?

Murnau: In Finland, the goth scene and the metal scene don't really mix. You don't hear metal music at a goth club and vice versa. The kind of Finnish bands you might hear at a gothic festival somewhere else in the world probably won't find any play time at similar events in their home country. It seems people on both sides of the genre divide wish to stay on their own side. Perhaps it's some sort of small country puritanism, perhaps it's something totally different, who knows. All in all, it seems to work so no one bothers to change it.

Our home town of Tampere has a nick name, Mansester, which is obviously a bastardisation of the UK's Manchester. Even though this comparison to its big brother mostly refers to our city's history as an location of heavy industry, there are parallel lines to be drawn musically, as well. Tampere is unofficially known as the goth capital of Finland. The city seems to have a way of attracting the gothic people from all over the country. As an interesting aside, none of the band members are originally from Tampere. I suppose that says something.

Generally speaking, the Finnish goth scene isn't that large, and active club attendees know each other quite well even if they come from all around the country. Finland was quick to adopt



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the goth thing, and since the 80s there has been a slew of clubs and active bands. Larger cities, mostly Tampere and Helsinki, house several active clubs around the year. Even as older clubs die out, new ones spring forth. Club Schatten, which is where this band was mostly formed, is Finland's longest running gothic club, but unfortunately it too is coming to an end in early 2010, albeit at the venerable age of ten years. Our hat's off to them.

In general, the music at clubs is much the same you might hear elsewhere, apart from the metal of course. Old school goth rock and post-punk are merrily played back to back with the latest EBM and industrial tracks. The rock following seems to be declining nowadays, but even if the fans are few, they are truly die-hard ones.

Nattsol: In this case, may be you could suggest some good Finnish

bands? And of course, goth places in Finland to visit, since Russia and Finland are very close.

Murnau: It always naturally depends on what kind of music you prefer. There aren't too many new rock bands with a gothic twist around here now, but you might want to check out names like Silent Scream and Silene. On the electronic side of the divide there's Machine Park and Beati Mor-

tui who seem to be doing quite nicely. If by places you mean clubs and so on, the Lumous Gothic Festival each summer caters to the gothic crowd. Synapsi is the biggest on-going club with live bands at the moment. Then there are naturally quite a large number of smaller local clubs, arranged more or less regularly, but perhaps they're not enough of a reason on their own to visit Finland. For those who are interested in the scene in Finland, the messageboard of club Schatten (<http://clubschatten.net/keskustelu/>) lists practically all clubs, concerts, etc. relating to anything even vaguely gothic. The conversation is mainly in Finnish, but you can always ask in English.

Nattsol: This small scene, - is it a kind of "family"? Can it be said so? And is there more punky or romantic goth approach for the goth fans in your country?

Murnau: A family might be a bit too tight grouping, because the scene is always changing and we are talking about several hundred people, after all, with new ones coming and older ones going all the time. Obviously there are small groups of people who have known each for several years.

The approach you mention, we take it you mostly mean the visual aesthetic people subscribe to? It would seem the cybergoth thing is quite common, but the more old school approach, both the punky and the romantic, is still present as well. It's quite much the same as it is with the music. Just as the clubs play different kinds of music, so too are they visited by people with varied appearances.

Nattsol: What were the band's first steps? Were there some important for you things (like good opinions or participation in an important gig or so on) which determined your further development and inspired for it?

Murnau: Once the band was finally together with Sari on the keyboards, we already had a couple of almost complete tracks and new ones were in the making. We rehearsed quite extensively from the get go, with the goal of going to a studio to record a demo. Our first gig, however, didn't come around very soon. We performed a couple of times for a group of friends at our rehearsal room, and they seemed like our stuff quite a lot. Definitely our biggest step forward in both positive response and people's awareness of the whole band's existence came in 2008, when we won an annual song writing contest that was hosted by Club Schatten on their web forum. It really gave us a clear signal that people liked what they were hearing.

Nattsol: Sari, your keyboardist isn't a band's founding member, right? In your opinion, how has the addition of keyboards reflected on the band's music?

Murnau: Bringing in the keyboards did actually have a distinct role in the development of our music. At that time the band was still looking for its own sound, and the keyboards added just the kind of layer of ethereality that we were lacking. Also, we were, unknowingly perhaps, already heading towards a post-punk type of thing anyway, and the keyboards further focused this direction.

It was actually around this time that older songs, i.e. written before the keyboards, found their true form. Some were almost completely rearranged, but the end results definitely justified the means in this case. If the keyboards had never been added to the sound, we'd most likely be leaning much more towards punk than we are now.

Nattsol: Let's talk about your demo. What can you say about it in general

and about the songs on it?

Murnau: The demo is something of a time capsule from the way the band was at that time. Since then, we've improved quite a lot and found our own sound even better.

The guy who recorded it had usually worked with punk bands, but had to admit that the one time he's recording a supposedly gloomy band, the sessions are the most hilarious he's ever had. We think it speaks volumes about the demo. We had endless laughs making it, and we thoroughly enjoyed our first ever recording sessions together. It was a major step forwards, obviously, since we had never recorded anything in a studio together. The songs are a bit raw and unpolished, but you can already hear the direction we were heading. New versions of each appear on our debut album, because the tracks continued to mature even after they had been recorded for the demo.

Nattsol: You released it on "Zorch Factory records". How have you got in touch with many, and how can you comment this label and your contribution to it? In particular, what does it mean for you?

Murnau: Sari had ran across the Zorch Factory Records website while looking for new music, and at some point during the demo recording sessions we began thinking that we might also publish it via such a channel. DJ Alien S. Pagan from Cemetery Girlz also suggested Zorch Factory for us. Manu was still playing in the band at the time. A few e-mails later we had agreed on collaboration.

We think it's fantastic that someone takes the time to gather similar music under one label online. All you need is one web address, and you're on the way to discovering great new music. After all, the web is the best promotional channel for a young band these days, and it never hurts to be able to direct your

material to the right audience.

All in all we find that Zorch Factory has been a good way for us to showcase our music. One track off our new album, *The Blight*, is also on a compilation called *Zoundbites Vol. 1* they just released.

Nattsol: What was the public worldwide reaction on the demo?

Murnau: Judging by the number of friend requests on myspace and facebook, people have liked it. We've received fans from Central Europe, Russia and all the way from Southern America. The demo has also had some air time at Finnish goth clubs and web radio shows.

Nattsol: And pretty soon after it you

release your new album, which itself is the foremost reason of our current interview. So, for a start, represent it to our readers, please.

Murnau: As all our music so far, *Sanity Show* is a clear nod towards the sounds of 80s post-punk. We wanted to write a short and to the point type of album that doesn't have any filler songs on it. We had all the leeway in the world and could thus make the album just the way we wanted to. It's eight tracks worth of Finnish post-punk goodness.

Arttu: Lyrically, the songs and the overarching themes of the album have to do with existentialism and basically the questions posed to us in everyday life. When you start to think about all the worry people develop over trivial

things, how they emerge into a world they didn't choose but are forced to cope with nonetheless, and how the emotional and intellectual choices often clash, it would seem we should all be mentally unstable and are just faking sanity to get by. This is what the title of the album alludes to as well. There's a quote from George Bernard Shaw that has really struck a chord in me and I think it has been haunting in the back of my mind since the first time I heard it: "When the world goes mad, one must accept madness as sanity; since sanity is, in the last analysis, nothing but the madness on which the whole world happens to agree." We can't seem control or change the world around us even if everyone seems to think there's so much that's going wrong.

Nattsol: The cover of the album - could you tell its history and meaning?

Murnau: Teppo, the guy who designed our logo, and a good friend of the band, also designed the cover. We had some ideas about the mood and themes we wanted there to be. He made a few notes about those and molded them into the piece of art it is now. We wanted to have a kind of a Victorian approach, and to steer clear from the overly typical black and white CD cover. There is a story going on in the covers, but we'd rather not spoil the chance for people to interpret it the way they want.

Nattsol: In comparison with the demo, you pretty "soften" your sound, making it closer to a classic gothic rock, whereas many people loved that "dirty" part of your sound. What was this change caused by?

Murnau: Most likely the biggest single factor playing into the the difference in the sound is the simple fact that the studios at our disposal with the album were of higher standard.



Also, the demo sessions were the first ever real recording sessions for many of the band members, and as a band we weren't so clear on what exactly it was that we wanted to achieve. It was more a case of just getting the stuff on tape and anything after that was extra. With the album, we took the time to

properly record, mix and master it, and we also had a much clearer picture of what we wanted it to become. We deliberately went for a more pop music type sound in places, and spent a fair amount of time re-recording takes and mixing it all together. There were also some defining finishing

touches given in the final mixing and mastering sessions.

Ville: This question actually made me listen the demo again and compare it to the album. Some songs do seem to work quite nicely with the demo's sounds, White Noise White Light for example. Then again, I think Sister



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Violence, for instance, needed this somewhat deeper and softer soundscape.

Arttu: I can see your point there. I'm sure that we'll pay even more attention to the sound of individual tracks on upcoming releases. After all, there's always something new to realize when you're doing these kinds of things, always something to learn.

Nattsol: "Sanity Show" – is that an album of a new music or a newly played old music? Why so?

Murnau: This naturally depends on what you actually mean by that. If you mean did we actually compose anything new for the album or did we just play old songs we already had in our repertoire, the answer is both. Even though the album contains tracks with same names as those on the demo, all of these have been rearranged and even had their lyrics partly rewritten. In this sense they are now the songs we wanted them to be but hadn't quite managed to write when recording them for the demo. The rest of the

tracks have not been released before, and were all written exactly with the recording of an album in mind. A couple tracks we had kicking around didn't even make it on the album in the end. So in this sense it is both new and newly played old music.

But perhaps that was a bit of a boring interpretation of the question. If you meant it in the sense of whether Sanity Show as an album is "music of the 21st century", or "old-school post-punk played in the 21st century", the answer is the latter. We do love the

sounds of all those 80's bands, and that's what we're aiming for, too.

Lately, post-punk has had a revival of sorts with big names like White Lies, Editors and so on. We didn't plan to play music the way they do, although we do appreciate those band. We wanted to stick to the eighties.

Nattsol: Do you have some favs in the album? Or, at least, what are the songs which are going to represent the band for radios, compilations and so on?

Murnau: Well, the song called Showreel will be a part of the Gothic Compilation part 46, which will be distributed alongside with the Gothic Magazine. That's definitely one track we all felt ended up sounding good. Another one is The Blight, which was mentioned earlier as a part of the Zoundbies compilation. Those two are probably the most radio friendly, if you can call them that.

Nattsol: A small "game-question".

Can you list a few things or places (no matter if these are exact places or not) which can be associated with "Sanity Show"?

Murnau: Arkham Asylum? Joking aside, anywhere you stop and begin to wonder about the meaninglessness of existence. Everyday places and things that turn into madness when you squint hard enough.

Nattsol: Now, after the first full-length do you have any exact plans or purposes?

Murnau: Ever since the album came out, we've been writing new music. We have plans of returning to the studio some time during the winter to record a couple of songs, so there might be something coming out next year. Whether it's a single, an EP or something else is still open.

Nattsol: It seems that "Sanity Show" have said all the words of the musical language it was written in. So do you

plan to develop your music somehow? Like changing of sound, lyrical themes etc...

Murnau: This is going to sound so clichéd, but we feel the music kind of creates itself. It isn't so much a result of planning as it is a collision of the band members' creative inputs. We make music we would want to listen to and enjoy ourselves. It's all about how we feel at the moment. With the new material we have noticed a change from the earlier days, it's nothing major but a change nonetheless. So you might expect something a bit different in the future, although it will still definitely be post-punk.

Nattsol: Thanks for the interview! And the final words are kept for you.

Murnau: Thanks for reading, and keep squinting.

*Questions: Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*

"Murnau's Playhouse" - "Sanity Show" album review



Once in the Finish city called Tampere some deathrockers gathered and for some unexplainable reason decided to play... gothic rock. These impressions may appear after making acquaintance with the recent release of the band "Murnau's Playhouse". And to continue this imaginary story, their venue was old forgotten cinema, a victim of fire in the beginning of the XX century. A cinema, which keeps its own secrets and

stories. These stories, which couldn't die among the old building's walls, were overheard by this band and became the source of their inspiration.

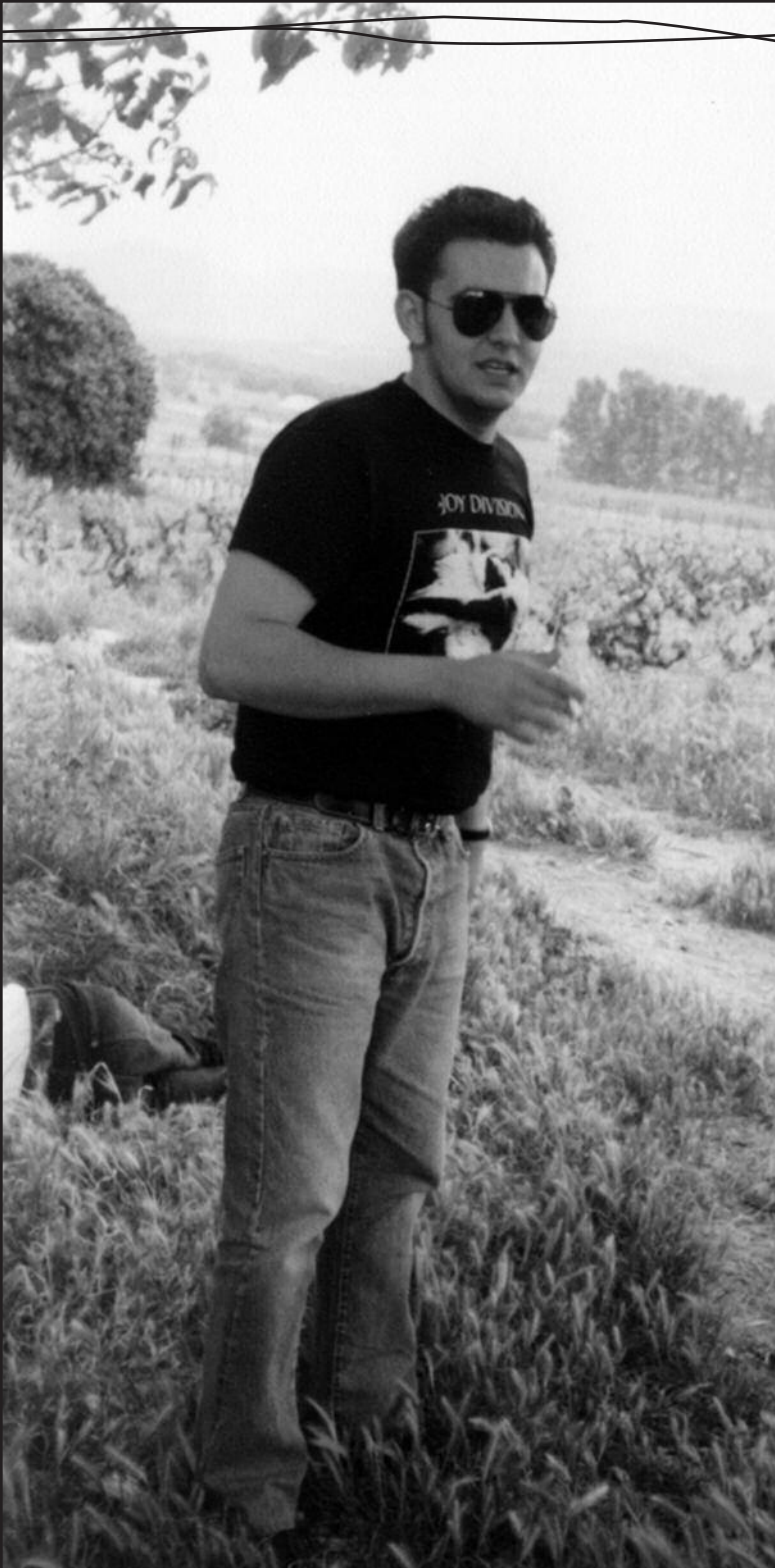
So that's the first impression which can appear after listening to "Murnau's Playhouse" debut album called "Sanity Show".

But if we have a glance a little bit deeper at a more real facts approach, it's possible to conclude that "Sanity Show" provokes 50/50 positive and negative impressions both in comparison with the band's first EP released by Zorch Factory Records. Namely the 50 positive per cents are that the album has 8 tracks which all are recorded in the real album quality, and the band sounds much more self-confident. But the music became more gothic rock - oriented, and the rejection of that raw EP sound and tense atmosphere made "Sanity Show" rather "colorless". So this more "standardized" approach instead of promising-sounded "boundary" style made up these negative 50 per cent.

But generally, the album doesn't disappoint at all. It is short, apt and exhaustive. Still it doesn't offer a typical music, it's "Murnau's Playhouse" with wide musical range, from deathrock-colored goth hits like "Bloodstopper" or retro-goth "Showreel" to lyrical and dreaming "Smoke and Mirrors". "Sanity Show" exhausted its ideas put in. So, if the band doesn't look to its past to give some new colors of its musical direction, it has a risk to become one of those pale gothic rock shadows and to be lost in their own smoke and mirrors. But on the other hand, the band is young and creative so let's hope that it has many more surprises for the future. And for now, let's have a pleasure of listening to "Sanity Show", the album which I'm sure will make "Murnau's Playhouse" much better known and beloved worldwide.

Rate: 7,5/10

Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy



Interview with **Humour Malade**

ID:

Name: Humour Malade

Location: Luberon – Djerba, France

Time: 1988-1992

Close to: coldwave, post-punk

Current Label: Brouillard Definitif

HUMOUR MALADE

<http://www.myspace.com/humourmalade>

MAY vs FEMME FATALE

<http://www.myspace.com/mayvsfemme fatale>

FEMME FATALE

<http://www.myspace.com/mayvsfemme fatale>

FATALOBJECT MUSIC

<http://www.myspace.com/fatalobjectmusic>

In 2007 the label Brouillard Definitif released the collector LP of Humour Malade, the French coldwave band of the late 80's / early 90's. And currently just a few copies are remained, so very soon this LP will become a great rarity. One of the band members was M., exactly the one who now takes a part in the band Femme Fatale and in the label FatalObject Music. And whereas his current projects are remained for the future Grave Jibes issues, let's now ask M. about that mysterious band, Humour Malade.

Nattsol: Greetings! For a start I want to ask traditional “free” question in which I ask you introduce yourself.

M.: Hello Nattsol I am M., founder of Humour Malade, which released an LP on the label Brouillard Définitif. I am also one of the founders of the new indie label FatalObject Music and I am a part of the French bands Femme Fatale (FF) and May vs Femme Fatale.

Nattsol: You started with a band Phase Critique. Could you introduce this band to a reader? What was it itself, what were the influences, atmosphere... were there some shows and are there some records available?

M.: Phase Critique was a post-punk group with the spirit of «no love lost by Joy Division»... There only remain some tapes as memories.

Nattsol: Phase Critique was reformed to Humour Malade, right? How, when, why and under which circumstances it happened?

M.: It was in Aix-en-Provence (South France), late 1988's. Following a clash in the group, M. and Wil signed the death certificate of their joint project. From this Humour Malade was born.

Nattsol: In the band's bio it is said that you were “strongly inspired by the cold wave movement”. I interviewed many coldwave bands of the 80's and they all said that not only there was no “movement”, but there even wasn't any sense of it. So could you explain it more clear, what was that movement for you? What was the general atmosphere? And what have you found as coldwave itself?

M.: These bands are mistaken! I was born in 1968... in '82 I was in the middle of it, and you could see the differences between the new wave coming over the radio, and the cold music by Joy Division for example... we were not in a «movement»... you're right, we were it.

Nattsol: Once again to your bio, - it says that in this for years of the band's existence you recorded more than 100 tracks. Could you tell a little bit more?

M.: At the time, we had no choice as today... With the all digital you can sort, mix, throw your own projects if the result does not fit. On the other hand, in those years, a Foxtex two tracks tape recorded our sessions and a «not clear to master» Roland Juno 60 accompanied our tracks. Quite a lot of tries and errors too (laugh) accumulated on stripes.





Nattsol: And being so productive with records, you played just one show ever in 1991. Why so? And what was that show?

M.: What we did during the rehearsals was not easy to reproduce live. For all a set has been played in 1991... the first in front of a public whom we did not know necessarily and at the same time this was the last one... kind of crowning and especially a tremendous souvenir.

Nattsol: The single point of my questions is the covers you did with Humour Malade. So, for example, I absolutely can't imagine what your cover on "Virgin Prunes" sounded like. What were these covers, why have you chosen them and what were the roles of these songs in your life?

M.: Well, in two words, our cover of the Virgin Prunes was in between of "Hérésie" and "KniCrik" (O Mana)... Briefly, very tribal somehow.

Nattsol: Why did the band brake up?

M.: The 90s began and we were already in other things.

Nattsol: Humour Malade is one of a few bands which faced the death of the initial coldwave in the 90's. Could you tell about that 90's decline, what was the atmosphere in France for coldwave music, and what had happened there with it in general?

M.: I'll tell you something very personal... late 80's we had among all the labels, a label called Divine Madrigal... Within this label had signed a band called Seconde Chambre... 2 LPs of rare power were turning on my turntable... following the closure of this label and tons of other ones, we found these famous LPs of Seconde Chambre on the shelves of discount stores. Well, when you see it, you take a big slap and only think that definitely a page is turned.

Nattsol: The 00's became the time when the name of Humour Malade appeared again. What has been done in this period for this project, and what does this project mean for you now?

M.: Sandra of the label Brouillard Définitif spotted Humour Malade, after listening to a personal myspace page where was turning the title.

Nattsol: Why don't you see any possibility of playing with Humour Malade again?

M.: Humour Malade had a leader, who was Wil. He's not here anymore, so there's no reason to let the souvenirs turn again. The memories turn enough as in Femme Fatale.

Nattsol: Now the question is about the Humour Malade collector LP. Could you represent it to a reader in your own words?

M.: According to Sandra 20 copies remain available of 500... so it's a success... not so much a musical one. Many other groups were much more powerful at the time and remain dear to my heart.

To have gone out to my request, a clear vinyl certainly helped it to become a collector. At that time, the clear vinyl, color or marbling had a tendency to become a collector. This can be considered as a proof that nothing changes at all!

Nattsol: Why has it been done in vinyl format? And in particular, what's your attitude to the contemporary tendencies in musical formats? What do you think about pirates, mp3s and what most of records can be found through the web for free in a couple of minutes.

M.: We can not stop the wave of downloading...but still there are people who buy music before all but also an object... that's what we wanted to do with the LP of Sick Humor...

Nattsol: What is your current musical activity?

M.: Well as you have read above... Femme Fatale is doing well and is finding a renewal through the project May vs. Femme Fatale... My complicity with May is huge, he knows it... I found in him kind of Wil (Humour Malade)... (smile)

Nattsol: How could you estimate the condition of the contemporary coldwave scene? What's your opinion about the new bands and resurrections of the old ones?

M.: Personally, I listen to many different things. My influences and musical styles are different... But I'm glad to see all these reissues come out... I'm greedy, so I buy.

Nattsol: Who are you apart from the music?

M.: «Si j'ai quoi affirmatif et quoi d'autre no comment» [Serge Gainsbourg]

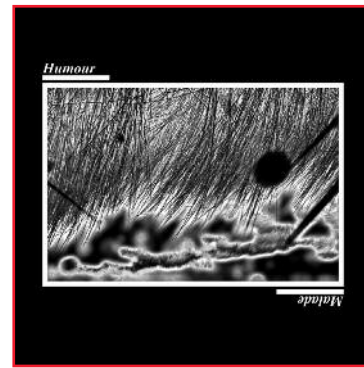
Nattsol: Do you have any regrets for Humour Malade? If you had one more chance with this band, are there some things you'd like to try to improve?

M.: No regrets. If I had redo everything, I just like remake... Problems included. It is a journey, it is a life and it is what it is.

Nattsol: Thanks for the interview. And the final words are yours.

M.: Well I want to thank a lot of people... including you :) The future now looks to our label FatalObject Music; a lot of things are coming... the budget is not huge, but when you listen to songs like those of [audible], to come out shortly on this label, you only can be sure that the energy and fun are still there... then we walk straight ahead!

*Questions: Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*



Humour Malade – self titled 12” LP review

Dress “Joy Division” in icy clothes, and you’ll get 50% of understanding what this LP is. Then add minimal synth approach and shake all the ingredients properly. Done? Then let AE (“End of Data”/“Charles de Gaul”) make mastering and give the result the shape of clear vinyl 12” and pack it in a nice-looking sleeve. Well, that’s about to be it, the collector compilation of the French coldwave band “Humour Malade”, which reflects all the four years of the band’s existence. The release is done in conceptual way and starts with its “Coldface”. The start at once reflects the band’s musical contradiction, which is quite UK post-punk spirit (with very Joy Division-ish bass lines), played in French cold synth approach. During the first song “One moment like this” I honestly tried to understand, which part wins, but failed. The more I failed in going further with two following tracks. The matter is that the second “coldface’s” song is “Joy Division” cover “Exercise one”, played in very “Humour Malade” style with much of cold synth sound and distorted impassive vocals, whereas the third track “Compressing the presence” is a “Humour Malade’s” song, played in a very “Joy Division” style with division-ish bass lines pushed to the foreground and vocal manner which has no chance of not reminding Ian Curtis. In this confused condition I’ve listened to the last track of the side, called “La gloire rien que pour eux”, in which the band’s synth and cold side finally wins what makes it sound like “Humour Malade” plays “Humour Malade” which is a very great coldwave band, turned the LP side to “Hotface” and... faced absolutely another band. Sounds as absurd, but the “Hotface” was chilling for me. Seemed that the opening meditative “Don’t fall” warned what can happen next, meaning not falling into the music... but too late, this track finishes and a listener begins to drown in the obscure chilling depths of “Living in ice age”. Mesmerised by this frightening but charming music, a listener can just discover himself after in the darkest depths of the finishing track, called “In my mind”. Generally, incremental turning into something very unique by opposition of two origins seems to be a great conception. But on the other hand, the initial contradiction could be between two band’s own faces, because it’s always better to have your own face (no matter if here it’s the second face) than other one’s, even if it belongs to a legendary band.

Rate: 8,5/10

*Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*

INT

IN THE NIGHT TIME

<http://www.echoesofsilence.it/>
<http://www.myspace.com/inthenighttime>
<http://www.inthenighttime.it/>
<http://www.myspace.com/mannequinmailorder>
<http://www.mannequinmailorder.com/>



Echoes of



Interview with Carlo.

Silence

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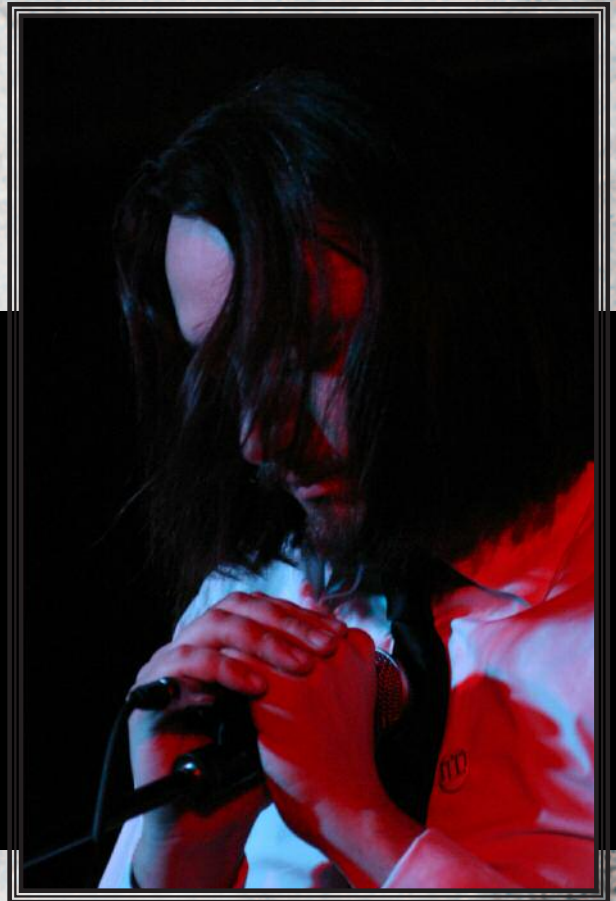
Name: Echoes of Silence

Location: Rome, Italy

Time: 2003-?

Close to: post-punk

Current Label: In The Night Time



Carlo Cassaro is a very modest person. He is the co-founder of In The Night Time records, the label from Rome which releases Italian post-punk/goth bands that certainly can be considered as one of the best in Europe, like Carillon del Dolore, Bohemien, Thelema. And also Carlo himself sings in a post-punk band, called Echoes of Silence. But he doesn't strive for being known and famous within the scene, - he does his work because of love and great passion for the music. However, he agreed to tell us about the situation around the roman scene and about his band.

Nattsol: Greetings! Traditional start, please, introduce yourself in any way you like.

Carlo: First of all, I would like to thank you for all the interest shown for In the Night Time and all the related projects.

I'm Carlo, I'm running In the Night Time since 2003, singer of the band Echoes of Silence and part of the label/mailorder Mannequin. I hope you'll find something interesting in this interview.

Nattsol: How have you come into the music as a listener? What were (and are) the sources of your inspiration in it?

Carlo: I started to listen to music quite early, as a child, and I've listened to very different types of music, but I always had a preference for sad songs. You know, "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought"... Then, about 16 years ago, I heard

about a band called Joy Division...

Everything started the first time I've listened to Unknown Pleasures. They have been, without any doubt, my greatest source of inspiration.

Nattsol: And how did you decide to personally contribute to the scene? What were the circumstances of your decision? What have you started from?

Carlo: Well, for what concerns In the Night Time, the answer is quite simple: it was the great passion of a couple of guys for this kind of music. We wanted to promote and to share the music we loved. At first, we wanted to do a radio show, but we didn't find any radio interested in that project. Then we started to build up a website to promote and share information about Italian postpunk/goth/wave bands from the present and from the past (the website is no longer online). In the meanwhile we started play

music as djs in some clubs, and to arrange a few events and gigs. Then, in 2003 we finally became label. Our first release was the Bohemien' cd "Danze Pagane". They were looking for a label, and we were searching new ways for promoting Italian bands. It was a kind of perfect marriage!

Nattsol: To clarify, please, tell me about your partner, Paolo. He was that guy, am I right? How had you met each other?

Carlo: The first time I met him he was playing as a dj in a club here in Rome. I really liked what he played. So, when I arranged the first In the Night Time party, I wanted him as a guest dj. I was very excited, but I was a little bit worried too. He was already a quite well-known dj, and I was just a beginner (both as a promoter and as a dj). I didn't want to disappoint him. There were two other guys with me at

that time (they left quite soon), and I clearly remember telling them to treat Paolo properly, to be kind and trying not to disappoint him, because we had to make a good impression! eheheh... Not considering that it was my first time as a dj and I was scared to death! By the way, I can't tell that the party was a success, there weren't many people, but we really enjoyed it. And Paolo too, so much, that he wanted to be part of In The Night Time. He joined us immediately, and soon In the Night Time became just Paolo and me. Our partnership came quite naturally: we shared the same passion

f o r
music

and we had the same tastes and goals. Music was his life; his dream was to promote the music he loved so much, to bring his contribution. And his dream is still going on.

Nattsol: Could you give a little bit more inner description of you progressed from DJing and organizing into label? What were the difficulties and so on? Nowadays some people have potential to do similar things, but they don't know what to start with, so a kind of advice or something like that could be more than useful.

Carlo: I've to be

honest? I didn't like to be a dj! I'm more the kind of guy who prefers to act behind the scenes. Djing wasn't enough for me, I wanted to find new ways of promoting music. So I came with this idea of the label and Paolo loved it. Difficulties? Well, it's very easy to produce a record, especially a cd, the costs are quite low nowadays. The hard part is to sell the records! The music market is in the middle of crisis, and the sells are going down and down. But there are still some buyers... In our case, we're quite lucky, cause we are in a kind of an elite market. People who listen to this kind of music still buy



records.

They aren't too many, but they are collectors. And what a collector wants? Limited editions, high quality products, special packages, etc...

So, my advice is, if you want to start a label, first you've to fix your goals. In The Night Time's goal is to promote the music we produce, so I keep the prices low, do many trades, and give a lot of promos and free copies... But this means that you won't earn a lot... If you want to sell, you have to follow another path. In this particular moment, the best sellers are the reissues

of old and hard to find records from the past, and limited editions. So you've to invest a little bit more in production, so that you can offer high quality products. And, of course, you have to do a lot of promotional activities and try to create a strong brand. Communication is half of the job!

Nattsol: Bohemien was the first band of ITNT. How had it happened? That's not a too usual thing when a

label begins with releasing a kind of cult

band.

Carlo: Well, they were a cult band, absolutely, but they also were a new band, in a certain way, because they've started to play again after 15 years, and they never published an official release. We thought it was the perfect debut for ITNT, because we were interested both in old bands and in new ones. So, we strongly wanted to produce this album. We already knew the Bohemien (they're from



Rome too) and when we explained them our project they were really excited to be part of it and to be our first band. We both felt that something special was about happen.

Nattsol: How had the label acted after it? Was there something what determined your activity (destiny?) or you got a kind of plan and just made it come true?

Carlo: We had a clear idea of what we wanted to do. As I told you before, our aim is to produce both old and new bands, and so we started to move in both directions. But we weren't in a hurry and we were very satisfied of Danze Pagane, so we took all the time we needed before producing our second release. We always preferred to do just a few things at time, so that we could keep the focus on them. And, you know, having a job, you can't have much time for music... By the way, at the start of 2005, we produced our second release: *Il Giardino Violetto - Danse Macabre*, the reissue on cd of a demotape recorded in 1989. A little gem that during those years has

become a cult tape. We are very proud to have this record in our catalogue both for its musical quality and for what it represents: an old hidden treasure brought back to life to get the attention it deserved. We had the old cult band, now we had to find a new one. Since we became a label we received a lot of promos from bands, but we didn't find anything interesting... until we received a promo from a band from South Italy called *Other Voices*. They captivated us at first listening, and so we decided to produce them. I've to tell you, it's not so easy to find good bands nowadays, the average level is quite low. One of the good things of new digital technologies is that anyone can make a record, because the costs aren't as high as in the past. But one of the bad things of new digital technologies is that anyone can make a record! So, in a sea full of low-quality products, it's very hard to find the few good ones. But I'm very happy of what we've fished out so far!

Nattsol: Whereas you were a DJ and

planned to found a label you already played in a Joy Division cover band. Could you tell about it and about the musicians you played with?

Carlo: This brings me back to many years ago... It was 1998, and the band was called *An Ideal Beginnig*. It all started when, in a music shop, a friend of mine and I found a flyer from two guys who were looking for a drummer and a singer for a Joy Division cover band. A very classic story.

We played for one year, doing a few gigs in Rome, and then we started to compose some songs. But we had to stop quite soon, because our drummer had found job in Milan, so he had to leave Rome for a few years. Then, when he came back, our bassist decided that he didn't want to play music anymore. So we started the search for a new bass player.

Nattsol: How had that cover band reformed into "Echoes of Silence"?

Carlo: It was in 2003 that we have finally become Echoes of Silence. We found a new bass player, we composed a few more songs and we started to play live. But it wasn't finished yet... In 2005 we changed our bass player once again! It seemed us to be a never-ending story, but, with that new lineup (Paolo Maccheroni - guitar, Andrea Iacobelli - drums, Gian Paolo Cesarini - Bass and me on vocals), we've finally found the right balance. This is very important for us, because we don't have a leader, none of us is a real composer. Our music comes out quite naturally, when we're together. Quite every of our songs came from an improvisation in studio. We're a group in the literal meaning of the word. When we play we act as one and if anyone of us has a problem the others are affected by it.

Nattsol: And the year 2006 was the

right time for one more In The Night Time release, - the first full-length of Echoes of Silence. Tell me please, the story and the essence of this release.

Carlo: It wasn't easy to find a label for Echoes of Silence, eheheh... Seriously... actually the album was self-produced. I didn't want to use the label's money for my band. But I also wanted it to be an ITNT release. What a problem!!! At the end, with the other members of the band we decided to self produce it, but as an ITNT release. This also gave us a little help with distribution and promotion. The release of the album was quite hard, also because it was the first album for all of us. We had some problem to find a good recording studio (we changed 3 times) and we found very difficult to play separately to record the single instruments. So it took a few months to record all the tracks. But, at the end we are quite

satisfied, even if I quite never listened to it. I can't listen to my voice! As I told you before, the songs come out quite naturally, our music is just a way to express ourselves, our feelings. And the same is for the lyrics, they're all unrehearsed. I don't write them before (neither after! eheheh...). They don't have any particular meaning, they're just fleeting emotions. The main theme of the album is very easy to guess... yes, right, silence! Well, maybe silence is not the most appropriate theme for a band, eheheh... but isn't silence the best music sometimes? "Listen to the silence, let it ring on..."

Nattsol: What does Echoes of Silence do now? When a new release should be expected?

Carlo: We're still active, we have a bunch of new songs and we plan to record a new album. I hope it will be



ready by the end of 2010, and there will probably be a vinyl version. As a record collector I was always fascinated by vinyl and I strongly wanted to release at least one album on vinyl. In the meanwhile we'll continue to play live. We're looking for new dates at the moment, especially out of Italy. We never had the occasion to play abroad. Maybe one day we will come to Russia too! Who knows?

Nattsol: What are your the most "bright" (weird, mad, silly, funny, whatever...) memories, connected with the label and the band? Are there some stories you'd love to tell?

Carlo: My best memory is, without any doubt the concert of Section 25 we arranged here in Rome, in June 2007. It was promoted by In the Night Time and Post Romantic Empire, a

very interesting project of a friend of mine. We started to cooperate in 2007 and we've done very nice things during these 2 years. Back to the event, the band stayed for a couple of days in Rome and we had the occasion to spend some time with them. It was amazing to hear all those stories about Factory Records and Joy Division! I personally consider that the best part of being a promoter is that you have

the chance to directly know some of your favorite artists. I really love this, and I always try to be a good host to them. The gig was amazing too. Echoes of Silence played as support band and Paolo was the dj. I remember that we were performing our last song, a cover version of Transmission. As soon as the bass started to play Larry, the singer of Section 25, came out from the backstage. I asked him to sing, but he didn't want, telling me that I had to do it, and then he sat down in a corner of the stage next to us. He just wanted to watch us playing. I was frightened but at the end (I don't know how, but) I was able to sing... This was the last thing I've done with Paolo and I carry this memory in my heart.

Nattsol: Let's give a small promotion for one more project you're involved in, "Mannequin Mailorder". Tell, please, about its creation and purposes.

Carlo: Mannequin is a project born in the summer of 2008. It was a friend of mine, Alessandro Adriani, who inspired me. He's a kind of human database of alternative music, he knows quite everything, always updated with the latest news, and he's in contact with many labels (he also gave some help to a few of them). In addition to this I was looking for new way of distributing In the Night Time cds. So I told him to join our experiences for a project of our own. Our first goal was to become a benchmark for a certain kind of music in the Italian market. So we started to distribute a few labels that didn't have any kind of distribution. Things went pretty well since the beginning, we had a very good response from our customers. As I told you before, if the product is good, you will sell it. A small mailorder, like us, must choose its records very accurately and Alessandro is very talented

in that. There are plenty of good records, but you have to find them! The mailorder was going pretty well, but we wanted more... So, in January 2009 we were involved in the reissue on cd of a very rare 12" of an old Italian band called Cold Phoenix. The album was produced by the original label, but we took care of the promotion and the distribution. Then we produced a couple of releases of Alessandro's bands (Peter M and Newclear Waves) and we started to work on a compilation of Italian bands from the 80s. And that brings me to the next question...

Nattsol: ...and to the Mannequin/ITNT release, "Danza Meccanica - Italian Synth Wave 1982-1987". Could you tell the history of this release, what it's remarkable by and why it's a release of collaboration of MM and ITNT?

Carlo: This time the idea came from Alessandro. He spent about two years to find all the artists and to gather the tracks! It was a very hard work. I loved this project from the beginning and I strongly wanted to be part of it, because it fits perfectly with In the Night Time's goal to promote Italian music. Speaking about the record itself, Danza Meccanica is collection of songs from Italian synth wave bands from the 80s. Some of these bands have recently caught the attention of some foreign labels (Anna Logue Records, for example, is reissuing a lot of them: Carmody, Cromagain, Monuments, Lisfrank...), and it's very strange (and sad, let me say) that quite no one in Italy is interested in all these bands (there is only one label, Spittle, which releases some very good old Italian bands). Danza Meccanica is an Italian compilation, produced by an Italian label to promote a particular period of Italian alternative music, which didn't have the relevance it de-

served. Many of the tracks are previously unreleased. The album includes an introduction by Fred Ventura (one of the most famous italo-disco artist and singer of State of Art, a synth wave band from Milan) and the mastering was made by Ton Willekes (Ensemble Pittoresque).

Nattsol: You seem to be much involved person, - shows, releases, promotion, running own band.... How do you manage to combine your artistic and daily life?

Carlo: Well, considering that I have a job that takes up most of my time, it's very hard to manage all the other things, but I try to do my best (the results don't seem so good, considering that I took more than 10 days to answer to the last 3 questions! eheheh). I take one step at time and I never make a commitment I can't keep. This mean that sometimes I have to renounce to something (a release, a gig...), but if don't have the time or the resources to dedicate to a project then it's not worth starting.

Nattsol: Do you have any global purposes for your projects? Or may be a dream which they can make to come true?

Carlo: Honestly, I don't have any great dream. I don't want to be a famous singer or to have a famous label. My dream has already come true. I had the chance to do something for the music I love. I've produced records, I've recorded one with my band, I've arranged gigs and I've met many of my favorite artists. I couldn't ask for more!

Nattsol: To summarize, what are the plans of your projects for the future?

Carlo: As I told you, I prefer to think step by step. At the moment the focus is on Danza Meccanica. Then, there will probably be other releases (both

with In the Night Time and Mannequin). We're already working on something... For what concerns my activities as a promoter I think I'm going to take a break. In 2009 I worked really hard for an event that took place last October, the Post Romantic Empire Final Fest: 30 hour of non-stop live music, with artists from all over the world (Current 93, Legowelt, Mouse on Mars, Di-afamma, Sieben, and many others). It was simply amazing, but very hard too. I definitely need a break now!

Nattsol: You work on stage as a front-man, behind the stage as promoter... and you have your daily life. Are you different in these parts of your life? If yes, what is this difference reflected

by?

Carlo: I'm quite the same. Same dresses, same attitude. I'm a very quiet person and I don't like too much to expose myself (maybe because I'm shy too...), so I feel more at ease behind the curtain, but, as a singer, sometimes I've to go on the other side too... But even there I don't have any particular way of dressing or acting/dancing. My movements just reflect the feelings that I get from the music.

Nattsol: Is there something you'd like to change in the scene you work for? No matter if it's possible or not.

Carlo: I would like to see fewer rivalries. Too many people just care about themselves. I think that, with a little

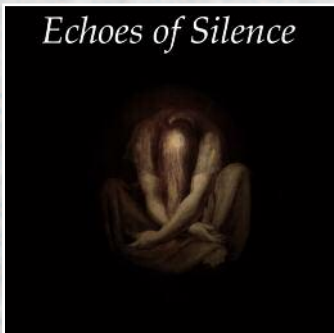
more cooperation between promoters, labels, bands, things would go much better.

Nattsol: Thanks, Carlo. And the final words are remained for you.

Carlo: I have to admit that I'm a little bit sad to finish this interview. I really enjoyed it. It kept me company these weeks. Thank you again for giving me this opportunity and congratulation for you fanzine. It's very well done. And thanks to the few who have been brave enough to reach the end!

*Questions: Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*

Echoes of Silence



Echoes of Silence – the self-titled album review

Hooray! At last, there is a band directly influenced by Joy Division in which this influence isn't harmful. Not too harmful, at least. This band is Echoes of Silence from Italy. To start with it should be mentioned that the band's leader and vocalist is Carlo Cassaro, the co-founder of one of the most important European goth labels, called In The Night Time and one of the persons who upholds the entire Italian scene being alive and unified. So it a priori can't be expected to hear a copy of something in a band with participation of this musical gourmet and connoisseur. Then, Echoes of Silence don't play classic post-punk. Quite unusual is the fact that in this band with the "basic" line-up (vocals-guitar-bass-drums) there is no base of any particular instru-

ment. Sometimes (as it's obviously seen from the very beginning of the album) active Joy Division's bass line appears, sometimes it is guitar, performed in early goth or even deathrocky manner which steps to the foreground, the drums which can "lead" all the instruments in the musical pattern (like in "Changes"), or Carlo's vocals which can from neutral and cold ones come to passionate and tense.

Yes, Echoes of Silence do play the music inspired by Joy Division, what is obvious from the first notes of the album. You may ask, what's the use in buying this release and listening to the "inspired" music? Let it be your own answer, but this band doesn't do copies; they put the influences through themselves, develop them and add quite unusual tinges. And it is just good music itself with very decent skills of performing and quality of recording and mixing.

Grade: 8/10

*Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*

Interview with VARSOVIE



<http://www.myspace.com/varsovie>

ID:

Name: **Varsovie**

Location: **Grenoble, France**

Time: **2005 - ...**

Close to: **decadence, post-punk, indie**

Current Label: **Editions la Hussarde / Infrastition Rec.**

Foremost the style of the band Varsovie can be considered as decadence, and only then as post-punk/indie rock. The band doesn't belong to any particular musical genre, but feels at home at any deathrock or goth event, being always expected guest there. At last, the band's debut album "Etat Civil" was published in December, 2009. What will we find in it? Arnault Destal, the band's leader agreed to represent it and answer some other questions about Varsovie.



Nattsol:

Greetings! Congratulations on your debut album release! I guess it should be reasonable to start the interview with representation of «Etat Civil» in your own words.

Arnault Destal: «Etat Civil» is something gathering post-punk, indie-rock and French «cold-pop» in a modern way, connected with various decadent, symbolist, surrealist or expressionist references. Add a bit of rain, a bit of rage, a bit of desperate and elegant actions, a bit of dust, some glasses of wine, whisky or vodka, some European cities at dusk, a last cigarette, a deserted landscape and a girl in the middle... Then you can maybe get something close to «Etat Civil»'s universe...

Nattsol: The album should have been released in the early 2009. Why had it taken almost a year delay with it?

Arnault Destal: Financial constraints are the first to impose their rhythm. For any young band that doesn't play «mainstream» music it's always a bit hard to deal with time. So we do as fast as we can. And it has been long to choose the better way to release this album. The songs have been recorded in the end 2008, thanks to a patron (Editions la Hussarde) who paid the whole recording at the Drudenhaus Studio near Nantes (France), during one month, with experienced guys who

were extremely motivated. Then two months have passed until the mastering... Then, we had to deal a moment with other stuffs called «life»... Then we've looked for some licences to publish the album. Finally we decided to do it with Infrastition Records. And here we are...

Nattsol: Your album contains the new version of the song «Leningrad» from your EP «Neuf Millimetres». Why have you chosen this song to do a new version? What is its meaning for you? And in your opinion, can the difference of these two versions represent the difference between the EP and the album?

Arnault Destal: The main difference is that we like the new one. With time we were not so satisfied with the EP version of this song and this is the reason why we decided to record it again. We had no problem with the other songs on the EP but this one was not as we imagined. So, we prefer the mix and the energy on the album version... The song tells about the Russian poet Sergei Essenin. The lyrics deal with his excessive life and death, in 30 years old, in Leningrad. A frantic artist who «sounds» deeply Varsovie.

Nattsol: Varsovie can be called one of the most French of the entire



French post-punk scene. What role does the French culture play in your music? And what are your lyrics about?

Arnault Destal: French culture plays an important role, yes. The history, the literature, the landscapes, the cinema, the cities and the tragedies of this country are a big part of our inspiration. We love to sing in French even if it's not always easy to make French lyrics stand out in «rock» music, particularly if I want to keep a poetic touch and respect some rules about pronunciation. About the «subjects» I can say that the lyrics explore some historic and personal crises that often cross themselves. There are some references to singular artists, some attempted exorcisms, some echoes to past events, some contemporary troubles, some symbolic cases... To be quick: love, art, faith, decadence and death are the fuel of the lyrics – it's not new but eternally interesting. An «English section» on our MySpace will soon be opened with literal translations of the lyrics – just for non-French speaking people interested in knowing a bit more about some songs...

Nattsol: Does Varsovie and in particular, «Etat Civil» have any foreign backgrounds and influences?

Arnault Destal: Yes of course. A lot of bands, artists and events from foreign countries have marked our music and continue to influence us... Our fates are often bound.

Nattsol: May be you can call some in particular?

Arnault Destal: As I've said before, Sergei Essenin's life for example on the song «Leningrad» or the Warsaw uprising on the song «Varsovie». I can add that the song «Mademoiselle Else» is linked with a Schnitzler novel and that «L'Art de la Fugue» frame is connected with Russia... «Etat d'Urgence» deals with the fate of modern Europe and so on...

Nattsol: Now let's have the retrospective look at the band. Let's start from the very beginning, - how has Varsovie been formed? Have the musicians had some previous experience of playing in bands? What was that?

Arnault Destal: I met Gregory in 1998 when we were searching for a new guitarist for the recording of the second album of my previous band, Forbidden Site, where I was already drummer and lyricist – it was radically different from Varsovie – more extreme, theatrical and grandiloquent. When this project ended I wanted to

return to my first musical tastes, and with Gregory we began to work on a project called Ex Cathedra in a more dark-rock-cold-wave style. Ex Cathedra became Varsovie in 2005, after two years of wandering – working on other projects – as we wanted a more direct name representing what we are on stage in a better way. Thibault Chapelat played bass from 2004 to 2006 but had to leave us, and now Yan Four completes the current line-up...

Nattsol: Is there any possibility to find records of these pre-Varsovie projects?

Arnault Destal: Not officially...

Nattsol: Contradictory to the band's music, the name isn't too original. Following the Bowie & Eno song and the first formation of Joy Division, almost every country has its «Warsaw». So why have you chosen this name?

Arnault Destal: Depends on what original means. Fortunately we are the only band called Varsovie... As I said before we were searching for a direct name. And after listing all the band names we liked, we translated Warsaw into French, as a joke, and it was a sort of love at first sight. It sounds really nice in French and as I had read some historic pages about the city during the WWII some years before, we found it perfect for supporting our universe in relation to the uprising of 1944 in the middle of the apocalypse... Those kind of desperate fights touch us deeply in general. In a way it fits well with the emotion we attempt to translate in music, this emergency. I generally like to start from universal events or historic facts to describe more intimate or personal feelings; some surprising echoes, links and correspondences can emerge.

Nattsol: When you gathered, how have you got the idea of the music you were going to play? Was that something which revealed itself from the first notes or you had the idea which you were going to realize?

Arnault Destal: Some influences, yes. Some directions, maybe. We wanted to sing in French... We wanted to make a music that we would like to listen. But, I guess something happened that we didn't really control... A kind of good alchemy at the right moment.

Nattsol: You recorded and released the demo and the EP, which now are sold out. Could you tell about them and about

of our influences are coming from those scenes, I guess. We have in common a manner to make sound music; we have in common some cultural aspects and some roots... And this even if we don't have the typical deathrock look, the typical post-punk «English style» or the typical cold-wave sound...

Nattsol: In particular I want to ask you about your video

of Sex Pistols cover you did with Eveghost (Scarlet's Remains, Christ vs Warhol). Can you tell me about this collaboration and the history of this video? Why have you chosen this song?

Arnault Destal: Eve came a week to visit us for holidays, in January 2008. (We've met together in 2007, in London). The day before she had to leave Grenoble we've met a guy with a professional video camera who wanted to make a short clip of us with Eve, but we had never practiced music with Eve before. After some glasses we finally decided to do a cover, and we thought of this punk song because it looked not so hard to do without practice. Then we listened two or three times to the original song in a car, in order to remind us a bit how it goes, and went to our rehearsal place and played it like that, with the guy around us with his video camera. So it was a total improvisation. Like a decadent postcard of a frantic week in France with Eve.



the role they played (and play) in the band's life? Is there any possibility to find them nowadays, or it's over with them?

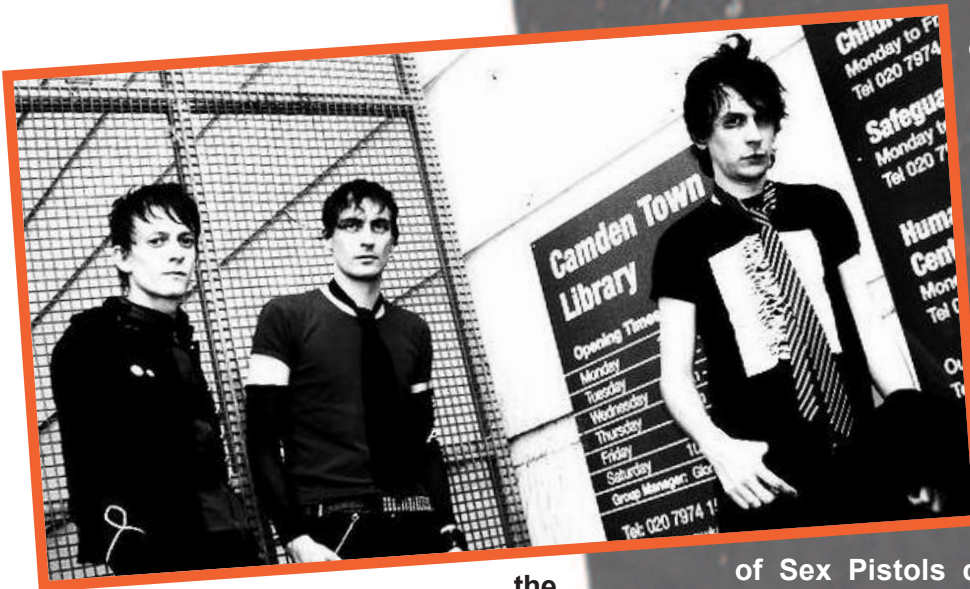
Arnault Destal: Thanks to the demo we did some concerts in France and we made the EP, and thanks to the EP we did something like 60 concerts in Europe and we made the album... For the EP «Neuf Millimetres» a sound engineer who had seen us on stage, here in Grenoble (France), wanted to offer us some days in his studio, for free, in order to record 5 songs, so we made it in February 2006... And yes, I guess we'll re-issue the EP... But for now we'll have to wait a bit...

Nattsol: This question can be considered as one of the most essential. The Varsovie women, the characters of your releases and the «soul» of your music. Who are they as persons and as symbols? How could you describe them by these photos, what do they wait for, dream about and so on?

Arnault Destal: These women express a state of mind, some atmospheres and feelings that make echoes to our songs. Maybe a kind of resistance of grace among the ruins, or at the contrary, the art of dying in beauty...

Nattsol: You had about sixty shows in Europe, and among these, Drop Dead festival, Batcave. SK show, the show in Germany, organized by Franz from the indie-rock / post-punk band MonoZid.... What's the scene you belong to? Even though you play indie and rock – oriented music, you're a welcomed visitor to any goth/coldwave/deathrock event. Do you have an idea why it's so?

Arnault Destal: I don't know if we belong to a scene in particular as our music is not so easy to label but we feel «at home» in any death-rock, post-punk, cold-wave, indie rock or goth event... Because a lot



Nattsol: What were the most exciting moments for you in playing abroad? And what do you consider as the most important parts of this touring?

Arnault Destal: Each time we play live is a great moment in itself. And it's always exciting. The concerts in London, Warsaw, Vilnius and Prague for Drop Dead Festival were of course important for us, but it's hard to say what we've preferred after about 50 shows. We've met so many different people and lived so many particular experiences that it's hard to make a hierarchy between the cities.

Nattsol: Varsovie can be called quite successful. In your opinion, what are the reasons of your success?

Arnault Destal: I don't know if we are so successful and I guess that a lot of successful bands are more than meaningless for me, but if some people believe in us and can feel close to our music, it's maybe because we are sincere in our work and we don't try to copy some established bands. We want to make the music we would like to listen, above all, with our culture and our references, and we attempt to express it in a radical way.

Nattsol: Back to nowadays, what were you doing in 2009 except searching for a way to release the album? What was this year for you?

Arnault Destal: Not one of the best years of my life, if it's the question, even if great stuffs have happened. We all have half-time jobs and I personally have some projects in literature... We've also com-

posed a lot of new songs for Varsovie and I guess that some will appear soon on stage and then on a second album...

Nattsol: ...and what do you plan for the future?

Arnault Destal: A lot of concerts to support «Etat Civil» and a second album, for the moment, this is it.

Nattsol: Do you think Varsovie has some relatives in music? And what about just friends?

Arnault Destal: Some people compare us to Noir Désir, but it's principally because we sing in French and the atmosphere of our songs can be sometimes close to their first album. If you seriously compare, you can see that we obviously don't make the same thing. Anyway, it's not a problem... We like the early Noir Désir period, it was a good band... Anyway, we could say The Sound, Joy Division, The Chameleons and Bauhaus for the music. Our various references are mentioned on our MySpace page.... Some friends in music: Christ vs Warhol, CNK, Violet Stigmata, Guerre Froide, Khôl, Villa Vortex, Joy Disaster... And some I forget for sure...

Nattsol: You said you plan a second album. Are there already any exact ideas about it? Is there any use in expectations for some serious musical surprises in the new stuff?

Arnault Destal: We've exact ideas of some songs that will appear on this second album, as we work on it since about one year, and I can say that it will be in the same vein as «Etat Civil» but with a more precise idea of what we're doing... Each song will be a surprise, of course!

Nattsol: Let's turn to a more literary space. You said you're involved in some projects of this kind, - could you tell more about it?

Arnault Destal: I've worked as literary reviewer for French magazines and I'm working for years on a project of short novels, when I find time... But I am not desperate to end that in 2010...

Nattsol: What are your preferences in literature and, in particular, in poetry?

Arnault Destal: Some classic names : Kafka, Baudelaire, Verlaine, Drieu la Rochelle, Maiakovsky,



Essenine, Nerval, Barbey d'Aureville, Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, Nimier, Francis Scott Fitzgerald, Apollinaire, Nicolas Gogol, Wilde, Schnitzler, Lovecraft, Blondin, Mishima, Poe... In poetry I like decadent, symbolist, expressionist and surrealist periods... And some rare actual unknown contemporary people...

Nattsol: If we take «the holy trinity» of symbolism, - Verlaine, Rimbaud and Mallarme, whose works are closer to you? And whose works are closer to Varsovie?

Arnault Destal: I would like to say Verlaine, because he was the best to incarnate the art of dying in beauty. Because music is essential in Verlaine's poetry... And because when you see the rain falling down on the blue-grey rooftops of Paris, this is Verlaine...

Nattsol: Do you find Art being in a kind of deadlock nowadays? And do you see any ways of its development? XIX century can be called the peak of synthesis, XX – the peak of destruction... what's remained for XXI century?

Arnault Destal: Art is always a kind of deadlock if you want to make a permanent new stuff. The question is not if you make something new but if you have a style. Style is the most important thing, I guess. And the style is inevitably something new and unique... I even don't talk about contemporary art where «concept» is everything... At the end everybody is naked, vomits, fucks and piss in

public and everybody finds it's really new and interesting... But 60s and 70s have passed, and so on... Provo-

cation is funny. But provocation for provocation sucks. Here in France to be «rebel» is promoted by the government, by the press, by your grandmother... It's cool. And some people really think that they create something new, showing their asses like everyone do... It's just so boring. A true rebel should risk to die or, at least, should risk to go in jail for his thoughts, and I don't see a lot of dead and prisoners among these so-called rebel artists... The deadlock is that «art»

and the «artist» is now connected to a concept of rebellion that is just a global program. A well-framed program that is paradoxically very conventional. Add on this the art marketing and then you remark that art sounds a bit like an empty word these days... Then, after some years, when everybody has pissed everywhere, maybe there will be a moment where the joke will end... And then we will have to find again a true emotion in art, a style, a strain, with some rules that we'll have to go round and some walls we'll have to break again...



Nattsol: In your opinion, what kind of sacrifice an Artist should have in order to create Art in the contemporary society? And what kind of sacrifices have you had personally?

Arnault Destal: You can sacrifice a lot of time and a lot of money. You can sacrifice all your life. But it's a choice. Nobody forces any artist to do his art. I won't cry on any sacrifice made by an artist to do his art. If you attempt to create something it's that you need to do it... Because you think that you've something to bring. Because you are sick or because you need that like a drug addict... Everything in life is a succession of sacrifices. And anyway, I don't consider myself as an artist. Let's see that when I am dead.

Nattsol: If you could change something in the world, what would you have changed?

Arnault Destal: The feeling that all what I like will be lost or despised in the future...

Nattsol: Thanks for the interview, Arnault. And your final words.

Arnault Destal: Thank you very much Nattsol for your interesting questions. We hope to come to play in Russia soon. Cheers to you all.

*Questions: Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*



Varsovie – “Etat Civil” album review

With almost a year delay, “Etat Civil” is finally out and shows that it's really worth to be waited for so long. It always has been a great riddle, how Varsovie manage to play so much romantic and decadent music without any “sweetness”, extra-pathos and affectation. And this approach is totally kept in the album, representing all the best what Varsovie has, what starts with these decadent women on the cover and in the booklet (it's actually impossible to imagine Varsovie music without these women), who seem not objects of sexual desire, but dreamy symbols of searching for some kind of pure and true love, and follows with the music. All the 11 tracks of the album are the direct followers of the band's previous release, the EP “Neuf Millimetres”, - they are dreamy, decadent and extremely romantic hits. What is really hard, it's to represent the style Varsovie plays. It can be called indie-rock, but it's too dynamic and not conservative. It can be called post-punk as well, but it's too lively, emotional and performed in a much more skilled way. It certainly has that French chanson-rock/new wave thing, perhaps, the most characteristic representative of which can be called Vincent Fallacara's “JEfH” and “TORSO”, but this genre is not enough to represent Varsovie. Actually, Varsovie music is all these genres and none of them at the same time, since this is the real case when the existing genres have no power in description of the band's music. Of course it has backgrounds, and influences, and not only the musical ones (for example symbolism and decadence certainly are the movements without which Varsovie never could've become itself), but they are so organically intertwined, that it's impossible to find some fundamental ones.

“Etat Civil” is the great example that there still can be done something new in the music even though it entirely consists of well known elements. And it certainly pretends to be called one of the best post-punk oriented releases of 2009.

Rate: 9,5/10

*Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*



Interview with **Guerre Froide**



ID:

Name: **Guerre Froide**

Location: **Lille - Nord-Pas-de-calais, France**

Time: **1980-1982; 2006-...**

Close to: **coldwave, minimal**

Current Label: **Brouillard Definitif**

Always cold and always minimal, Guerre Froide has had the "cult" status even before its reunion in 2006. And in the new century they returned with the album "Agnosses & Divertissement", which, apart from being the brilliant example of Guerre Froide music, also showed that the band has found its place in the new times. Now the musicians don't make a secret that they work on the second album. But it isn't the only aspect to be curious about. The band's past, present and future are extremely interesting for being explored since it seems that there's the whole own universe behind this band. So let's give a word to the musicians so they could tell us the Guerre Froide story.

<http://www.myspace.com/guerrefroide>
<http://brouillard-definitif.fr/>
<http://www.nordwaves.fr/>
<http://visiond1autreindustrie.fr/index.php>



by_Janicks

Nattsol: Greetings! The traditional start question is a “free” one, so please, give some introduction to the interview.

YVES: We’d like to play in Germany, further than Bochum, why not Berlin?

FABRICE: I agree.

Nattsol: What were the circumstances of the band’s creation in 1980, and what were its initial ideas?

YVES: So, how did it happen? Well, it happened in a basement. And sincerely, I don’t know what’s happened anymore. We had common friends, musician common friends. But how came to us the wish of doing that...

FABRICE: There was a proliferation of British bands doing punk that started to be released, and we wanted to do like them, just make some noise and then take some energy out, and after that we wanted to go a little bit further and work on sounds, like some bands did, at that time, to get out of the punk which has allowed us to unwind,

but which was also quite limited.

YVES: I wouldn’t say much better...

Nattsol: In those times have you had any sense of a new movement and were you inspired by it? What actually the atmosphere in the country was?

YVES: Of course we were aware (smiling).

FABRICE: I wouldn’t say «inspired». We were inspired by the movement impulse, but there were too many things to listen, too much different music to get really inspired by one style. We inevitably wanted to bring our part of creation. We thought we had something to bring...

YVES: And, moreover, each one had different tastes, so, even if we were part of a movement who was getting bigger, it was, like Fabrice said, very very diversified. Finally, we had very different horizons, from tough industrial of that time to softer bands, and improvisation tendencies, stuff like that, the movements was large.

FABRICE: We were aware that something was happening, but that something wasn’t clear enough to really inspire us. We were more inspired by the wish of change, the wish of create something more than by another music.

Nattsol: Guerre Froide. Why have you chosen this name, and what meaning have you put in it?

YVES: I think I already said it sometimes, in interviews, it’s our common historical reference to all of us, who are born during the cold war. Even if it was a leitmotiv, in 1980, the wall was still there.

FABRICE: It was our smaller common denominator.

Nattsol: Could you tell me, please, about your activity in the early 80’s (shows, releases etc) from the “inside” viewpoint?

YVES: Eighties, so far as I’m concerned, are quite short, because I think

that the more it goes, the less it goes. So, I would stop at the early eighties. Indeed, the interesting things happened at the beginning, I'd say 82-83, and after, all was already set up in what are called alternative, industrial, post-punk music, cold wave etc.

The richest things happened between 80 and 82, really. On the other hand, it's not evidently what's left on our memories. That slice, 80-82, was even the more unknown and the more disliked for various reasons because there are people, for obscure reasons, personal rancour or whatever who don't evidently wish to recognize themselves in it, after the event. But it's my personal point of view.

FABRICE: To be honest, I think that, in the 80's, I wasn't aware of the 80's.

YVES: Uuuh.. yes.. and you were younger than me, that's why.

FABRICE: I don't know, maybe.

YVES: No, I was aware of it very soon, at the early beginning of the 80's, but after, it's all gone wild... Besides, all good eighties bands quickly crashed, symptomatic of something which didn't stand up although there was a wonderful impulse at the beginning, and few people got out of that really Alive...

Nattsol: What are the most "bright" reminiscences of the 80's, connected with the band?

FABRICE: Her name was Agnes...

YVES: With the band? We could name a concert, that



by _Janicks

sounds common, well for me it's the one at Saint Germain Church, were you there?



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FABRICE: No I wasn't! No personally, I think the best gig was the goodbye concert we played just before this one.

YVES: Oh yes, at CSC Guynemer.

FABRICE: Yes with a movie projection of themrock before.

YVES: April 81.

FABRICE: But it's clearly associated to a girl I'm sorry...

YVES: Personally Saint Germain Church because... it's clearly associated to a cassock...

Nattsol: What were the reasons of the breake up of the first formation? When did it happen?

FABRICE: When I left, before the others, it was because it pissed me off, they were getting worked up, they already thought they were super band of the century, well, when I say «they», it's some people of the band, and it pissed me off. And there was an age difference, to me, there were old guys. Old guys who were trying to hijack some thing. Personally, I was clearly the kid in this stuff.

YVES: Fabrice left before the end of GF. The end of GF, it was a problem with the producer, I won't enlarge on that. Management and band's intern problematic that made it split. To sum it up, it's when the others learned that, by my fault, there wouldn't be a repressing of the maxi, there wouldn't be any management etc. It was a hard blow, so it imploded.

Nattsol: So, after the split. Hard to believe that you abandoned music then, so what were you doing? As far as I'm concerned, there were some other projects. May I ask about them?

FABRICE: We didn't give up music, we gave up music WITH GF, but we continued doing stuff and stocking it, and after, we had projects...

YVES: Yes, even if you add «Gegenacht» between the two projects, Fabrice and I made «Pour L'Exemple » together, after.

FABRICE: On the other hand, about the instruments, I've always done things, not as accomplished because there was no reason to release but I've always done stuff on my side.

YVES: And I've always written and sung under the shower.

Nattsol: The middle of the 00's was the time of your "comeback". How has it happened, and why you decided this formation to be Guerre Froide again? What keeps its spirit?

YVES: In fact, we were bored, each one on our side, so we decided...

FABRICE: Because new technologies allowed us to make things we couldn't before.

YVES: The opportunity was «now or never» in fact. I think that, for a long time, Fabrice and me we had wishes, individual or to share to make music again but we didn't know under which



by_Janicks

form. And indeed, the newest technologies allowed us to make our first album, which matches us much more than before.

FABRICE: Internet, myspace, all that, it created something around, guys pissed us off to get us starting GF again (I prefer not to name him), purchase of new hardware, well computers, we realized we could do stuff we couldn't before. That were very complicated before and that now became very simple. We didn't have this technological barrier anymore, we could do whatever we wanted to, about the sound, it wouldn't be complicated, or expensive.

Nattsol: And as for your currently lat-

est release, "Angoisses & divertissement". Could you represent it in your own words? What is it about?

YVES: Oddly, it talks about anxiety and entertainment... It's been made because we were frustrated, 25 years before, by the technique, and by having to stop for various reasons, but too early. The album's full of new tracks that were created very quickly, our ideas were gushing out, not always for the best, but we made a selection and after some time, less than a year I think, we had enough to make an album. We've done it because we really wanted to, a lot of de-

sires to share...

FABRICE: It's a comeback album, a mix of things we had wanted to do but couldn't realize at that time, that weren't so new in terms of sound and research but, we had them in mind, it had to get out, and now we can make something else.

Nattsol: You did some shows and tours after the reunion. What were they, and do you feel a difference in performing in the 80's and in the 00's? Which conditions you feel more comfortable in?

YVES: Personally, I prefer now.

FABRICE: We have a better control over technique and instruments. On my first concerts, I could barely play two notes...

SAM: Now, we easily doubled the amount of notes.

FABRICE: Something else, the concerts are quite difficult for us and often frustrating because we're not bass-guitar-drums rock band, the sounds getting out from the different machines and synths are very important. And accentuating them for a concert isn't that easy, especially with half an hour soundcheck... that's why we adjust our set towards the «easiest» things, the more energetic, more easy to listen to, which are not the most representative of what we do. In my opinion, people who know us can understand, people who don't know us at all, who listen to a GF's concert for the first time, I guess they don't understand that some people like it, that it has a so sophisticated reputation.

YVES: On stage, we are more in basic post punk than in what some people call «cold wave»...

Nattsol: And to finish this “chronological” part, could you tell me about your latest EP “Nom” and about the forthcoming new album? What will it actually be, and what your public can expect from it?

YVES: From what I know, a 10-tracks album on which there will be 2 tracks from the EP, and also a remodelled version of a track previously released on a Str8line compilation. So, 7 true unreleased out of 10, in the same guiding line as the EP, aesthetically...

FABRICE: More in accordance with what we want to do than the first album which, finally was quite simplist. But it's a little much more complicated to do, by the way I think the 3-tracks shows pretty well what we want to do, in terms of production, it's not as basic as the first album...

Nattsol: May be there're some other

plans for the future?

FABRICE: Personally, I really have to release my solo industrial album « Minimal Trash » before it gets completely taken over by GF.

YVES: And I really have to release my solo album, made of GF 's wastes.

FABRICE: We're a sustainable development band, when there are wastes, they're recycled.

YVES: I'm determined to keep my waste and to recycle them, I'm very serious, but the problem is I depend on Fabrice's technology to make exploitable waste... without becoming GF.

Nattsol: Guerre Froide is referred to so-called “coldwave” movement. What do you think of it? Do you find it a real movement, and if yes, what are the factors which unify bands which belong to it?

FABRICE: Movements always both-



ered me. GF is more cold wave than reggae, for sure. Minimal, I'm OK; eclectic, I'm OK, cold, I'm not sure it's a good definition. But people can't help but making categories, drawers, and we're in this one. Well, it's not the worse...

YVES: To me, «cold wave» is a label that has been invented at a time people didn't know what to place under some notice.

FABRICE: What pisses me off is when you're in a drawer, it means you don't have the right to get out of it, and it's a little bit boring actually.

YVES: It's almost pejorative because, to me, it doesn't match to a real collective approach, it's more a kind of abstract conglomerate made of very different things. From there, why not call it Dadaist? «cold wave» is simplistic.

Nattsol: And what do you think about the contemporary scene? Do you think that coldwave, if it ever existed, is dead, or it still lives? Is there something that attracts you in the new bands?

YVES: Dead cold wave, I don't know because to me it never really existed. It was not born at a precise time, well we could say «the eighties» but it's a little bit easy, simplistic. Moreover, we're not big fanatics of what is called «cold wave».

FABRICE: It's very academic, it's boring.

YVES: Somehow, I feel closer, in the spirit, of «My bloody Valentine» than any cold wave band. In the spirit, not

musically. Cold wave is assimilated to so many clichés... like all «environments»...

Nattsol: Is Guerre Froide a contemporary band?

FABRICE: In any case, not doing again the same stuff than 20 years ago, even if a lot of people are asking us to.

YVES: For instance «Demain Berlin»... We're not vintage addicts, all these people from years 2000, soon 2010 who absolutely want to make music with vintage instruments from 25 years, 30 years ago, I don't see the



point of it. Well, I understand, they didn't live it, so they want to do it. We have lived it, we don't want to do it anymore! As simple as that. Some guys come and tell «your sound wasn't like it was 30 years ago!» Well, fortunately! Otherwise, it would mean we never evolved!

Nattsol: Your lyrics are in French, so it seems logical to ask you, what you sing about in general. In particular, I want to ask you about the song «L'éternité» with Rimbaud's poem. Why have you chosen this cold, and probably even desperate poem? What does it mean for you?

YVES: Personally, I don't find it desperate. On the contrary I find it quite optimistic somewhere, although I'm generally very pessimistic. It matches me quite well, The Eternity. Moreover, I don't believe in God, I believe in nothing. Eternity is a kind of joyful absolute. The text is not easy, it's hard indeed, but not pessimistic. Well, I never felt it this way. And for me, it also was homage to Pierrot le fou from Jean-Luc Godard in which there's a quote «... go find back what is eternity...».

Nattsol: And in addition to the previous question, tell me, please, about your Art preferences, and what kinds of Art you find close to Guerre Froide.

YVES: Love, death, money... No, what's common, common to the whole universe, universal common topics. We talk about

us, sometimes others too. Often about everybody, that's the universality of it.

FABRICE: We also talk about your difficulty to live in the world.

YVES: Yes, since the first album, there has been a kind of crescendo in getting to a claiming.

FABRICE: First album is our difficulty with others; the second is more our hatred of others, then it will be...

FABRICE: I like images, moving ones, I think we call it video. Besides, what do I listen? This afternoon, I've listened to CocoRosie, Bjork, the Notwist...

YVES: For me, cinema and contemporary dancing.



Guerre Froide - “Agnoisses & Divertissement” album review

It's found again.
What? – Eternity
(A. Rimbaud “L'Eternite”)

FABRICE: I hate dancing!

YVES: If I was younger, I would do contemporary dance, now but...

S: For me, cinema, bis cinema, or even gore, rather European, 70's...

FABRICE: Our influences are so wide, it doesn't mean anything.

YVES: Yes, I like New Orleans jazz as much as the more obtuse «musique concrete», as long as it's well done, that it touches...

Nattsol: You contributed to tribute to Charles de Goal recently. What has this meant for you? Could you comment it?

YVES: It was a veiled reference. I immediately thought of a track I had listened to a lot when the album was released: «La Porte». To me, it was obvious to get along on this one.

FABRICE: Yes, and it's a band we like so it's funny. Funny to think we are trying to put our sound on their song, not doing it exactly as they did it, but doing it as we would have done it. And since it was them, it was not a problem.

YVES: And Charles de Goal are friends. Patrick even said they didn't play that song on stage, at the time, that's amazing.

FABRICE: And it's also because of the big amount of money we were promised, I've seen no sign of it ;)

Nattsol: Thanks for the interview, and one more, finishing “free” question.

FABRICE: I have a new guitar.

YVES: He has a new guitar...

In any time since Guerre Froide's existence the description of its music as “expressive feelings under thin ice” could take place. And there always could be some expectations that this thin ice breaks, giving freedom to these feelings. But this never happens, being an integral part of the band's style.

And even when the band reformed after very long period of silence, this style still is reflected in the best way. “Agnoisses & Divertissement”, the first album of the XXI century Guerre Froide formation proves it very well. The band represents itself as it was: minimal, cold, thoughtful and lyrical, and it seems that the new century hasn't harmed the band for it's still able to play Guerre Froide music, which sounds no less inspiredly than the 80's stuff. And as for the technical approach to the sound of the 00's, it only profited the band. To move forward with investigation of “Agnoisses & Divertissement”, it offers us two new versions (or to be more correct, two newly played songs) of “Demain Berlin” and “Remorquage” which in spite of having not much differences to the originals, sound pretty more accurate and this time they really do seem finished (though this sense appears only in comparison of the versions for the originals sound quite self-sufficient as well). And as for the new stuff, “Agnoisses & Divertissement” exactly contains some 100% hits which exactly will become the band's classics some time later, like melancholically-hopeful “Come Back”, “throbbing” and “breaking away” “L'Eternite” with lyrics of A. Rimbaud and probably the best song on the album and, in my opinion, one of the best band's songs ever, “Saint-Ex”.

It can speak for itself that the band's label Brouillard Definitif had to make some extra-pressing of the album since the first pressing was rapidly sold out. It proves that the album was expected and Guerre Froide exactly hasn't disappointed its fans. So, if you like Guerre Froide, “Agnoisses & Divertissement” really does worth to be heard for you. And if you don't know this band, I guess it can be one of few exceptions for “Agnoisses & Divertissement” can quite well describe what this band entirely is even though it was released 27 years after the band's foundation. And after such a powerful start, it's really hard to imagine what the new, to be out soon, release will show us. Let's wait what the future shows...

Questions: Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'

Rate: 8,5/10
Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'

Ligne D'Hiver

Ligne d'Hiver story started in 1983 in the wake of "afterpunk and the hopes of new cold sounds", in Brittany, north-west of France, in Rennes. Both Frederic and Loic had their radio shows on the famous local Radio Congas and used to listen to each other's show. They talk a lot about music and a possible "industrial disco" music concept. Loic is more into industrial and Frederic likes no wave. Finally, Frederic dropped the idea : "would you like to make some noise with me?". Early 1984, the cold wave duo gets in the rehearsal space and starts writing music. Ligne d'Hiver ("Winter Line") was born! They wanted it to be a one-shot band, "a one-night lived and ephemeral band". The endeavour lasted for almost 5 years...

We are in Rennes and that makes the difference of course. A lot of strange and cold music has been spreading from the city in the recent years. The most famous local band who got national attention and actually made it to a major company is Marquis de Sade. They disbanded in 1981 but their influence on the local scene is still very strong. With their live performances, Philippe Pascal charismatic presence, Frank Darcel singular songwriting, their two albums and a couple of singles, Marquis de Sade has definitively set up the vibe of the music that would come from Rennes for the years to come. The "Rennes Sound" is somehow cold and mental, the music is angular and serious; "intellectual" according to a few national rock critics annoyed by this new cold New Wave sound... I actually think that there is something romantic and dark in the celtic soul; as people from Brittany are Celts. I like to think about Rennes as the French Manchester. Same sense of a different identity, same strong sound coming from different bands from the same city at the same time, same attitude.

And indeed, local bands are thriving: Warsaw Pact, Prima Linea, Geisha, Les Stylistes, End of Data, Words of Goethe, STPO, Splashh, Complot Bronswick, Ubik, Marc Seberg, Octobre, Mecanique Rythmique... National press from Paris who rushed to the city to find out

what is going in Rennes will name them "Les Enfants du Marquis" ("the sons of the Marquis"), as a reference to Philippe Pascal and Frank Darcel band. Interestingly, at the time, Ligne d'Hiver founders are trying to find their own identity. They feel the rock reputation of the city as something suffocating for new young bands and are trying to free themselves from this. The band thought its identity was more into industrial and avant-garde bands like Tuxedo-moon, music looners like Pascal Comelade (of Fall of Saigon, the French Young Marble Giants); or Belgium iconoclast label like Les Disques du Crepuscule... and the whole Belgium scene. Also, Ligne d'Hiver had a very theatrical approach to the scene. They even wrote a music soundtrack for a piece, "Bellacqa ou la metamorphose". They used videos and dancers which was quite new and ambitious for a local band. But also technically complicated and expensive. Nevertheless, the band members thought it was part of their act and concept. They wanted to offer a full experience to the audience.

In spite of new band members and their contribution to the music, Ligne d'Hiver never got the music label attention they deserved. They dreamed of far-away destinations for their music but it didn't happen. After a dozen of live performances and a couple of contributions to compilations on independant labels, they disbanded in 1989. Loic wanted to focus more on his political union acrivities and Frederic had to join the traditional French army conscription. Loic later admitted having one fantasy: "to sing naked on the highest peak of Alaska mountains so my voice would be as trembling as Elisabeth Frazer". That says a lot about this singular band.

*Gilles le Guen
Special for 'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*

<http://www.myspace.com/lignedhiver>

Since the Spring of 2009: http://www.myspace.com/les_mammouths

Coming soon : <http://www.myspace.com/fredamry>

and let's not forget the mates : <http://www.airtist.com/algo> & http://www.myspace.com/theo_gavro .

Ligne D'Hiver

Interview with Frederic Hameury



Loïc&Frédéric (approximately 1986)

ID:

Name: Ligne D'Hiver

Location: Rennes, France

Time: 1984-1989

Close to: coldwave

Current Label: Brouillard Definitif

Nattsol: Hello! For a start, please, give a short introduction to the interview. It can be anything you'd love to say for a start.

Frédéric: I'd like to thank Brouillard Definitif for (re)discovering us. It's just wonderful to feel vindicated after all this time.

Nattsol: Rennes is a cult city for new/cold wave, there were quite many bands legendary for the style. Tell me, please, how have you got your musical preferences, what are they and has the atmosphere of the city influenced on these preferences?

Frédéric: Well the cold, grey & rainy atmosphere must have been an influence, but to me the whole LDH thing was first & foremost a rejuvenation of the pleasure principle behind playing music without thinking too much about how it should be made, something that had been lost with the other musicians I had been with beforehand (more of that below). That AND the fact that both Loïc & I were

into cold wave, industrial music & such. At the time it was either that or more mainstream music like The Police or even... AC/DC! Also I was (& still am) a big fan of Cabaret Voltaire and Gary Numan for example & of course we were both great admirers of Joy Division. Depeche Mode also was an influence in the sense that they mainly used synths, obviously, and I wanted to play synth as well as the bass. And sing a bit. The ultimate reference to me was Kraftwerk. They were (still are) like absolute synth gods to me. As for the Rennes scene, it was quite amazing at the time, featuring really original bands with a distinct sound like Marquis De Sade, Complot Bronswick, Orchestre Rouge or End Of Data. One other favourite of mine was Meca Rhythm (Mark II). They were like Rennes' answer to Depeche Mode, with great songs & a brilliant singer. Sadly they haven't been heard of since.

Nattsol: You said you "were into coldwave". Has there been any "coldwave" movement, or it came later as unifi-

cation of bands under one genre? Was there a sense of the movement at all, and, if yes, who were its followers?

Frederic: There might have been some sense among ourselves & others who were listening to The Cure or Joy Division that this was not ordinary music, yes. And also looking back upon it seems that the post-punk bands like Magazine or Ultravox, or LPs like Iggy Pop's 'The Idiot' & David Bowie's 'Low' changed our perspective a lot about how music should sound. And the key word was "synthesizer", I guess. And also a certain minimalism. The minimalism brought about by the punk movement had sort of been incorporated into something more elaborated &, yes, 'educated'. That was what we, at the very time when most of us were being dispensed with a college education, wanted our own version of 'rock' to sound like: minimalist post-modern rock with some sense of 'culture' & a discourse, possibly. I, for one, had also been very impressed with what Ultravox had been quoted to have said: 'We make film music with lyrics'. I've always been a great fan of film scores & composers like Howard Shore for example. And imagine my delight when I finally came across Brian Eno's 'Music For Films'. Also in Ultravox I had found a wonderful sense of succeeding in blending Kraftwerk with post-modern rock, as in 'Mr X' or 'All Stood Still', for instance. On the 'Vienna' album. Or implacable beats with great vocals & delirious synths, as in 'Western Promise'. Much earlier in time, but later from a personal point of view, because they were still, to me, undiscovered country at the time, Roxy Music's 'In Every Dream Home A Heartache' or 'The Bogus Man' had obviously been an amazing landmark for those who wanted to play more or less the same chord(s) for 4 or 5 minutes or more. One other example of how punk rock could evolve into something fascinating & not just loud & fast & dull was how Wire had transformed itself from the 'Pink Flag' LP into the '154' one. Simply one of the most inspiring LPs of all time for me. But it all goes back to The Velvet Underground I suppose.

Nattsol: Have you had some experiences of being in a band before Ligne D'Hiver?

Frederic: I was first in a cold rock band called SARAJEVO who later became what was to be known as La Société des Timides à la Parade des Oiseaux. SARAJEVO's main influences were Joy Division & Wire (see above). We used to cover 'Blessed State' from the '154' LP.

Nattsol: Now let's go further to Ligne D'hiver itself. How was it born? What were the circumstances, initial ideas... why this name?

Frederic: The name came to me as a mind flash while some musicians & myself were trying to find a name for a one-night-only Sarajevo side project that relied heavily on distortion. That happened during one winter obviously.

Then I met Loïc since we were both DJs for the short-lived so-called 'free radio' called 'Radio Congas', he told me he'd like to sing & also played some guitar, & LDH was born. We used to rehearse in a farm at first. No heating whatsoever(!)... Those were the days. We used Loïc's guitar & simplistic one-note synths & drum machines. And my electric Vantage bass.

Nattsol: What was Ligne D'Hiver on stage? What were the bands you shared the stage with? What was the crowd and so on?

Frederic: LDH on stage took many forms. First there was just Loïc & me doing the 'musical scenery' for a group of students who wanted to stage a self-penned play called 'Belacqua ou la Métamorphose'. After the last performance in Lorient (Brittany, France) we did a few numbers on stage as a duo then there was a great jam session with an electro-duet from Nantes called Da Vinci. Then a trio was formed with Benoît Careil on synth, & Carole, one of the 'Belacqua' students, once did some body expression in a metal cage during 'Crime Passionnel' (see the split E.P. Ref.BDSP001 entitled 'Ligne Froide'). There was also a time between the Marc Mathey (a.k.a. ALGO – See <http://www.airtist.com/algo>) period & the Lord de Vere one when Loïc & I performed once on stage using tapes. Not very satisfactory. But mainly it was Loïc, Lord De Vere & myself performing as a trio with drum machines, sometimes with Carole on backing vocals &, again, body expression. Once before a Minimal Compact set on the Rennes II campus, at one other time a support act for a French band called Movement in a Rennes discotheque called 'Les Fleurs du Mal'. There was also a great gig in a tiny café in the countryside around Rennes. Sadly we never performed live with Marc Mathey.

Nattsol: The band hadn't released anything when it was active, right? Just participation in "Leiv Traumas" for the entire 80's. How has it happened that there was no release until recent times? And could you also tell about the records the band did then?

Frederic: We released a tape demo of 5 songs, including 'Crime Passionnel' & 'Tired'.

'Titihoya' featured on 'Not Apartheid!', a Not Unauthorized tape compilation.

A Marc Mathey / Frederic Hameury instrumental called 'Fast Cities' was also featured on a compilation entitled 'Gilded Fall'.

Apart from those I honestly can't remember. Nothing was released on vinyl at the time though.

Nattsol: How had it happened that the band split?

Frederic: We had been apart for a year AGAIN (in 1986-1987 I had spent a year in Great Britain, hence the Marc Mathey / Loïc D'Hiver numbers such as 'Titihoya' in

which I had no part) because of my military duties (there was still a national service at the time) & Loïc decided to dedicate himself fully to his trade union activities.

Nattsol: What did you and other band members do after the split?

Frederic: I can't speak for the other band members. All I can say is I continued to write songs, but more so in a pop or electronic format. Various bands were formed, but none as original as Ligne d'Hiver I'm afraid. As Loïc said to me when we split: 'Ligne D'Hiver will be heard of again I'm sure.' And he was right.

Nattsol: After breaking up, have you watched over the evolution of the cold wave movement? How can you comment upon it since the 80's? And what do you think about the resurrection of the movement and the bands of the 80's?

Frederic: I don't have any comments except that it would seem that the thirty-somethings or even the twenty-somethings of today, or even some teenagers apparently, are not satisfied with the whole James Blunt / Charlie Winston / Ben Harper etc. scene or the awfully bland 'nouvelle chanson française' thing. Or the stupefyingly dull so-called 'chanson réaliste' scene as performed by acts such as Les Têtes Raides or Debout Sur Le Zinc. So they probably look for other stuff & become aware of the existence of bands like New Order, I guess, or The Cure, thanks to their parents, older brothers or sisters, teachers, the Internet, etc., or thanks to the so-called 'Gothic' movement's interest in Gary Numan, Modern English, Cocteau Twins, etc. We must thank Marilyn Manson in particular for that, obviously. Also it shouldn't be forgotten that some of the bands that were born in the wake of the postpunk / cold wave / techno-pop movements are still active today. I'm thinking of Depeche Mode & The Simple Minds in particular, obviously. So when one makes up his mind to know all about their discography one might discover older & much better stuff like the Simple Minds' 'Sister Feelings Call / Sons & Fascination' or Depeche Mode's 'Black Celebration'. Then there was also Magazine, Ultravox, Spizz Energi, Clan Of Xymox (a favourite of Loïc's), etc., or even The Undertones 'Hypnotized' for those who didn't want to have to listen to any synthesizers. Although some 80's bands like Milli Vanilli have been much maligned, & quite rightly so, it was an incredibly creative period when musicians really started to treat



Frederic & Loïc (198?)



the synthesizer as a rock instrument & use drum machines or tried to combine them with human drummers. Let's also thank Kraftwerk, Brian Eno & Roxy Music for that, because they did show us the way very early on.

Nattsol: How has it happened that you released the Split EP with Saison Froide? What can you personally say about the situation and release itself?

Frederic: It all started with Brouillard Definitif's head Sandra asking me if other tracks existed apart from 'Black Monday', which she had discovered & loved on the 'Leiv-Traumas' compilation. I must confess that I was amazed that people were still listening to that, but obviously this song had become an underground cult classic. We must thank Lord De Vere for that. He alone wrote the lyrics and the music by the way, contrary to what 'Für Immer's' inner sleeve suggests. I just played bass & did a few vocals. So I made a CD of almost everything I had on tape after digitalizing it, then re-equalizing it, cleaning up the sound, re-mastering it, etc., in my home studio. I even added a few things when I couldn't do anything about the sound, like a bass drum – played manually! – on 'Pourquoi?'. Oh, and a tambourine & some synth as well. Then Sandra told me that she & a few others were thinking of creating a record company & wanted to feature LDH as one of their first releases. So Brouillard Definitif offered us this deal & we took it. One of the hardest things was for me to find the other band members after all these years.

Nattsol: Ligne D'Hiver has very different stuff, and in particular when I reviewed the LDH songs of "Ligne Froide", I wrote that "surprising is the fact that both songs are done in the very darkwave and Sopor Aeternus manner, but when these songs were written, Sopor Aeternus hadn't even existed". Would you like to comment it somehow?

Frederic: Oh dear, I'm afraid I was not aware of the existence of Sopor Aeternus. Blame it on the huge gaps in my musical 'culture'. Maybe you should ask Loïc.

Nattsol: And the most essential question, your mini-album 'Für Immer'. What can you say about it? What does the name mean? What are the songs on it, and what do they personally mean to you?

Frederic: "Für Immer" means "For Always" in German, obviously. That was intended as a tribute to all the German bands that Loïc & myself liked at the time like Die Partei, D.A.F., Xmal Deutschland, etc. It also means that LDH is now immortal, no less! Also one of our early numbers, yet unreleased, was sung in German. Brouillard Definitif wanted to release an LP too from the very beginning. And their selection from the CD I'd made was the 5 songs on Side B as well as 'Black Monday', of course, and 'Pourquoi?'. Then I suggested 'Trouble' (Crime Passionnel 1986) because I thought that 3 songs on each side was a

better deal for the listener than 2 on Side A & 3 on Side B. And obviously there was enough vinyl! 'Black Monday', 'Deauville', 'Pourquoi?' & 'Walls & Bridges' were all mid-1980's 8-track efforts, financed by us, in order to have something decent for record companies to listen to so that they would offer us a deal. It turned out to be effective, but only twenty years later! 'Titihoya' is a bit special in the sense that it was one of three or four songs that Marc Mathey & Loïc D'Hiver recorded on Marc's 4-track equipment while I was in Great Britain. Another 4-track recording was 'Trouble', which Lord De Vere had re-arranged with me from myself & Loïc's early version of 'Crime Passionnel' (see 'Ligne Froide', the Brouillard Definitif Split EP referenced as BDSP001), which truthfully was a bit simplistic.

Nattsol: For that CD you've also made other unreleased, - is there any chance to see them released? What are these unreleased tracks (could you say a few words about them in general)? And do you want to keep Ligne D'Hiver as a band of vinyl releases, or there also is a possibility of a CD release for wider range of crowd?

Frederic: I do hope that one day soon we can release an LDH CD, even though that format is slowly dying I suppose. That's up to Brouillard Definitif or any other label that would be interested. These as yet unreleased tracks cover the whole span of Ligne D'Hiver's existence, from the early hardcore industrial days to the late electro-pop period, with all of the other Marc Mathey/Loïc D'Hiver recordings in between, including one to which I added some bass last year, i.e. 24 years later! I'd like to add that the Mathey/D'Hiver compositions are amongst my favorites, which is as objective as I can get since I had no part in them at the time. So I'm pretty excited about having them released.

Nattsol: Could you tell me about the other bands you contributed or currently contribute to? In particular I'd love to ask you about "Les Mammouths" and its approach to the music and the videos which're so close to avant-garde movies.

Frederic: 'Les Mammouths' originated in the late 1990's from a jam session on June 21st between La S.T.P.O. (see above) members & one or two other musician(s). Pascal, i.e. the singer of La S.T.P.O., grabbed a magazine & started recycling some of the words from the articles to form sentences, some of which had no apparent meaning. One of the articles referred to "le mammouth" as a metaphor for National Education, according to the then Minister for Education. Hence some of the sentences uttered by Pascal & the name of the 'band', which I 'joined' later. Mind the italics, since Les Mammouths is more of a reunion of old friends than a regular 'band'. The kind that practises regularly I mean. Or practises at all. You could call us a

CLUB I suppose. Les Mammouths never rehearse & have played a 'number' twice only once. So the 'sessions' follow one another with sometimes intervals as long as several years. We keep the 'numbers' we like & throw away the others. Recently the most enthusiastic member, i.e. yours truly, was so impressed with what had been 'produced' that he suggested we 'advertise' ourselves on the Internet, & myspace was suggested, for want of a stronger incentive to create our own website and also because we're as obscure as a Rennes 'band' can be. So we thought we had better start small. Then I offered one of the fans, i.e. my elder son Benjamin, to make two videos: one for a song of his own choosing & the other for 'Butée Divine', for which I had thought of a 'script'. As for the videos themselves you'd have to ask him, since he is the director after all. He's studying to be a filmmaker. Loves Sokourov & Tarkovsky by the way. By way of a final note for Les Mammouths I'd like to say that we're a biologically-grown, environment-friendly club with tusks, and, yes, we like to have some ice in our 'aperitif'.

N.B. The other bands I was in over the years are not worth mentioning.

Nattsol: As I know, currently you are working on your solo LP. Could you represent it and its music to our readers? When approximately should we expect this release?

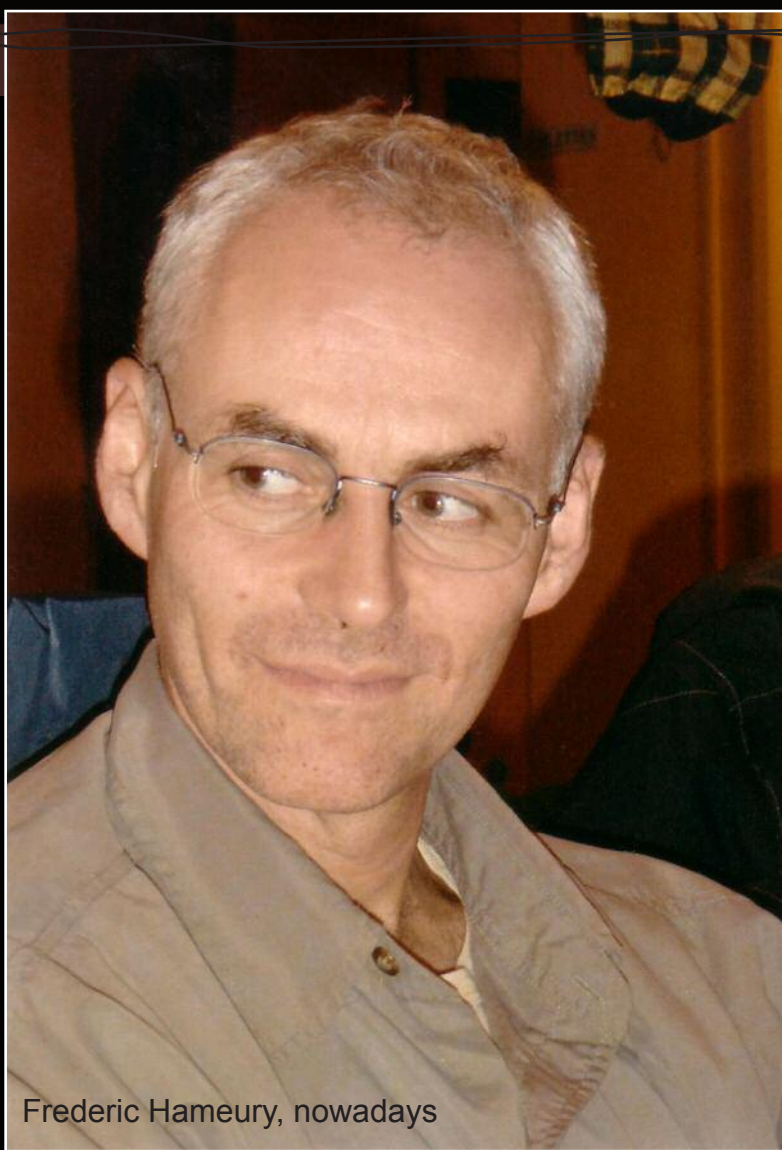
Frederic: I'm working hard to release a CD of approximately 10 avant-pop songs with a passion for electronica and some seriously tongue-in-cheek lyrics in French, English or German, for Christmas. It would feature such ironic titles as 'Down On Yer Kneez', & you can work out by yourselves what sexual practice that is in praise of, or 'Diskö Für Einen Schwein', which actually is the reworking of a very old title from my Ligne D'Hiver days & was also broadcast last year in Sandra Sieradz's radio show 'Radio Stranger'. I played all of the instruments, most of them as naïvely as I could except for the bass which I'm supposed to specialize in. However the drums were played by my elder son Benjamin who's also a film director for Les Mammouths (see above). The other drummer was Ghislain Couteau, La Rochelle's best drummer.

Nattsol: Ligne D'Hiver also records some new stuff, - is it so? What is this stuff? Is there a possibility of a kind of "resurrection" of the band?

Frederic: No new recordings or serious talk of any 'reformation' whatsoever for the time being. I can tell you more after Christmas.

Nattsol: In your opinion, what makes Ligne D'Hiver still sound actual?

It's not so much that we've remained 'actual' as the fact that 1980's cold wave or underground music or whatever you'd like to call it has become fashionable again (see



Frederic Hameury, nowadays

above). And I suppose most of our compositions were good enough & particularly sincere enough. After all these years, you can still sense the passion in the way Loïc sings.

Nattsol: What can you say about yourself into and apart from Art?

Frederic: I can't think of myself if I can't think of myself as a being immersed into the World Of Art. Not the sort of art for which you have to be an expert or a dully consummate musician, but more the Art that seeps out of you if you let go & relinquish control, i.e. the sort of control that you have to exert in everyday life, over your timetable or your diet for example. And once I start to let go, music comes to & out of me as if from nowhere.

Nattsol: Frederic, thanks for this interview and for this great possibility of re-discovering Ligne D'Hiver. And the final words shall remain yours.

Frederic: I'd like to thank all of our fans, yes, all 12 of them, ha-ha. And mark this: approximately TEN Ligne D'Hiver tracks are still unreleased!

Frederic Hameury

*Questions: Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*

Ligne D'hiver – Fur Immer LP review



I guess, everyone, who's at least a little bit familiar with coldwave, knows the Rennes scene for its own, unique style of performing this music and for so different, but at the same time obviously unified by something indefinable the city's bands. Indeed it's about to be impossible to imagine if coldwave never had Marquis de Sade, Complot Bronswick, End of Data, Ubik... but there were plenty of other bands, and one of them this review is dedicated to.

Ligne D'Hiver remained almost forgotten until recent time when Brouillard Definitif released their split 7" with Saison Froide, and soon after it we finally have the 6-track vinyl 12" mini-album which consists of the songs, originally recorded in the second half of the 80's. And personally, thanks to Brouillard Definitif and this release, I find Ligne D'hiver one of the best and the most interesting my musical discoveries for 2009. Running ahead, it should be said that the release consists of five 100% coldwave hits which any new wave compilation would be honoured to have. The album starts with the band's "ID", the song "Black Monday" which first introduced the band to public in 1989 in compilation "Leiv Traumas". The song greatly combines pretty pop tune and cold mystery. Enough to say that after just one listening you'll have no chance to drive this catchy tune out of your mind, but contradictory to most "light" "stuck" tunes, this one also makes sense which only true Art can cause. The next song, "Trouble" ("Crime Passionel" 1986) has already been included in "Ligne Froide" split 7", but as a live one. And with "Fur Immer" we have an absolutely different song. The desperation which was pretty obtrusive in the live here turned to a mysterious voyeurism of a grief with unreal decorations which

collapse at the final point and listener makes a surrealistic trip in his mind to the very heart of this grief. "Pourquoi?" begins with very Clair Obscur-ish intro, but then turns to quite thoughtful but dynamic track with keyboard/bass basis, being a great representative of new/cold wave music, pretty textbook, but with the band's personal face at the same time. "Walls and Brides" exactly is the track of the kind of "Black Monday", being not a copy of that hit, it has all its features, so I'd rather called them equal ones by their levels. To get understanding what the next track "Titihoya" is, try to mix in your imagination the most schizoid End of Data tracks like "If I was a Killer" or "3eme porte a gauche", with Complot Bronswick experimental tracks of Patrick Chevalier period and put it a little bit slower. Personally, I'd call this result a very avant-garde schizoid punk/new wave representative. And "Deauville" finishes the release. I said that "Fur Immer" contains five 100% hits, because this, the last release song is a song of outro kind. Some tense slowly fades and a listener sees "Fur Immer" dying. The conclusion is simple. "Fur Immer" ensured me that I actually know nothing about coldwave since there still are SUCH bands to be discovered. Certainly a musthave for any "cold".

Rate: 9,5/10

Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy

'Grave Jibes Fanzine'

ID:Name: **This Window**Location: **Barnstaple, UK**Time: **1980-...**Close to: **experimental, goth**Current Label: **m4tr.com**

<http://www.myspace.com/thiswindow>
<http://www.thiswindow.org/>
<http://www.myspace.com/finishthestory>
<http://www.finishthestory.co.uk/>

Interview with **This Window**

Peter Bright, the founder of "This Window", can tell about the British "goth" scene much more than many other involved people. He was there from the very beginning and not only saw it but contributed himself with the bands "The Urge", "Finish the Story" and "This Window". The recent release of "This Window", "Cassette Culture 1989-2009", seemed a wonderful occasion to talk with Peter and the second band's member Jake about the current situation around the band and also, of course, to ask Peter about his past activity.

Photo: Nicola, Finish the Story

Nattsol: Hello! I'd love you to start the interview with a kind of introduction to it. Whatever you think is interesting to say.

Peter: History is a strange subject, you don't really know you are part of it until time passes and when you realise you were part of a small piece of history everything else suddenly makes sense and you then know who you are.

Nattsol: Quite common question, however, it's a necessary one. How has you come to the music? What were your inspirations, purposes and so on?

Peter: My Dad was (is) a musician who played in dance bands in the 1960's. I never really took an interest in playing music until I was in my teens. My real involvement came when I went to the Art College and met Garry Smout.

At school I was taught English by Clifford T. Ward who had a massive UK hit in 1973(?) with a song called 'Gaye'. This long haired Wordsworth reading hippy's life changed over night. One day he was driving a battered old Ford Cortina and the next a flash Scimitar. I can remember thinking, "I want a bit of that". He was a real gent and it is a shame he had such a horrible slow wasting death.

At the Art College I was in a band called T34, with Garry, which was an experimental electronic thing (1979). We were booked to support a band called 'The Urge' at my graduation show. The singer of The Urge was a friend. His guitarist, a couple of weeks before the gig was sectioned under the mental health act and was sent to a secure hospital for treatment, so I was asked to sit in for him for this gig or until he recovered. I read chord sheets I had scribbled on scrap pieces of paper on stage (very un-cool) because I had no idea what the songs were. The gig came and in the audience was an

A&R man from 'Beggars Banquet Records' who asked the singer if he would like to support Bauhaus for a few gigs. The singer explained he had no guitarist, to which the A&R man pointed at me and said: "What's wrong with him?"... That is how I was offered my first record contract (which I never signed) and replaced the original founding member of the band - I was suddenly 'living the dream' and playing the best clubs in London, it was a bit unreal but great fun. The highlight of this period for me was being a witness to the signing of Bauhaus to Axis (which became 4AD) in a tiny little office at the back of the Beggars Banquet Record Store, it was great to be part of this little bit of history. It was also eye opening supporting and being on the same stage as bands like The Innocents, Protex, Adam And The Ants, The Pack etc. and even more bizarre being at Gary Newman's party to celebrate Beggars Banquet's first major 'real chart' success.

In many ways I accidentally fell into the music industry.

The past is repeating itself and my eldest son (Jake) has become the next generation to follow the dream and play live music, the nice thing for me though is that he is my right hand man and produces and plays on the latest This Window tracks.

JAKE: I grew up with it around me and it just kind of happened. Once I started learning about music I had something to say about it. I've always been interested in what goes on with This Window, but never actually understood it until a few years ago. Then I got involved playing bass and guitar here and there. I think the first thing I recorded was a version of "Trees Dance Naked" with Gary Smout from Finish the Story. I was 15. Musically I am a classically trained double bass player. The discipline was something I didn't really appreciate until my late

teens, so never really put as much into practicing or working until much later. Guitar and bass was kind of my 'undisciplined' musical outlet, so I focused on that as much as I could as a sort of rebellion against school life. I played with orchestras from a young age so got a grip on classical music quite early on. I didn't really appreciate it then, but now it's a big part of my musical understanding. Mozart and Placebo - both have had an impact on how I think and work musically.

Nattsol: Peter, knowing a bit about your musical activity, I can't keep myself from asking several questions about the band Finish the Story. Could you tell me about its beginning and describe it in your own words?

Peter: Whoever said life never repeats itself is a liar; this whole interview is based around chance and the same things happening over and over again. Russell Young (The Urge singer) and I were still close friends and we got together in London in a flat above Goode Street tube station and created a surreal performance ensemble called 'In a Glass Darkly'. Our live set comprised of Russell, two ballerinas in tutus and on point dancing, me playing guitar with a fencing mask - accompanied by backing tapes of dripping taps and ticking clocks. We performed at all the trendy New Romantic (YUK!) night spots in London and for some bizarre reason we appeared in Italian Vogue.

Meanwhile... Garry phoned and asked me to help him get a set together with a young girl called Nicola Baby Go Slippers. 'In a Glass Darkly' was fun but not really sustainable and by this time the energy had fizzled out.

I was aware that Nicola's boyfriend Stuart (who was the bass player with The Dancing Did) had unfortunately died in a car accident a few weeks be-

fore and that the gig was a one night only thing - it was designed to be a cathartic release for Nicola, she was full of anger and sorrow, letting it out on stage was thought to be a good idea.

Garry had also lost a sister tragically a few years before so I walked into something very heavy, sombre and emotional at the first rehearsal. I was just a whore looking for my next gig - in retrospect it was probably a good thing I was grounded.

Garry had already worked out drum patterns and pulses and Nicola had a vision in her mind of what she wanted to say and sing - my job was to come in and fill in the gaps.

Garry and I had a lot of common ground; we knew what each other were likely to do, so we used a few tricks from our T34 days - to make our task easier. We instinctively knew that certain things would work e.g. if I played powerful chords with a space between the changes a sense of drama and anticipation would be created. Likewise if Garry played long notes on

the string machine a sense of relief and elation would be created. Nicola and her haunted cries and whispers, simply and beautifully nestled inside a blanket of barbed sound, the nerve jangling relentless T34 blitzkrieg - a hybrid of sounds and influences, spawned from Kraftwerk, Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark, Bauhaus, Led Zeppelin, The Banshees etc - all ideas plundered from vast record collections and tapes, a Post Modernist dream. The result made the hairs stand up on the back of your neck.

We only rehearsed for a few hours together and then we supported The Dancing Did in a sleepy Worcestershire hamlet called Malvern. The gig was dynamite, I wasn't sure what I was doing - it was instant and edgy (the best way - like my first Urge gig). The press reviewed the gig, one describing our performance as, 'better than the second coming of Jesus Christ'. Nicola had found her voice and a way to exorcise her ghosts. Yet again circumstances meant I was now tied to another band.

Nattsol: What was the beginning of the 80's for UK in the music? What was Finish the Story on stage, what were the bands you shared the stage with, the atmosphere on the shows... (and so on, the crowd etc)

Peter: In the early 1980's the UK was recovering from PUNK. Punk had had such a fantastic influence on our whole culture; we were left with a feeling of 'where do we go next?' Musically things got fragmented and lots of sub-cultures popped up but nothing really dominated like Punk had done. In many respects we were in a similar situation to now, where nothing is the real driving force. Finish The Story didn't really fit in anywhere.

Performing on stage with Nicola was an intense experience - she was exactly what T34 (Garry and I) had been lacking. Nicola was the philosopher and poet - the grieving, suicidal teenager who could draw an audience right in and hold them captive for the duration of the show. Our stage shows were described as like being witness to some sort of voyeuristic, ménage a



trios, the audience didn't exactly enjoy the experience, they were entrapped in a huge spider's web, mesmerized by her possessed performances.

We supported people like: And Also The Trees, Blur but most of the time we did solo gigs around the South West of England and London. The chance to support The Cure at Hammersmith Odeon came about because Robert Smith had heard a copy of a demo we did called 'Doorways'. He liked it so we were booked and allegedly he mixed the sound for us. It was great fun - a proper dressing room, hospitality and catering and an after gig party. Hammersmith Odeon was a vast place and our pathetic amount of gear was lost on the stage. When the lights came on you couldn't see a thing it was like being in a small room.

Nattsol: How and why did Finish the Story break up?

Peter: There was always a tension between the three of us - sometimes it was creative and sometimes smothering - sometimes it simply got too much for us - musically it had got too intimate and close to the bone. Socially we had a good time - we were always a marriage of three and relationships outside the triangle were always difficult and fleeting. (Until we played at the Era Club in Bristol and I met my future wife.) With any ménage a trios there is always somebody left at some point twiddling their thumbs. Sex and relationships are not a good idea to mix into a band.

We were fortunate (although it was mainly all false promises) to have record companies sniffing at our door. We were booked to headline in a London club and the audience was going to be made up of A&R men from various major and minor labels. The build up for the gig for me wasn't that good, I had tried for ages to get a drummer

on board with us to enable me to slot back a bit in the mix and not be the constant musical 'powerhouse' but this was overruled in favor of a violinist. This drove me insane and the constant violin soloing in my ear on stage was too much for me - it sounded crap so I walked off in the middle of the gig and the A&R men walked out too. After an acrimonious divorce from Finish The Story I began recording my own stuff. Garry and Nicola carried on with another guitarist but eventually they called it a day.

After the dust settled Nicola got back in touch with me and we recorded some songs together and ironically we were offered a little deal and a track on a 'Beggars Banquet/Zig Zag' compilation album which came out in 1985. I had gone full circle.

Nattsol: And to finish this cycle, could you represent the Finish the Story releases to our readers?

Peter: There are unreleased demos from the early 1980's and we keep on considering whether or not to release them. Three other tracks Nicola and I recorded together were released in France in 1990 and then re-released in 2005 on a CD called 'The Sampler #05' which was a combination of This Window and Finish The Story tracks. There is a live bootleg CD available which is a badly recorded documentation of a gig we did in Exeter but to be honest there is nothing out there that fully represents what we were like. I think we were just a live band; you had to be there, which is a really dumb thing to say, but probably true.

Nattsol: Now let's turn to the direct subject of our conversation, I mean the This Window project. Tell me about its beginning, please.

Peter: I had been recording my own stuff since about 1980 and after recording the acoustic Finish The

Story track for 'Zig Zag' and hearing that on vinyl I thought, maybe I should release some more of my scribbles. I can't remember how I found Alain Neffe and 'Insane Music' of Belgium but he was the first to release my stuff on cassette in 1986. After that EE Tapes, IRRE Tapes, A State Of Flux, Old Europa Café etc. began releasing my music.

Nattsol: And some things I'd love to clarify with This Window. What are its name origins? And what is its style, references and initial ideas?

Peter: The origins of the name are rather silly but... During the 1970's and 1980's there was a TV show on TV aimed at pre-school children called 'Play School' and on it there was a section which showed little movies of different things like windmills, farms, trains etc. In the studio there were three full sized windows, an arched one, a round one and a square one. The presenter said: "And which window shall we go through today" (or something like that). You would then choose in your mind which window you would like the film to be behind and then the studio camera would pull into their selected window and the film would be played.

I had always thought this was an amazing piece of visual chance, a game to play in your head. I then began wondering what was behind the windows not chosen and in many respects this echoed my music - I had no distinctive style and I wasn't afraid to risk taking a chance, I never knew which window I would be going through, I never knew what I was going to produce.

Nattsol: Your discogs profile says that there were no records of This Window for ten years since 1995. Why so? And what was This Window in the 80's-90's period with its

music, achievements, shows, releases etc?

Peter: EETapes of Belgium released 'Extraction 2' in 1995 and this for me was the end of the road. I felt that I had done all I could do and it was time to quit. The digital age had begun and the cassette was a dying format, the production of CD's was expensive so I decided to stop recording.

The project I am most proud of is 'Extraction' which was released in Belgium by EETapes in 1989. Jake did a remix of this and it also appears on 'Cassette Culture 1989 - 2009'. This tape was a watershed for me - for the first time I had managed to mix together different recording processes and different styles and produced a product that worked from beginning to end in a cohesive logical manner. Amazing when the majority of it was recorded in a bathroom by four very drunk, naked people, one of which was Nicola from Finnish The Story.

I tried to be more inventive using experimental, analogue (tape machine) techniques e.g. the use of different tape machine speeds, different recorders, tape types, with and without noise reduction, the use of microphones (different types in various different rooms) at one point I used the whole house as a studio, the bathroom became the live room, the bedroom the dead room, etc.

I must thank Steve Portnoi, who was a BBC sound engineer and member of this early incarnation of This Window for his help on this project and I am still eternally grateful to Eriek Van Havere of EETapes for his faith in me. (I don't think I ever thanked them so this seems like an opportunity to do so.) I played the 3rd mail-art festival

(1990) also organized by Eriek Van Havere at OJC Clichee in Sint-Niklaas. This festival was a multimedia event, a combination of a postal art (Mail Art) exhibition, live music event



and live radio show. This was also a good moment for me.

I made a lot of friends during the cassette networking days and in many ways the 'Mail Art' and 'Cassette Scenes' created a mirror for MySpace, Facebook etc. to look into a few years later. What we were doing then is not a lot different from what people do now on the Internet; it was just a simpler, slower method of delivery. What we do now is just a larger reflection of what we did then.

Nattsol: Tell me please about your tape culture approach. What are tapes for you and why do you prefer them?

JAKE: There's something about having tape that's more satisfying. Mp3s

and other digital media are so clinical - there is no physical transition between playing a note and having it on a record - it's all sterile. You can't connect with an Mp3 in the same way as an LP, tape or even a CD. You don't remember where you were when you bought an Mp3 or why you bought it. It's just another 4mb on your hard drive to add to your collection. Peter: Jake as about said it all really. The greatest advantage digital recording has is the ability to reproduce silence.

I became really disappointed with demo studios in the late 1970's and Art School eventually got me involved in experimenting with recorded sound. The first machines I used were a Phillips reel to reel and a budget priced cassette recorder. Home recording equipment became more accessible in the 1980's and I recorded most of the cassette releases on a Fostex M80 quarter inch eight track or a Teac Tascam 144 cassette multi-tracking machine and mixed down onto a quarter inch Revox PR99. I also used dictaphones, telephone answering machines and anything else that would record sound. What I strived for then was clarity and no tape hiss but now with digital recording everything is perfect. Maybe the easy way in which things can be recorded now as taken away the experimentation? The recording equipment I'm using now is far more common place. Any PC, Linux or Mac will produce the goods. As I said above the main thing I got out of the whole cassette scene was the chance to meet and become a part of a network of likeminded people.

Nattsol: This Window in XXI century, what are they for each other?

JAKE: The XXI century is a very different place to where This Window was created. It's much freer and easier to get your 15 minutes of fame. I guess This Window stands on the credibility it gained in the formative years and



uses the XXI century to push new boundaries. Maybe we just use that credibility to take the piss? I don't know I guess the answer lies with the listener.

Peter: The Internet and all its possibilities, has made releasing material simpler. The postal networks we used in the 1980's and 90's were a lot slower and more expensive. This democratic approach to publishing via the Internet has destroyed the mainstream record industry. The business models of the 20th century no longer apply and ironically the 'Home Tapers' philosophy and strategy of DIY has suddenly become the mainstream itself. MySpace, ReverbNation and the others, have enabled the artist to become creator, producer, distributor and manager. The object as product and art, the cassette, the LP, the CD has been replaced by the file, as Jake eloquently said previously. The freedom we craved for in the 1970's has now actually happened. We all have bigger audiences and the distribution of music is cheap and mostly free to the end user but the question we need to ask is: "Are we better for it?"

I guess we keep going not for fame and fortune but simply be-

cause we have to. There is a need inside to create music that will not go away, even though old age for me is around the corner – maybe that is the challenge I am looking forward to.

Nattsol: Generally, is there something of which you could say "this is This Window in its best"?

JAKE: There's a recording of us playing live in Regensburg in Germany, which I remixed and was released on 'Cassette Culture 1989 – 2009'. We performed live in North Devon but streamed it to an audience on the continent and via the web to the rest of the world. That was an interesting experience. I'm very used to playing to an audience you can see. It was nice - the isolation means you don't worry about mistakes so much. The recording of the performance underpins a lot of things we rely on. Much of it was pre-recorded or sampled; some of it was played live on regular instruments; parts of it were a bit off the wall; and parts of it were totally spontaneous. I think all those things can be found in most of This Window's tracks, but that one stands out for me as it was one take.

Peter: I also enjoyed the live Plac.Art.X it was weird knowing the audience listened through headphones and watched us on video screens or were at home viewing on their PC's.

Nattsol: Let's stop more detail at your "Cassette Culture 1989 - 2009" release. Could you represent it?

JAKE: I guess it's a sort of retrospective look at what's happened so far and where we're going now. Some older stuff and some new tracks.

Peter: In December 2008, Electro Arc label (Germany) released 'Where Is My Jesus' on their Net.Ware Stimulation compilation album. This track was from a limited CD we did called

Boycott the exhibition
at the Landmark Theatre,
Ilfracombe, North Devon, UK
3rd Sept. 2007 – 7th Oct. 2007



'Morgue Studio Demos' and formed the basis for our iTunes, Napster, Amazon etc. mp3 which was released in January 2009. 'Cassette Culture 1989 - 2009' contains remixes of a series of demo recordings made in 2008 and a section of the live German Plac.Art.X, together with the complete remix of 'Extraction'.

My roots are defiantly in 'Goth' music, something that is residual from the Bauhaus support days - a couple of the tracks are blatant references to those influences. Jake has brought with him a new feel and edge to the process, so from that point of view it has been a very worth while project.

Like all of our releases there is no one style of music to tag us by.

Incidentally a remix of 'You Have The Power' did really well on the free Microsoft download promotion they did in mid 2009, and as a result it has become our most popular and downloaded track to date.

We were aided on this release by Marni de Much on drums and additional vocals by Caroline B.

Nattsol: What does This Window plan for the future?

Peter: There is another download available via iTunes etc. and mobile phone networks; it is called 'Again'. These three tracks are more of an acknowledgement of my electronic roots and the reworking of 'Again' has never been heard before.

Unfortunately it looks like Marni will no longer be part of our team but... We have a few tracks on the drawing board which should be released later next year (2010). This will be totally new stuff and leaning more towards my 'Goth' roots.

I have also started to record some new tracks with Garry Smout so a T34 release is on the cards for 2010 - we might possibly release the early 'Finish The Story' stuff as well.

Nattsol: Are you inspired by other art aspects such as literature, painting, cinema and so on?

JAKE: Whenever I've asked about where ideas come from I've almost always been given a literary or artistic comparison. The art world and the music world have always gone hand in hand - you can't focus on one section and expect to understand it fully. Debussy and Monet go together, as do Cage and Rauschenberg. It's a symbiotic connection, so of course we are influenced by other arts.

Peter: I can't follow that so I am going to be completely uninspiring and say there is a lot of inspiring stuff out there - simply being still alive is inspiring!

Nattsol: What do you think about contemporary music? Do you find some interesting projects among the young ones?

JAKE: I suppose I am one of the young ones so it would be unfair to comment.

Peter: What as amazed me is how many new bands have appeared recently that are of my generation (or slightly younger). It is as though, suddenly, the democracy I spoke of earlier has enabled everybody, young and old, to suddenly become brave enough to have a go or reform again. 'The Eden House' produced a fantastic album recently, they are not young but they are a relatively new band. We are living in strange times! (Besides I have always loved Julianne Regan's voice and song writing ability.)

There are tons of new unsigned bands out there - the biggest difficulty is digging them out from under the crap. It would be churlish to pick a favourite.

Nattsol: Is there something what you could call an ideal record for you? Or what could it be?

JAKE: There are a lot of elements to what we do and I don't think they'd all

be able to fit into one piece. I suppose we could have an ideal album, but we couldn't plan it - if it happens I guess it will happen by accident.

Peter: Ditto. It is just a case of waiting for that eureka moment.

Nattsol: That's about music, and what can you say about your daily life?

JAKE: I'm a music student at Bristol University. Studying music is excellent - it's strange how much of an influence reading about Stravinsky and Bach has an impact on how you work with contemporary music. I work with another band called Dastards as well as This Window so while I'm not studying I'm doing stuff with that. Or catching up with TV.

Peter: I am also a painter so when I have exhibitions coming up I am busy throwing paint around and swearing a lot. I am also interested in signing up new bands and releasing their stuff (this is a new project and is in an embryonic stage - but I will keep you informed.)

Nattsol: Thanks for the interview then. And the final words are yours.

Peter: Thanks for being interested and doing an interview with us - this has been a mind warping experience, I haven't thought about why I do what I do for ages. You have saved me a fortune in psychiatrist's fees.

*Questions: Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*



This Window – “Cassette Culture 1989-2009” review

It's the unbelievable fact: the borderline between post-punk and experimental noise music has the shape of... window. And the release “Cassette Culture 1989-2009” by the band/project This Window exactly confirmed that.

Let's for a start make clear what we know about This Window. It's the project of Peter Bright, the person who IS actually as much familiar with the British goth scene as it just can be, - his participation in the bands The Urge and Finish the Story and sharing the stage in the late 70's/early 80's with Bauhaus and The Cure indeed speak for themselves. But also we know that Peter is a painter and that he doesn't need any musical genres to work for. And to complete the picture, “Cassette Culture 1989-2009” is remixed by Jake, a pretty skilled and talented musician who's also Peter's “right hand”. So what can we expect from “Cassette Culture 1989-2009”? I think, the answer is obvious, - almost everything.

The release starts with post-punk experimental “You have the Power” which right from the beginning prepares a listener to some experimental stuff on a par with some British early goth tunes, quite soft, which actually made that Sisters-ish style, but exactly with the early 80's spirit when goth wasn't a cliché. Later on we can note that the musical pattern slowly flows into more experimental space, pushing this goth stuff to the background, and finally flows to pure experimental which begins from “Extract

(Live Regensburg Germany) and lasts four tracks (Extraction Part 1-4) after it. Actually, these traditionally for experimental noise music long tracks reminded me of very well Massimo Magrini's “Bad Sector” by sound and by that artist's approach, when an artist-musician paints with sounds different pictures, and sound becomes about to be visible. So, Extraction Part 4 finishes and the history repeats itself: goth tunes appear again on a par with experimental in “Hungry Children” and goes into pure goth super-hit “Where is My Jesus” which actually some people find played in a Sisters of Mercy style whereas I don't think so, probably because I usually find some cheap copies in this gothic rock music while this sounds extremely initial and primary.

Listening to this release can be a real pleasure in spite of, or may be even because of its ambiguity. Only one thing is really incomprehensible: why it's released only through the web while that's exactly not the web music, it requires for CD at least, or may be even vinyl sound. And one more thing which confused me is this compilation title while this release doesn't seem as a compilation at all.

Rate: 8/10

*Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*

Interview with Corine

<http://www.myspace.com/excesnocturne>
<http://www.nordwaves.info/>

ID:

Name: Exces Nocturne

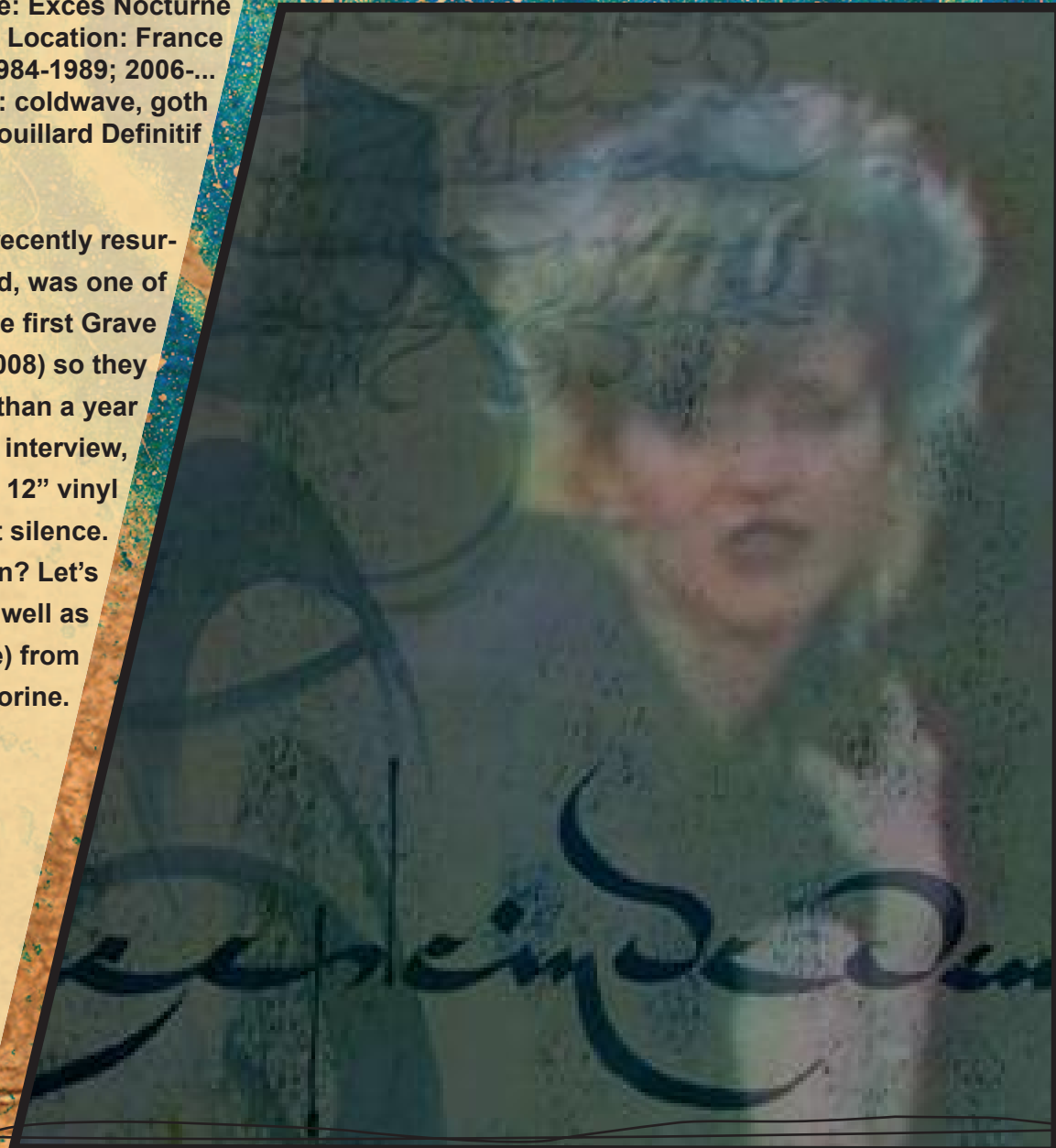
Location: France

Time: 1984-1989; 2006-...

Close to: coldwave, goth

Current Label: Brouillard Definitif

Exces Nocturne, the recently resurrected coldwave legend, was one of the headliners of the first Grave Jibes issue (04.11.2008) so they are now as well. More than a year has passed since that interview, the band released its 12" vinyl EP and then has kept silence. What do they plan then? Let's try to find it out (as well as many more, of course) from the band's singer, Corine.





Nattsol: Hi, Corine! A year already has passed since our first interview. Generally, what's happened since then? And what was this year for you and Exces Nocturne?

Corine: Well, a lot! I wasn't sure all has happened within the year, but... a year ago, the tribute to Christian Death was released and I loved the release party where I met lots of people I like! And then, we released our 4track vinyl and since then, I've spent a lot of time redecorating the sleeves, buying feathers, and pens. And now, new projects are cropping up, so I can say this year was very very exciting!

Nattsol: I'll ask you about these new project a bit later, but now let's turn our attention to the latest EP. Tell me, please, first about the old songs there: why have you chosen these three, what have they meant for you before you gave them this new birth and what do they mean for you now?

Corine: I don't remember who decided, (except for "Mem-

oire") I just have the feeling we agreed on the titles, which is probably wrong...! I really wanted to re-record "le soleil s'est noyé", as it's probably one of my favourite songs, ever. The one I still sometimes find myself singing. I wanted to give it all I couldn't express before, due to the poor technical conditions we had. I remember when we recorded it, it was at my home, with Richard. I was never happy with the result, I expected each note to be exactly what I had planned, and of course, it never happens, as you get caught in the thrill of the song, in the emotion. Specially because I didn't write the text and it means so much to me. And I kept saying "I want to record this part again". Eventually, Richard mixed it before I could record it for the hundredth time. And I felt he did a great job.

But I'll always be frustrated with this song: it will never be as perfect as I wish it were... Well, I can never be as perfect as this text, that's it! But I think what Richard did is perfect!

As for "La vie peut etre cruelle", we loved the new rhythm Richard gave this song for our concert in Lille, so we thought it would be cool to make it exist for real.

And I do remember that Richard and Remy insisted on recording "Memoire". Remy, more specially. I think he

enjoys playing it. I'm not particularly happy with the lyrics, which I find too short, not developed enough... And also, we created "Memoire" at a time when I had to be operated on for my voice, and singing was very painful at that time. The first recording session was a nightmare and I can still hear it in my voice when I listen to this song (I never do, actually!) Also, the lyrics were gloomy, it speaks of the power we have to forget parts of our life that are too painful to remember, like a black hole. I know that too well and I don't like that memory, precisely.

Nattsol : Can you say that now these songs tell about other things in comparison with the previous versions?

Corine : I like your question! Because, yes, they do sound different to me, because the reality they express is different today, and that's why it was very interesting to re-record them! "Le soleil" for instance was kind of a desperate tribute to the person who made me discover Baudelaire. At that time, our relation was not easy and that was a way for me to say "listen to what I've got to tell you". It was full of despair, sadness, and I was really choking, just as Baudelaire when he wrote the lines. Today, this relation has grown, and things are much better now; so I'm more focused on what the text meant for me and how I'm feeling today. So I sing it with more passion and more faith. Like I'm breathing at last. To me it's very very different, I'm not sure people can tell, from listening to the 2 versions.... Well, it's not necessary, anyway...

Nattsol: And for the new track. First, could you introduce it? What is it about? It certainly can be considered as Exces Nocturne in its best, so how have you managed to keep your style after this long period?

Corine: Well, that was a tune I'd been singing for years, like an unfinished song.

I sent it to Richard and Remy and they liked it. Remy added guitars and Richard the bass and drums. I actually didn't have this idea, when I imagined it. To me, it sounded more like "spellbound" from Siouxsie and the Banshees. But well, that's what usually happens: we have different musical influences and we always end up with something that is a crossroad... that's probably why we still have the same style!

The lyrics are about people we meet in their life online, like on myspace, for example! One of our early supporters had chosen "me.in.silence" as a nickname. She organizes concerts in Italy. I

thought she had defined perfectly what myspace was for me: me in silence, browsing through other people's lives. At least, the life they had chosen to share. That's how the lyrics came: me in silence, and thousands of lives. Thank you for seeing it as EN at its best... it's really sweet I was not very comfortable singing it, though: I'm not used to singing positive lyrics.

Nattsol: To summarize for this EP, what general advantages and disadvantages do you see in it, and what does it represent in general?

Corine: To me, the biggest advantage is technology: we were able to record in fabulous conditions: although we were 1000km away from Remy, it was easy to communicate and exchange tracks, just add up tracks and top it up with vocals we recorded in my living room... or at my brother's home studio... We were able to really enjoy it. Pure pleasure!

And then, with the Internet, we can talk with the people who listen to the EP, it's magic!

I am happy this EP gave us the opportunity to live Exces Nocturne this way, with all of today's possibilities.

As for disadvantages... I can't think of any!!

Nattsol: Seems, that almost everything what could be released for Exces Nocturne is already released. But there was the live K7, unreleased video tapes... may be something else? Could you tell a little bit about these records? Is there any possibility to see them re-released? And what can you advice Exces Nocturne fans who want to get it but don't know how?

Corine: You're right, there are live tapes, unreleased stuff... but it usually has very poor sound quality. Already, some of the stuff we used for the compilation is not very good quality, although Remy has remastered it...

What I'm trying to do at the moment is compile all the sound I can find in old rehearsal tapes. I convert everything to MP3 and if I can find something interesting, I'll make it available, if the boys are okay with that (but I'm sure they will be...)

I think it would be cool to post it on the web so people can download it.

I'm also planning to save all the old video tapes to my computer, to make videos, adding another sound track.

I'm also scanning all the old pix I

have, manipulating them sometimes, to "clean" them. But it's a long work... it's too bad I need sleep too!

Nattsol: According to your words, after a Cd and a vinyl release you don't mind moving to a web release. What determines your and the band's decision about the format of release? What are their advantages for you?

Corine: To me, what can be available on the web is everything which is ours and hasn't been released by a label: We've always been ok with being downloadable on the web, and Dahlia Noir has been on peer to peer networks for years. But labels do a great job and we don't want to be a threat when they release our albums... It wouldn't be fair to them. So if we have an agreement with them and they ask we don't web release, it's just fair: they've spent money on us so it's right we help them the best we can.

But I'd be happy to post and share everything we can find in our archives. I was thinking of a website, dedicated to pix and MP3s... and older material, but I don't have the time for it now, and also, we'll all have to agree on that before.

Especially since, now, we are 4 again!! Thierry, our drummer, who left just before we recorded our LP «l'echo des lumieres», is back in Exces Nocturne!! He'll be part of all the new projects and I think it's so exciting!!

Nattsol: Finally we've come to the actual time. What's the current situation around

Exces Nocturne, and what are the band's plans if that's not a secret?

Corine: So the current situation is very very exciting as it means getting all back together (except Remy who is always in the lovely South of France, but very present with mails and MP3s) and I'm sure Richard, the bass player will be so happy to work with his brother again in Exces Nocturne, you see, Richard joined the band because his Brother was the drummer and he was dreaming to play with him!

So the new projects as a 4piece are: a cover version of Joy division for a compilation album, with Infra-stition again (they released our 86.06 compilation), and a cover version of French band Martin Dupont (we have not agreed yet on the song we'll choose, but soon!) This one is for the Str8line label, I really like their work, and also the idea of the compilation: you give your name and they organize a draw: each band is associated to another band and they have to cover one of their songs. But it's not reciprocal! That means, Martin Dupont are not covering Exces Nocturne.

Then, we also plan to re-record «Chats qui» for a compilation with Brouillard Definitif label (they released our vinyle). This track is Manu's favourite Exces Nocturne track. He's the founder of Brouillard Definitif, and he's also the puppet master behind Exces Nocturne getting back together!! So I'm very happy we can do that for him: we'll record the song exactly as it was



when Manu heard it for the first time.

Nattsol: How do the things go with the band's live performances at the time?

Corine: It's still as difficult, honestly... as long as Remy lives so far away, it's hard to find a suitable solution... Rehearsing is very difficult: we have to do it separately, and I can tell you, when you start the first song live, you never know how things will go... as you've never done it before together... Very uncomfortable, and very weird too!!

Nattsol: To summarise, the reunited Exces Nocturne activity, we have: two new songs of 2006, which actually aren't new; the Christian Death cover, one new song and the plans of doing two more covers. Since that new song, "Moi dans le silence", is done extremely great and it really shows your ability of doing brilliant things, the question appears: when will we be able to hear more Exces Nocturne new songs? And is that the distance only which so much slows down the creative process?

Corine: Yes we're currently working on new material. We have got a big project: a new CD for the next year!! It's still a secret, well, now it's not anymore... ? And this time, Thierry will be with us on drums, which makes it still more exciting! I'm writing new lyrics, although I thought I had nothing else to say... I've found myself writing again, and I was very surprised... It must be because I'm so thrilled with the project! It's true that distance makes it a bit slower, but I think what happened so far was that we were all very busy with other projects: Richard was touring with Brisa Roche and recording her new CD, Remy has his other band, Intimty Pop, and I had my own side projects, so it's not as easy to find time... Also, we all have a family now!

Nattsol: You mentioned your side projects. Seems that you haven't told about them before, so can we improve it now?

Corine: Well, I'm currently training in other domains, so it's not musical projects, one of them is calligraphy and painting and I love it, so I spend all my free time with pens and brushes and nibs... and it's invading my life, and my space. I write about everywhere (walls, boots, bags, coats...) and it's a terrible disease!

Nattsol: Your new CD, what is it going to look like? Or, if you can't say now, do you have any personal forecasts about it?

Corine: I don't know... but before I even started writing lyrics and tunes, I wanted to be sure that the boys all agreed I would be in charge of art work...! I would be so disappointed not to do it...!

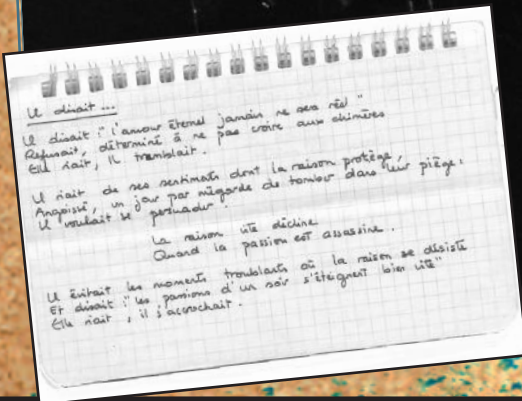
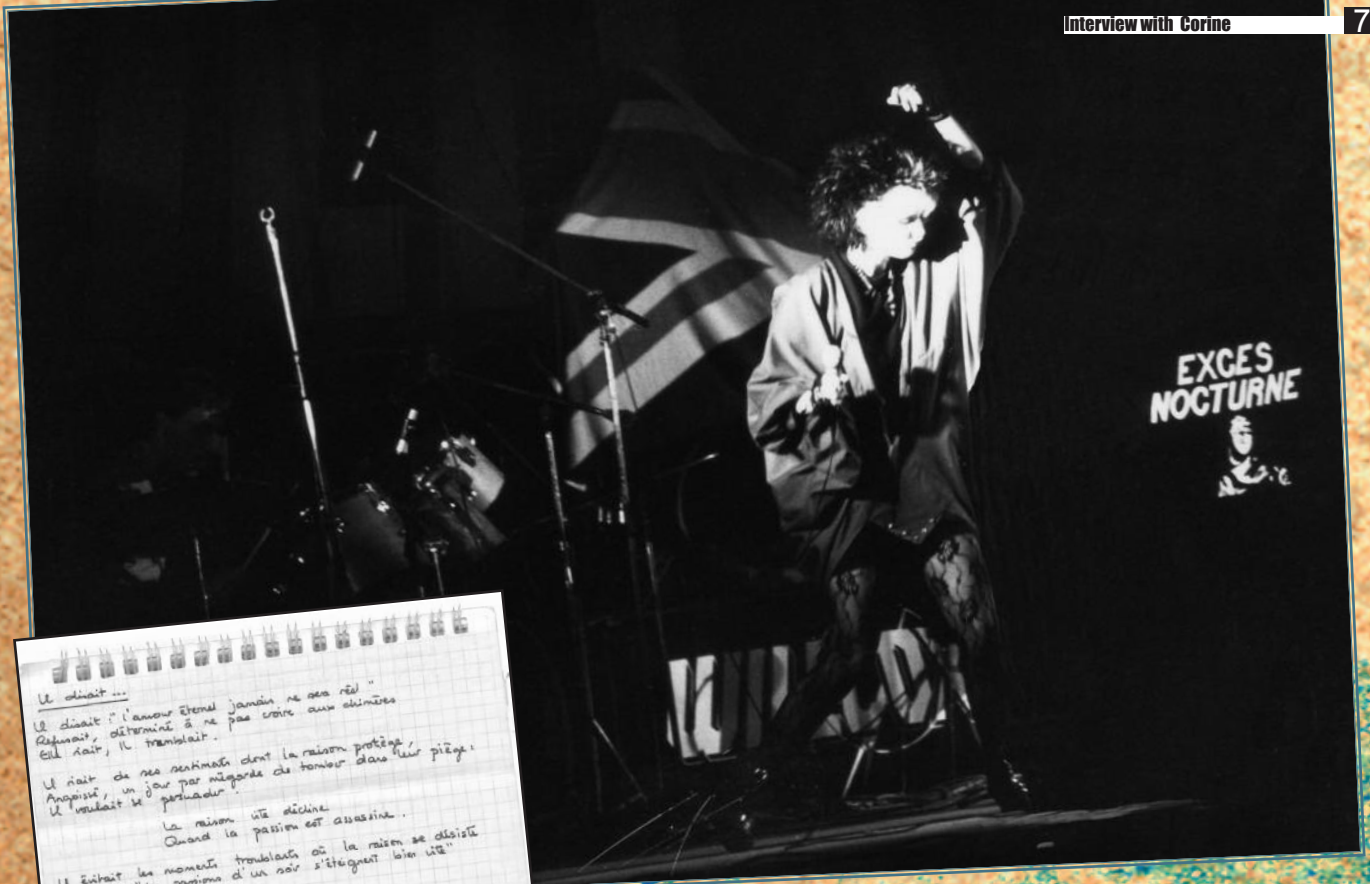
Nattsol: You got Thierry back to the band. How has it happened and what kind of changes can it bring to the band?

Corine: It really was a misunderstanding, back then, when he left. We realized that years later. And I'm glad it's over! And now the misunderstanding was cleared, we got in touch by email and everybody seems very happy to work together again... The kind of changes it will bring... Thierry's got a very personal rhythm, always very special, so it helps to find something interesting: I used to listen the way his drums breathe, it's like a heart beat, to me, so it's very inspiring! And I'm sure Richard will be very happy to work with his brother again, also, drums and bass breathe together...!

Nattsol: I guess many readers of the fanzine will patiently wait for the news from Exces Nocturne, and now since the "musical" part of the interview is over, we can turn to some free questions. To start with, could you list a few records which were recently played in your stereo? What are they for you?

Corine: Well, I usually listen to female voices. I don't know why... they make me dream. I wish I had an ethereal voice!! So I've just played one of the first Belcanto albums. Shimmering warm and Bright and Spiderdust are my favourite, I think. I was lucky to see them live and it's a wonderful memory! They make me feel like clouds singing, and sometimes, I feel like I can't breathe anymore ... it's sort of magic! I've been listening to a lot of old Japan albums, like Adolescent Sex for example. I always listen to Japan because I think his voice is so pure, and at the same time it is so sensual! And I find him dead sexy!!

I also listen a lot to An Pierle, a Belgian band with a girl singing in English, and again, a beautiful and pure voice... I saw her live, it was a heavenly coincidence... I didn't know anything about her, except she's Belgian. And the concert was just wonderful! Very emotional too. I don't know why, but she started crying while singing, she didn't seem to know why and it made her laugh too, but she couldn't help and I guess a lot of people in the audience felt like crying too... it was beautiful! Her music is with me at day time, when I'm working and



it's quiet.

My latest biggest musical crush is Cinema Strange, I love his voice, although it has the strange power to give me a headache if I overdose!! A bit like Castrati... They are a real drug to me!!

Their music makes me think of vampire-like grins, carved knives and slit silk: at the same time so sharp and dangerous, and so beautiful and elegant... Listening to Cinema Strange is like traveling in a dangerous landscape full of terrifying shadows and weird colours, and yet you feel it's the most wonderful place you've ever been, and you can't leave.

Nattsol: If your fans are asked what's the colour for Exces Nocturne, I guess everyone will answer "blue" without any exceptions. Could you try to explain your love to this color? And what's the relation between the band, its songs and colours?

Corine: Wow, I'm speechless, there... Honestly! You see, I just realized it was my colour, a few weeks ago... It's brand new to me and there you are with this statement... I just can't believe it! (long silence!)

Well, I would have said everything about Exces Nocturne was dark, and black used to be my reliable friend. And not a long time ago, colours came back into my life and... It's sort of exploding, you know, like catching up all those lost times! And Blue just imposed as the sign of life, hope,

light... And I'm surprised you should know... before I do. Do you know the biggest surprise in my life is my daughter and her name is... Blue...? Well, I'm sorry all this is not very coherent, it's because of the shock (laughing).

Nattsol: Any punky band has something to protest against. And what do you protest against? How has it changed through years?

Corine: I guess I used to protest against how difficult it was to live. I protested against myself, actually. Well, that seems very self centered.... it wasn't, actually, it was just very hard to live with myself. I just had loads of mountains to climb. Writing helped me achieve part of the way.

Hopefully, this has changed over the years and I eventually realized I could find a cure. But all that time, I was helped by all the lyrics of the bands I listened to... Sometimes I wonder what I would be without The Cure's "Pornography" album... and later, without the light I could hear in Belcanto's music.

I'm less epidermic with music now because it's less painful. So I can enjoy more things.

Nattsol: You certainly are a person who loves literature. What do you think about the contemporary literature?

Corine: I just read whatever happens to

be on my way, which is not the best way to choose, actually, because there are so many wonderful books I have not read yet... And I often enjoy a book without even knowing who wrote it, like the one I'm currently reading, strangely named The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society...!

But I have a preference for the beginning of the 20th century literature.

Nattsol: And who are your favourite authors (not only poets), and can you call what do you love them for?

Corine: Today, I'd say my favorite is Amelie Nothomb. I love the way she plays with words!! But the authors who really are important to me are poets. I love Prevert, Queneau, Vian, Appolinaire, and most of all, Baudelaire and Verlaine. But they are in my genes. I feel Baudelaire describes the world as I see it!

Nattsol: Linking literature and the band again, can your stage behaviour and image be associated with a book, a poem or a character? Why so?

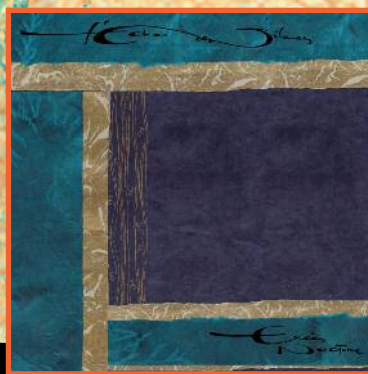
Corine: You see, I would be very happy if someone else answered that question... I don't know... I don't often watch me on stage... I'll have to post some live footage on the internet and ask what people think about it. Have you any idea about that?

Nattsol: Well, I think it's possible to say so only being a woman, really! Thanks for the interview, Corine. It was extremely nice to work with you again (and thanks for the postcard!). And the final words are yours.

Corine: Well thanks a lot to you!! I really enjoyed talking with you, and I loved your questions!! They made me travel and think... and discussing with you also gave me some ideas for a new song, so thanks a million.



Questions: Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'



Exces

Nocturne -

"L'Echo des silences" 12" EP review

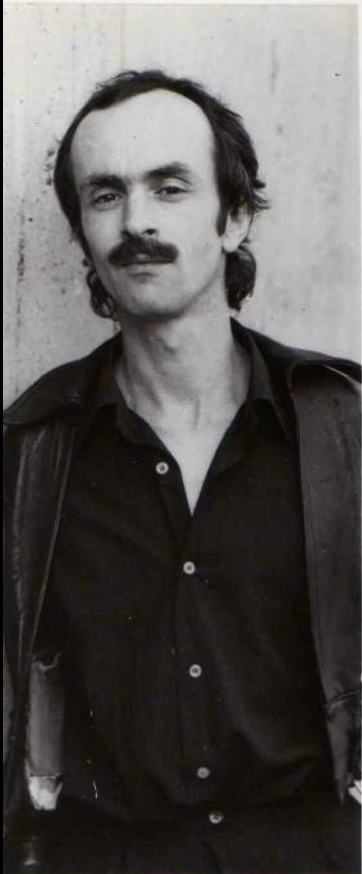
The originality of this vinyl will be the sleeve: the first hundred sleeves will be original items as I will redecorate each of them personally, so each will be a different and unique sleeve.
(Corine, interview for Grave Jibes #1)

I guess everyone can say that we lose something while we grow up. Some features pass away, some new appear. The same happens with musical bands, and Exces Nocturne seems to be the unique example for they haven't lost any features they were known and loved for in the 80's and got plenty of new ones. The EP begins with the new song, called "Moi dans le silence". In comparison with those songs dated 2006 ("Mots Dits" and "Et du bleu", which can be found in the band's compilation "86-06"), which personally I found rather weak stuff in comparison with other songs of the band's synth-ish side, reflected in the songs like "Cauchemars blafards" and others, first, this track is a guitar one. And second, it's Exces Nocturne in its best. Being of the kind of "L'echo des Lumieres" and "Le Soleil s'est Noye", "Moi dans le silence" doesn't yield to these songs by all the aspects. The same thing can be said about the new versions of the three old songs, "Le Soleil s'est Noye", "Memoire", and "La Vie Peut Etre Cruelle". The band managed to do very hard work in a very good way: the new sound approach, which is done extremely professionally hasn't destroyed the fragile spirit of the songs. As for general atmosphere, the emotions which are put in these songs are reflected much more sincere and less artificial (what again, hasn't manage to destroy the band's "coldness"). "La Vie Peut Etre Cruelle" sounds much more romantically-desperate than it was in the original, "Memoire" has extremely well-balanced mix of passion and coldness and "Le Soleil s'est Noye" has greatly combined dynamism and temper.

Generally, from the very first acquaintance, this small musical jewel promises that it will turn to be something very special. It's so, starting from the sleeve which I'd rather say reflects the Exces Nocturne essence, and moreover, it is simply very beautiful, and finishing with the music, which not only shows that the professional level of all the Exces Nocturne musicians obviously grew up, but also shows that these musicians still have some words to say and they exactly know how to do it.

Rate: 10/10

Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'



Hans
Keller



Michael
Ruff



Matthias
Schuster



Jürgen
Weiß

GEISTERFAHRER



Interview with Matthias Schuster

ID:

Name: Geisterfahrer

Location: Hamburg, Germany

Time: 1979-1991; 2004-2006

Close to: dada post-punk, avant-garde, experimental

Current Label: NLW Rec / Plasticfrog Rec. / Domelchklang Rec.

Geisterfahrer. What this strange band with unpronounceable name can be, a one may think. Unfortunately, it's not too rare reaction whereas these mad experimenters and talented innovators were one of the pioneers of post-punk music in Germany. And the conversation with the band's founder Matthias Schuster seemed to be the brilliant opportunity to know more about the band's history, the atmosphere in Germany when post-punk has appeared, and about Matthias's other musical projects, of course.

<http://www.institut-schuster.de>
<http://www.thegeisterfahrer.de>
<http://www.myspace.com/balpare>
<http://www.myspace.com/imnamendesvolkes>
<http://www.myspace.com/matthiasschuster>



Nattsol: Hello, Matthias! To start with, say some words about yourself, please. You seem as a person who's very close to Art in all its reflections. Is that so? Tell me how you got involved into it?

Matthias: I was born in Hamburg, 1953, after school I started studying art at different artschools, so I did not start with music but with painting etc. In 1974 I founded the electronic music group LICHTJAHR together with Jan T. Krahn. We played at different art exhibitions, made music for theater performances etc. The music at that time was strictly electronic and more kind of avantgarde. In 1977 I was in London and enjoyed the punk explosion, so I returned to London in 1978 and 1979. Inspired from bands like the HUMAN LEAGUE etc I formed my first solo project STROMAUSFALL when I came back to Hamburg. I've got invited to play at Hamburg Markthalle, at the In Die Zukunft Festival, but a few days before I met Hans Keller in a recordstore in Hamburg and he was very interested to play violin and guitar along my synthesizers. Holger Hiller who lived with Hans together liked to play with us and after that I met Michael Ruff who was writing little stories and lyrics so he joined at last and we decided to change the band's name to GEISTERFAHRER.

Nattsol: Thanks for this introduction, Matthias. Could you tell a little bit more about your first projects before we step further?

Matthias: After school I studied art and played in dif-

ferent rock bands. But tended more to electronic sound so formed the group LICHTJAHR with Jan T. Krahn, two synthesizers (PPG), lots of echo machines etc, so we played at art events. There are lots of recordings but they've never seen the light. Next band was STROMAUSFALL, pure electronic but with rythm machines, more punk orientated which resulted in IM NAMEN DES VOLKES 1979 when I released my first EP IM NAMEN DES VOLKES – "Ich War Da Leergebrannt" on Konnekschen Rec. Later recorded under my name Matthias Schuster "The ATEMLOS I" LP, "The Ritual" EP both on Konkurrenz Rec in 1981 and then my synth pop projects JEANNETTE & DAS LAND Z and BAL PARE, both 1981 on KONKURRENZ. At that time I produced lots of German bands including that NDW smash hit "Fred Vom Jupiter" from ANDREAS DORAU , but lots of bands like SAAL II, CHOCOLATE FACTORY, BROSCHE, and so on...

Nattsol: I must confess I can't keep myself from this question. You were in London just when this European punk explosion began. So it's extremely interesting to see it from a "spectator's" viewpoint. Could you try to do it, please?

Matthias: Yes, London, this was absolutely amazing because when I went to London I must confess i was more electronic and hippie orientated. I knew nothing about punk, even the word was new, because in Hamburg punk hadn't existed at that time. I wanted to see

INCREDIBLE STRING BAND at The Marquee but when I arrived in 1977 the concert was canceled and MEAN STREET were playing, so I went in but that had nothing to do with music for my ears at that point. They were smashing glass bottles over the audience so it rained glass and the audience looked like coming from strange planets with its rotten outfit and those needles thru its face, at that time it was shocking, today every girl wears tons of tattoos and tongue piercings etc but in 1977? Later I recognized that MEAN STREET was Gary Numan's first band. I saw there lots of bands like SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES, GLORIA MUNDI, THE PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY, PENETRATION, etc and believe me that was pure energy, it blew me away, I forgot everything I knew about music and thought: THAT'S IT!

Nattsol: For me GEISTERFAHRER became a band which reminded me that Dadaism is initially the German movement (I guess we can say so, can't we?), so could you please describe the general atmosphere about the Art in your country at the time you began? And in particular, which Art directions and Art actors you were inspired by?

Matthias: So, I came back to Hamburg and formed GEISTERFAHRER, but nearly three years after that first punk explosion, so, you're right we were more DADA orientated and our heroes at that time were more THE RESIDENTS, CHROME, etc. This is crazy because you say it's a German thing, of course

it is, but we heard lots of American bands at that time, but RESIDENTS were of course inspired by German DADA like DEVO were too, I think. But not only DADA that inspired me, I came back to the experimental 70s so I was influenced by bands like THIRD EAR BAND, VAN DER GRAAF GENERATOR, too. And still those psychedelic folk bands like INCREDIBLE STRING BAND. The art scene I was in at that time was of course DIE JUNGEN WILDEN, THE WILD ONES, like my friends I worked later with ALBERT and MARCUS OEHLER, WERNER BUTTNER, I recorded later that great "Lousy Times Are Here to Stay" with BUTTNER/OEHLER, this is real weird music and the cover artwork was by KIPPENBERGER. Anyway KIPPENBERGER was great.

Nattsol: So, further about GEISTERFAHRER. Could you tell me how the band "stood up"?

Matthias: Yes, GEISTERFAHRER:

GEISTERFAHRER was never formed as a band, it was a project just for that In Die Zukunft Festival, and as I wrote to you it was first called STROMAUSFALL and only me.

But at that gig we were crucified by the punks, they hated us really and we destroyed them with tracks like SIMPEL 1 and SIMPEL 2 and SIMPEL 4, they smashed us with glass bottles on stage like I encountered in London. You can hear those glass bottles and that riot on stage on the latest GF CD "Zurück In Die Zukunft – Geisterfahrer live" which came out on





NLW last year. There are the first two gigs released that one at Hamburg, Markthalle and that second at HfbK (Artschool, Hamburg). All fanzines wrote this was the worst they ever heard which filled us with pride of course. So, we got an offer from the new formed ZickZack label from Alfred Hilsberg to record the first single for ZickZack, so we did. (ZickZack 001). From that time we hadn't appeared live on stage for 4 years, we lost any interest in live performance but started recording records. Holger Hiller left to form Palais Schaumburg, Jurgen Weiss joined GF to play drums (I never wanted a drummer, drum machines are better) but things changed. So, this always was an inspiring point we never planned to be a band but we let it happen....

Nattsol: So about records of that four year period, - could you tell their stories and drop a short description of them?

Matthias: After that 7" at ZickZack records we moved to Phonogram records, a major label, because ZickZack expected that we had to work at my own studio without getting money for the production, but my studio at that time was very limited and we wanted a "bigger" sound. At Phonogram we started with "Schatten voraus" which was very "German", as the cover artwork reflected as well. Of course we were inspired from bands like JOY DIVISION but also German bands like CAN, AMON DÜÜL etc. The lyrics tended

to be very "dark" at that time. Second was "Fest der vielen Sinne" and was made as trio because violinist Hans Keller had left the band to go to New York. That was more powerful and perhaps inspired by bands like THE BIRTHDAY PARTY, etc.

Guest musician was guitar legend Mayo Thompson from THE RED CRAYOLA on two tracks. After that we left Phonogram and I overtook The Konhurrenz Label to work fully independent so we moved back to GEISTERFAHRER studio to record our third album "Topal" again as trio but this time without singer Michael Ruff like a mix from "Schatten Voraus" and "Fest", but with Erdem Güngörecek on bass guitar. So, for this album I did most of the lyrics and was singing alone.

Nattsol: So these four years passed and you returned to the stage. What circumstances made you do that? And what has the band turned into on stage?

Matthias: In 1985 we met guitarist Any Giorbino who played a lot of solo work but as well with Kastrierte Philosophen etc. At that time we got an offer from What's So Funny About Label to record our new album, now with studio budget etc. So we started recording "Fischgott". We got an offer to support the Swedish rock band LEATHER NUN for their first German tour, so it came that we appeared on stage again but this time as full working rock band with two guitars, me and Andy, Erdem on bass, Jürgen on

Drums and back again Michael Ruff on vocals. That tour was a big success and after that "Fischgott" was sold out so played a lot of live with bands like DINOSAUR JR, CRIME AND THE CITY SOLUTION etc etc for the next five years.

Nattsol: What were the things that much impressed you (from the musician and from the listener viewpoints), and what were the most crazy things you were involved in in the 70's-80's period?

Matthias: I think the early years were the most impressing things, like recording "Schatten voraus" etc. And it's still the best record from GF I think. As listener I think that short period of punk explosion was most inspiring and it was at that not only punk there was new music at every corner like industrial, cold wave, new wave, no wave, etc.

Nattsol: I see there was a huge pause in the releases of your projects in the 90's. What was it caused by?

Matthias: After our last gig in 1991 with Camper Van Beethoven we left What's So Funny About. We never split but we got tired a bit of playing, recording etc. I was searching for "new" music, we started experimenting with electronic, drumloops etc but nothing worked perfect, means I wasn't satisfied with most of it. But in 1994 I recorded with Jürgen Weiss the album "Himmel und Hölle" which came out in 2007 on Domelchklang Label as a mini CD. It's dark and minimal but in the 90s there wasn't any interest in that kind of music, everybody was in techno at that time, especially in Germany.

So, I moved more into art scene, made installations at Hamburg, Kampnagel etc. I lived at time from recording commercials. In 1998 I met Trautonia Capra and we formed DAS INSTITUT which we're still working with, last at August in London. Since 2000 there's a big interest in 80s music so I restarted my old projects BAL PARE and IM NAMEN DES VOLKES, as well as GEISTERFAHRER. We did a few gigs in Berlin, Hamburg etc and recorded some new material which will come out soon.

Nattsol: In your opinion, what's the difference between past and present GEISTERFAHRERS?

Matthias: GEISTERFAHRER started as a project not as a band, it got a rock band in the 80s, mutated back to a project in the 90s with experimental electronics and came back for a few rock gigs in today. Don't know what future will bring...

Nattsol: So, you said you "moved more into art scene, made installations <...> etc". Could you tell more about this aspect of your activity? Who are you in the art scene apart from the music, and where some your works can be found?

Matthias: Yes, in the 90s it was the Mediale in Hamburg where I did one installation with the N.Y. based artgroup Planet Moves (Bernd Ewert, sorry forgot the female name) at Kampnagel Fabrik. There's a CD Rom which represented the whole Mediale, but don't know if I could find my copy. There were much more installations but sorry, nothing's left without the event itself. In 2003 I was part of the Artgenda in Hamburg,





an event with artists, musicians from Poland, Lettland, Estland etc.

Nattsol: You already mentioned your other musical

projects. As I know, you have several ones, mostly experimental. Could you introduce them in a more detailed way?

Matthias: Yes, there's the first the oldest IM NAMEN



DES VOLKES which came out on an EP on Konnekschen Records in 1980. The idea behind was making punk orientated music with pure electronics. This project was sleeping till 2004, I restarted when I got offers from internet to rerelease old stuff. So the EP "Weisses Rauschen" came out on NLW Rec. later then the "Volksmusik" LP and CD on NLW too.

Second there were the 12" RITUAL together with Geisterfahrer Hans Keller and my solo works like "Atemlos I", later then "Atemlos II".

Third: BAL PARE, it started as "Jeannette & ads Land Z" in 1980 with a cover 7" "Raumpatrouille" "Poupee de cire..." on Phonogram Rec. We changed the name to BAL PARE when we left Phonogram to work independent and recorded the "Hamburg - Paris - Catania" LP on our new label Konkurrenz which I overtook from Phonogram.

1983 was "Metamorphose" mini LP released in Sweden on Kraut Rec.

A 12" named "Ting Voice" came out later and finally the T.O.S.O. 12" called "Sex Goddess" came out on Cash Beat Rec, coproduced from Ledernacken Folke Jensen.

I restarted BAL PARE in 2006 to produce the 10" "Sommerwind" for NLW records and the 7" for Minimal Wave in N.Y.

Fourth of course my actual band DAS INSTITUT with Trautonia Capra on Theremin and vocals. We released first some CDRs like "Der Kalte Garten" or "Hausbrand" then the mini CD "Zukunftsmusik", a new album is coming soon. We played in august 2009 at

London, The Old Blue Last, with IM NAMEN DES VOLKES, Katja von Kassel and OPPENHEIMER ANALYSIS.

Nattsol: Plastic Frog records released the tribute to GEISTERFAHRER recently. What can you say about it?

Matthias: Of course I felt honoured when Plastic Frog decided to release a whole album with GEISTERFAHRER tribute songs. I think one of my favourites is "Es tut nicht mehr weh", I love it even more than that original. But the whole record is great and it was so interesting to hear that songs in such different versions. And it was a big chance to rerecord two tracks from the todays sight as we did with Pestkreuze and Schatten. Or Trautonia is great version from TOPAL's 17 Jahre!

Was fun doing it....

Nattsol: Is there a word (or a few words) which can describe your artistic activity?

Matthias: I think art has to change, that's the most influence I'm in, I never could work in one band for years without change like playing guitar in GEISTERFAHRER. So, I never felt as a musician more like an artist.

Nattsol: What does Art mean in your life?

Matthias: Art is my life!

Nattsol: And for contemporary society? In your opin-



ion, what role Art plays in it now?

Matthias: I think art is getting more popular today and there's a huge mix with visual, musical, computerized etc. Till today I play a lot at vernissages etc or work with artists like Malte Steiner with my project "AKUSTIKKOPPLER" (www.myspace.com/akustikkoppler) and with internet there's a lot of networking etc.

Nattsol: There're many new young bands which just start doing music and searching for their ways. What could you advise them?

Matthias: I think today it's getting harder for new young bands because there are millions of bands because it's getting easier to create music today with computers etc. So creating music is easy but marketing is heavy. But, crazy, the more possibilities you have working experimental the more mainstream is generated. In the 80s you had perhaps 15 seconds sampling time so you had to share your creativity with that, today you have gigabytes but most bands are using the "normal" instruments like piano, guitar etc. There is too little hunger for exploring new areas, so I would advice new bands getting more curious, more crazy, more creative...

Nattsol: And to summarize for people who're not familiar with your music, call a few releases you find the best ones to start making acquaintance with it.

Matthias: I think my best releases resulted from that hunger for new sounds like "Schatten Voraus", "Fest der vielen Sinne", "Ritual".

IM NAMEN DES VOLKES – "Ich war da leergebrannt", but also the synth pop stuff like the first BAL PARE – "Hamburg – Paris – Catania" or the latest

recordings with IM NAMEN DES VOLKES – "Volksmusik".

Nattsol: And apart from your own Art, call some books, releases, artists, films or so you think our readers and fans of your works should pay attention to.

Matthias: Of course music gets inspiration from all kind of art, so I like all kind of German film like Werner Herzog, Fassbinder but also Fellini, Hitchcock etc.

Books from Aldous Huxley like "Schöne Neue Welt", "Affe und Wesen", etc. I could write pages over pages about inspiring art factors, Dali of course, Picasso, Rimbaud, Baudelaire, not mentioned the classic electronic composers like Stockhausen, Kagel, Pierre Henry, BBC radiophonic workshop, or last not least the "new" electronic music from the DDR in the 60s.

Nattsol: Thanks for the interview, Matthias. It was a great experience for me and I wish you all the best. So, the final words are yours.

Matthias: Thanks a lot for the interview, was getting me back to my art roots a bit. Thanks.

*Questions: Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*





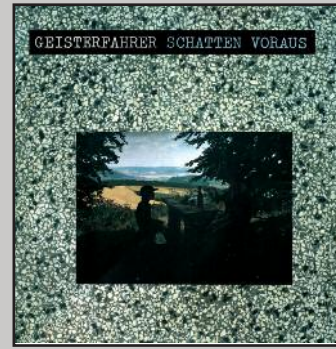
Geisterfahrer – Fest Der Vielen Sinne re-release review

Thanks to people from Plastic Frog records and Matthias Schuster, the legendary album of this legendary band, which initially was out in 1981, is re-released. These ones who're into DNW don't need any introductions about this band, but it would be useful to say for others who don't know this band: if you think that the best musical reflection of the German DADAISM is Einsturzende Neubauten and related stuff, you should listen to it or to keep up being in a state of blissful ignorance. Just try to imagine the combination of punk, experimental music and records of German DADA poets (like the CD "Dada-Antidada-Merz" and others), and you'll get the understanding of what this release is. Extremely catchy, driven, artistic and weird.

The album itself originally consisted of 12 tracks, which I guess could be well described as a savage and offbeat weird madness and could perfectly fit any dance of this kind. Music and DADAISTIC destruction balance over all these tracks; something can dominate for a while, but nothing wins till the end. But the album finishes and a listener faces 8 bonus tracks, so more about them. First five are the band's unreleased before demos which reflects quite wide range of Geisterfahrer music, - whereas its start is more in the mood of "Fest Der Vielen Sinne", the further it goes the more weird, DADAISTIC and experimental it becomes and reminds of more industrial and poetic frenzy, and finishes with its culmination, reflected in another re-release, the three-song "Linientreu", originally released in 1981 by the side-project of Geisterfahrer members Jurgen Weiss and Michael Ruff, called Die Schonsten.

In conclusion it should be said that this work is absolutely brilliant and if you're into the Art in punk music, then it's a 100% "must have" for you. But if you don't like too much of weirdness and avant-garde in music, this release won't satisfy you.

Rate: 10/10
Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'



Geisterfahrer – "Schatten Voraus" album review

Here it is, the reissue of the first Geisterfahrer album, which initially was out in 1980! "Schatten Voraus" shows that everything starts from something. And in this case it's (post-) punk as the starting point. The album begins with "Das Ufer", the song which at the same time reminds of Joy Division and Wire and has that "labeled" Geisterfahrer experimental and weird approach. But going on, this "greet" to the British wave almost totally vanishes, taking its place as a brick in the band's foundation. The album actually contains all what the early Geisterfahrer is known and loved by: wave/post-punk sound, minimalism, unexpected moves, a touch of electro but only when it's needed, weird and catchy tunes (like in "Festkreuze", "Es tut nicht mehr weh"), majestic and obsessing Dadaism ("Das Haus", "Schatten"), mad experiments ("Wasser") and many more. The album also contains six bonus-tracks, but most of them are closer to drafts by there condition. And on one hand it's a real regret, since these songs could've become the great band's hits, but on the other, they have that inimitable raw and spontaneous sense which gives them very specific attraction, and actually, brilliantly reflect the entire album approach, which is foremost based on inspiration, spontaneity and carving for experiments. Comparing the album with its follower, "Fest Der Vielen Sinne", there's just one thing "Schatten Voraus" totally lacks for, - it's that infectious and intense mad dynamism, which brings listener into a kind of feverish dadaistic condition and keeps captured over the entire period of listening to the music. And there really is the feeling of this absence.

But generally, even though it's probably not the best work to start with making acquaintance with Geisterfahrer, its songs worth being the songs of this great band and it's very unlikely that a one will be disappointed.

Rate: 9/10
Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'

Interview with CHARLES DE GOAL



ID:

Name: Charles de Goal

Location: Paris, France

Time: 1979-1992;2006-...

Close to: post-punk, coldwave, goth, punk

Current Label: Self-Control

|

Charles de Goal. This band certainly is one of the best and one of the most well-known among the entire French post-punk/coldwave "movement". Being active as the Patrick Blain's solo project in the period 1979-1992, Charles de Goal returned in 2006 as a real band Patrick always dreamt of, and proved that they still are the best. What was the band in the 80's? What is it now? Where does it want to go for the future? We got a great chance to ask Patrick himself about all these things.

Nattsol: Hello! The start is quite traditional with the question to introduce yourself with everything you find relevant here.

Patrick: So here we go! My name is Patrick Blain and I'm the one responsible for the whole thing named Charles de Goal that I started in 1979 after the disbanding of my first real project whose name was C.O.M.A. (one record & one concert). That's the first time I'm addressing to Russian people and I'm quite happy about it. Russia is a place we never played until now and I hope this won't last forever. The other members of the current CdG are Thierry Leray, Jean-Philippe Brouant and Etienne Lebourg. I wish they could have been there for the interview but usually they let me do the talking.

Nattsol: Patrick, you formed Charles de Goal in 1979 as a solo project. So first, what was the musical atmosphere at that time, and what music you were inspired by?

Patrick: France was not a very good country for rock music at that time (has it ever been?) but I was a part of an underground minority almost only interested by what was coming from the UK or the USA. I lived the Punk era as a kind of liberation after years of music for technicians (Prog-Rock, Jazz-Rock). My favorite bands at that time were mostly part of what we now call Post-Punk: Wire, Gang of Four, XTC, Television, Talking Heads, Metal Urbain, Devo and many more. And the only place in Paris where to buy these records was the New Rose record shop where almost certainly you could meet all of the French music scene of the 80's.

Nattsol: Running a solo project must be was a hard thing. Have you got any skills which let you do that before you launched CdG? How many musical instruments do you play?

Patrick: Not at all! At first I'm a bass player. If you have a good sense of rhythm you can play almost every instrument at least in the way I'm interested in. I took on the guitar because I needed it but I play an open-tuned guitar (never had time and courage to learn and practice all of these complex chords). Apart from these two main instruments I also played drums, keyboards, percussions, and I think I could find interesting things on any instrument if I had to. The important things are the intention and the result, not the technique.

Nattsol: Could you tell me about the project's name's history?

Patrick: I must say that I'm not the one who found this name. It came from Patrick Mathé (owner of New Rose). I didn't want to call it Patrick Blain and Patrick Mathé came with that name thinking it was very easy to remember (even in the rest of the world), and that everybody would know from which country it came. I just changed "Gaulle" in "Goal" just for the fun of it. It was also courageous to take that name because at that time the real Charles de Gaulle had only been dead for ten years and he was considered like the savior of France. It could have been considered as an offence and lead us to some trouble but happily this was not the case.

Nattsol: When you started CdG, what purposes for the project have you had? Was there any conception behind it?

Patrick: I never had any purpose in mind other than enjoying myself when doing music. I always had a great amount of luck finding people liking what I was doing. At the end of C.O.M.A. I started recording demos with Philippe Huart and Claude Lamamy (ex-members of C.O.M.A.) on a 4 tracks recording machine with Denis Wolf. He was a Canadian living in Paris who had access to a demo studio and he also made the first demos of Rita Mitsouko, Warum Joe & La Souris Déglinguée. That's where we made "Modem", "Dans le labyrinthe" and three other tunes. I went also in a real professional studio for "Exposition" and "Radio on" with Patrick Woindrich who was the producer of C.O.M.A. and very found of my music. Everything had been done for free. The owners of New Rose listened to the result and decided that they had to release it on their newly born label. They sent me to a studio in order to make 2 more songs ("Synchro" & "Hang on to Yourself") in one day so we could have a full album. "Algo-rythmes" was born in the form of a real patchwork thing in terms of studio recordings. The only real concept at first was to make it something "mysterious" in terms of record cover and communication. No photos, no credits, nobody knew who made this album. It had the advantage of both arising the curiosity of the audience and of the press but also of not putting me in front because I'm kind of a shy person.

Nattsol: Could you tell a bit more about New Rose Records, which you were signed by right from the beginning? Seems that your friend who has run it, provided the world of new music to France. Was that so? Was that a hard thing to do?

Patrick: I met Patrick Mathé and Louis Thevenon (the founders of New Rose) in "Music Box" in 1977. It was the only record shop in Paris where you could find the latest imports directly from UK, that means it was almost the only place where to find punk and post-punk records. Patrick & Louis were running the place but they didn't own it. I was there at least 3 or 4 times a week and we became friends. The real owner went bankrupt because of a side project and the shop had to close. So in 1980 Patrick & Louis decided to open their own shop with the same formula, 'New Rose', and it was a real success because many people in Paris were in need of that kind of music and were very eager to get the latest records available (especially the singles that you couldn't find elsewhere). A few months after the opening they decided to launch their record label with The Saints and Charles de Goal as first releases. Patrick Mathé was into American rock music and Louis Thévenon more into post-punk and cold wave hence the dichotomy of the New Rose releases. At first the label was a real success, there was no such independent label in France at that time.

Nattsol: The initial formation of Charles de Goal existed from 1979 to 1986 and released four albums. Could you briefly describe each of them?

Patrick: In fact the first life of CdG goes from 1979 to 1992... 'Algoythmes' (1980) was the result of a DIY process and had bits of C.O.M.A. in it (musicians and left-over songs). It was done in a very minimal way on mostly cheap instruments. I'm proud of the result but nothing was really prethought. It came as it went. And that was the first time ever I tried to sing.

'Ici l'ombre' (1981) of all CdG albums of that period is the closest of what you could call a band album. It was conceived as a 3 members band (Philippe Huart, Claude Lamamy & me) and it was recorded almost entirely live on a very short period of 3 or 4 days (due to the lack of money). It is a very desperate and dark album, must have been not quite "right" in my head at that time. I was at first very disappointed by the muddy sound of it.

'3' (1984) is by far the most 'solo' album of the whole. We started doing it like the previous one but unhappy with the results, I rebuilt it from scratch. It really was a two persons affair, myself and Patrick Woindrich who produced it in his own studio. That was also the first time I could take all the time that I needed to make a record. Even if the sound has aged a bit, this is the album that I'm the most found of. At last I succeeded in mixing my love of pop melodies and strange noises. This is also the turning point in terms of musical collaboration, my old mates vanishing and new musicians appearing.

'Double-Face'



(1984) was made in the same conditions as '3' but I think I was kind of unfocused at that time. There are too many songs and in too many different atmospheres. We never should have made it a double album and instead should have concentrate on fewer songs. There are some good songs on it but I must say that I like it less than the others.

Revolution (1991) is the unreleased album. It took me 3 years to achieve it because I had a free access to a studio if nobody was in it. Bad deal because the studio was very successful at that time. That's the reason why it took me 3 years and nobody should be allowed to make a record over a so long period. That leads to discouragement and too many change of ideas. I made this one with totally new musicians who were very good but had not the slightest idea of what the CdG sound was. It's entirely my fault, I never had the courage to say to these very involved people who became friends: "Stop it! We're on the wrong way." We never found a record company for this record and I'm quite happy about it. Apart from the lyrics and the voice, this definitely was not a Charles de Goal album.

Nattsol: As far as I'm concerned, you had gigs in the 80's with side musicians. Could you try to describe what was CdG on stage then?

Patrick: To be frank, not a very good thing... I only decided to go on stage around 1985. Before that, due to the fact that I was almost playing everything on the records, I found difficult to go on





stage alone. I should have used tapes and I was not interested in it. So around 1985 we formed a Charles de Gaul Live Band with semi-professional musicians. And that's the reason of the problem. These musicians were not involved in my music. Instead they were listening to Simple Minds, Inxs or Billy Idol. So the result was something like "songs of Charles de Gaul played by musicians trying to sound like Simple Minds with less technical capacities". Get the picture? The thing is totally different with the new version of CdG on stage.

Nattsol: For France the first half of the 80's was the period when some incredible amount of bands appeared and now they are described as the ones which belong to "coldwave movement". What about you, have you ever had an idea what coldwave itself is? Has it meant something for you then or it's just a word which tries to unify different bands with different music? Have you had the sense of a movement at all?

Patrick: Not at all when I lived it. It was more a concept invented by the musical press. It's true that a lot of French bands were at that time into cold music but there were also a lot of bands playing things much more lighter. I think it was due to the period that we were going through. There was a real feeling during these years that the 3rd World War was near. I never understood at that time why I was described as a part of the Coldwave. I think that post-punk is much more appropriated to my music.

Nattsol: In the 80's has CdG had some bands-friends or just musically related ones?

Patrick: Not really. I'm kind of a solitary person. Considering that I made music on my own, I was not going on stage and I hated the showbiz environment, it was difficult to make friends in music. Plus there is the fact that I was not interested by what was made in France (maybe I was wrong).

Nattsol: Sounds like contemporary Russian approach with romanticizing foreign music and ignorance of national. But as I know, you personally were a witness of the birth of the scene when you travelled to England. So apart from these obvious things like language and so on, what do you think was (and is?) foreign part of CdG and what was the French one?

Patrick: I don't think I ignored the French scene at that time. It's just that I found it dull except for a few bands such as Marquis de Sade. On the contrary I would have been very proud if France had been able to compete with everything that was happening overseas in terms of music, but for me it was far from being the case. What irritated me the most with French bands was the terrible singing... weak voices with lyrics full of clichés when sung in French or a terrible accent when sung in English. But I certainly missed some good things. At that time whenever I could I'd go to London in order to go to concerts in small venues (I must have seen live almost every band of these golden years) and buy any records I could in second-hand record shops. So it's almost certain that it influenced a lot my way of playing, especially this kind of anti-groove stiffness that could be found in bands such as Gang of Four or Devo. But other influences surfaced here and there, for example the instrumental section of "Modem" is directly influenced by the rhythmic guitar of King Crimson in 'Lark's Tongues in Aspic'. I can't see any French part in my music with the exception, of course, of the lyrics. I found it very important to sing in French. Singing in English would have resulted in an uninteresting imitation of what was done elsewhere.

Nattsol: Before the interview I totally had no any information about the band's 1986-1992 activity. What was it except already mentioned "Revolution"?

Patrick: That's mostly after "Double Face" that I began touring for about a year and a half. I re-recorded two old songs ('Atout mineur' & 'Ambiance répétitive') for the 'Commemoration' compilation released on New Rose and we even recorded some songs live in the studio with the touring band, also for this compilation. After that I began work on the new album but I had lost faith. I was disappointed by 'Double-Face' and also disappointed by what we were doing on stage. I had to find new ideas but I lost myself on the way.

Nattsol: And a kind of deadlock after. Why the brake up happened?

Patrick: As I told you before, it's in 1992 that I decided to call it quit. I didn't find someone interested in releasing the new album. I also knew that this album was not a good one. Holding a project alone for 13 years is also not very easy and seeing



that it interested less and less people discouraged me. I was simply bored by the whole thing. My main intention in doing music, have fun, was not there anymore. It was time to put an end to it.

Nattsol: What were you doing after CdG quit?

Patrick: I never had in mind to stop making music (it's in my blood). But I had to start again from the beginning in order to heal the wounds. So I joined a bunch of friends who were making simple rock'n'roll just for the fun of it. At first I didn't even want to sing, I was just playing bass. This band went through a great number of changes (musicians and names). At the end it was called Monkey Test. It's in its ranks that I met Etienne Lebourg and Jean-Philippe Brouant. It lasted until 2006 and only stopped because of the CdG rematerialization.

Nattsol: If I'm informed well, CdG played occasionally together somewhere in the period of 1992-2006. Could you comment this? In particular, I want to ask you about the CD "Garage_Sessions #4"? The list of musicians there impresses very much.

Patrick: These musicians you're talking about are the ones who played on 'Revolution'. I finally met a lot of people during these years and I wanted most of them to be on the record (not a good thing to achieve coherence). Friendship is something very important for me. After the breakup of CdG, there only was a single concert (with Warum Joe) to celebrate the release of a compilation ("Etat Général") in 1997. It was almost a sketch of what would happen in 2006 because Etienne & Jean-Philippe were already playing with me for this event.

Nattsol: Well, 2006 was the year of resurrection for CdG. Tell me, please, how has it happened and how did you manage to get this brilliant line-up?

Patrick: At the end of 2005, the remastered version of 'Algorithmes' was released ("Garage Sessions #4"). At that time I also met a French DJ, Gilles le Guenn, living in the USA and who included some of my songs on a few compilations he released. He is the one responsible for the reemergence of Charles de Goal. He convinced me to perform for a single concert in order to help the release of this record. At first I didn't want to do it at all, for me CdG was dead and not to be reanimated. I'm not a fan of all these bands reuniting only for the need of money. Then he introduced me to Thierry Leray (one of his close friends) who played in a band named End of Data under the name of AE. Thierry was a big fan of my music, he told me that my records gave him the spark to begin playing music himself. So I agreed to try to do this single concert with him and Jean-Philippe and Etienne (I was still playing with them in Monkey Test, what better choice?).

We made this concert, the place was packed and the audience response overwhelming. But the most important thing is that I realized that Charles de Goal on stage was at last sounding like I always thought it should be. I had finally found the right people on the same wavelength... what a happiness! We were immediately offered other gigs all over Europe and decided to do them. The new Charles de Goal was on its way.

Nattsol: You mentioned your approach to commercial reunions. But due to interest to the art punk/coldwave music

many bands resurrected just because the need in them appeared. What do you think about this kind of resurrections? Have you noticed some interesting ones for you? In particular, what do you think about recent releases of your resurrected French colleagues like Clair Obscur or "Rouge Reve" of Complot with the ex-End of Data Thierry's colleague Eric in the line-up?

Patrick: It's true that some reunions are not always guided by the hope of making money and regain a lost glory. The need for seeing the original bands of that era has certainly been ignited by the new post-punk wave (Bloc Party, The Rakes and many more) who helped rediscover these bands. The problem with these reunions is that people attending the gigs want to hear the old songs in the old way but twenty-five years have passed and the musicians have evolved. For CDG, if we don't play 'Exposition', it's a kind of sacrilege for most of the people and I can't blame them because they're so happy when they hear it. But it's very important also to play new songs because these new songs represent what we really are now. Leaving in and on the past is very frustrating and like Wire used to react when somebody was requiring an old song at their concerts I would say that we're not a juke-box. In the resurrection corner I would say that Complot made a very good album, the same for Guerre Froide (I think the next one will be even better).

Nattsol: And about the latest band's album, "Restructuration". Could you represent it in your own words? Why this name? And why you made it in vinyl and CD versions?

Patrick: "Restructuration" is kind of a concept album. It's constructed like a progression towards death and a possible reincarnation into something else. I made a parallel between life and what happened to the Charles de Goal entity. Most of the songs are speaking about death or identity. It's the first time that the songs have been composed not only by me but by everybody in the band (except for lyrics). The new CdG is more a band project than a solo one. We made a vinyl version because a lot of people still like to have records that way (including myself). In these times where the death of the CD format is announced by everybody, the old vinyl is making a glorious comeback.

Nattsol: And you started your own label, "Self-control". Why this name, and are there some other purposes for the label except releasing Charles de Goal stuff?

Patrick: 'Self-Control' is the name of one song on my second album and it described very well what we wanted to do, that means have a complete control over our music. I'm not sure that today a real record company or distributor is able to sell underground music. It's very difficult anyway to sell records these days so, at least, do it ourselves. The label has essentially been created to release our albums but we're not closed to other projects if we believe in them and if we have the money to do it.

Nattsol: ... and about the "Expositions", tribute to CdG. What's your opinion about it and about the bands involved? Do you have some favs among these covers? Why?

Patrick: The idea of "Expositions" came when we found by luck a real good cover of "Synchro" by a band named Andromax on MySpace. We launched the idea of CdG's covers and we were amazed by the number of bands wanting (wanted?) to be a part of it. The first time I heard the final result was very moving for me, all of these bands had covered my songs and they did a very good job. I myself am very found of doing covers of songs that I love and I always try to make it sound very different than the original songs, that's what is interesting for me. I have of course some favs but I won't tell you because all of these bands put their hearts in doing it and that would be unfair to point out at good and less good results.

Nattsol: As far as I know, you plan a new album. What will it be? Are there some other plans?

Patrick: We're currently writing songs for a new album to be released next spring (so we hope). This time we really do it as a real band. We're constructing the new songs in a rehearsal studio before putting them on tape. We're trying to have at least 20 songs in order to retain the best of them or the ones that will make a coherent album. Right now some of the songs already done are direct followers of 'Restructuration' but other ones are going into new directions. It's a little early to tell you what the result will look like. The code name of the record is "Metastasis" but it could change.

Nattsol: What is Charles de Goal on stage and who's the band's public?

Patrick: Hard to tell you because we're on stage, not in the audience. From what we heard of people at our shows, it seems to be very powerful with a lot of energy. I think it's more or less 'Restructuration' with stage fever. We also play old songs with the same treatment. I think what characterized us most is the constant presence of a rhythm box with the addition of real drums. We mostly play inside the gothic scene, audiences are very open-minded and found of post-punk but we also play for other kind of people. For example, we played in an electro festival in Norway and everything went very well.

Nattsol: You played in many countries at very different venues and festivals, like Drop Dead. Were there some which you could call the most exciting?

Patrick: First experiences are always the ones you most remember so the first gig of 2006 in Paris is a very good memory. Our first appearance in a gothic festival (UCOD in Münster, Germany) was also great because this was the first time we were meeting this very specific and warm audience. At first we were a little bit afraid by all these gothic/punk looks and it turned out that these people were really great with us. The first concert at the Drop Dead Festival in Praha is also



one I especially cherish. We received so much love from the audience when leaving the stage that it was very moving. But we like to play anywhere, every concert brings something.

Nattsol: And you shared the stage with many bands, old and new. Do you have some favs of them? What's in general your attitude to this contemporary gothic/cold scene? Are there some recent releases or performances which impressed you? And are there some bands you'd love to share the stage with, but haven't had a chance yet?

Patrick: When it comes to music I'm a very eclectic person. I can listen to almost any kind of music the moment it does something to me. So I'm not especially stuck into gothic/cold scene. It's really great to share the stage with all of these bands and I'm sometimes really impressed by what I see and hear. Compared to the 80s I really think that the level of the bands I see live is much more higher than it was at the time (especially for French bands). Two of the bands we played with and I like the most are Frustration and Agent Side Grinder. For me these two bands are really great, especially on stage. I'd be very happy to share the stage with some of my "idols" like Wire for example but I've heard they're not very cool persons with the opening acts so it's better to keep the myth intact.

Nattsol: Well, let's return to your music. Could you tell me about your side projects?

Patrick: Considering that I do have a normal full-time job, CdG is taking the rest of the free time I can have. Work on the

new album is time consuming. We also have to record two covers for compilations we'll be part of. That currently leaves no time left for side projects.

Nattsol: Ok, and what about the projects of the past? Like that pre-Charles de Goal C.O.M.A., the mini of Danse Macabre you contributed for and which above-mentioned Gilles le Guen described as "sounding like a Bauhaus jam-session, a forgotten rehearsal of New Order's "Movement"..."? And may be some others for which you contributed as a member or a guest musician? Could you drop some words about your apart-CdG musical activity, please?

Patrick: The first real serious band I made was a punk one named Chaos but we never made concerts or records and it didn't last very long. It evolved into C.O.M.A. with the same singer. At first we were only doing demos at home with a 2 tracks record machine. We gave a cassette to Louis & Patrick of Music-Box (already) and they immediately sent us for a week in a real studio in order to make an album. The least I can say is that we were not prepared for that because we never intended to do music seriously and we were really not good musicians. So the result is a bit hectic in some parts but it was fresh with ideas. The music press compared it to a cross between Devo and the Residents. We plan to re-release it on Self-Control. Once it became serious (the record and a concert at 'Le Palace' with Stinky Toys and Taxi Girl) came the problems. We were neither prepared to become professionals nor interested in becoming so. Pressure to do more commercial





things began to interfere and we decided to break the band. It then evolved into CDG.

Danse Macabre is a project due to Louis Thévenon (New Rose) who played drums and who decided to do himself a favor. As a label manager it was easier for him to make a record and release it through New Rose. He wanted to make something sounding like his favorite bands that were P.I.L. and Bauhaus. What is funny is that the musicians he asked to play with him were all involved in CDG or C.O.M.A. It's also true that it was a kind of jam-session. Louis had recorded the drums parts and we constructed the songs starting from them. Except for the cover of Bauhaus, it was almost total improvisation. There was also a huge work on the sound by Patrick Woindrich who gave this gothic feeling. It is now viewed as the first gothic record made in France but I can assure you that we weren't aware of doing 'Gothic' when we recorded it.

In 1987 I made backing vocals (almost a duet on one song) on 'Paranoiac Songs', an album by Baroque Bordello, a band I really liked. Weena was the singer and I had already invited her on 'Retour au Dancing', one song on 'Double Face'.

Around 1990-1991 I began working on what I thought at the time could be a new direction for CDG. With two friends (Serge Viellescaze & Benoît Morel) we tried to work on a project only made of samples and loops. It finally went nowhere except for the 3 songs you can find as bonus tracks on 'Revolution' under the name of 'Mental Solution'. We made these songs with Jean-Philippe Brouant (who plays drums and sings). The singing is rap orientated but as we were not good at it, nobody notices it. These songs are almost exclusively made of samples and the game is to recognize them. It was really fun to do it and I'm very proud of them.

Nattsol: In one interview you said that texts as "messages"

play very important role for you. But since you sing in French many people (like me) can't understand your messages. So in general, what do you write about?

Patrick: Writing in French for rock music is a difficult task. In English you can sing stupid things and it will sound good. In France people listen carefully to the lyrics (because they understand them). I also choose words that will sound good in a rhythmical way. Concerning my texts I would not say that I want to deliver "messages"... I'm not that selfish and I hate lesson givers. I'm usually speaking of very personal reactions to the facts of life and what surrounds me. The last album was especially focused on death (because I'm not that young anymore) and politics (the difficulties to live in a world which is becoming more and more liberal). But even if you'd understand our language doesn't mean you'll get the meaning at first hearing. I like to write things with a hidden sense and that can be interpreted in many ways.

Nattsol: So you care about politics, don't you? Could you tell a little bit more about your attitude to it?

Patrick: I don't really like to talk about politics. I much prefer letting the people imagine what my opinions are by finding clues in my lyrics.

Nattsol: Charles de Goal has no any professional video, as I know. Do you plan to improve it? Or if to put a little bit more fantasy, may be video clip or concert DVD?

Patrick: We recorded a concert in Paris with a professional team and we're thinking of a DVD. A lot of people ask us for at least a live album, we'll have to think about it. The problem with videos is that it costs a lot of money and that we don't have it. Maybe we'll try to make a DIY video for songs of the next album.

Nattsol: One more question I personally can't avoid. You said that most of recordings you did at home. And as for your "Restructuration", I can't describe its quality in any other words but brilliant. How do you manage that?

Patrick: For this question you'd better speak with Thierry. He's the one responsible for the last album sound. All I can say is that everything was made on computer in his room except for the voices and some drums we recorded in a professional studio. He then mixed the whole lot and decided the running order of the songs. He did a hell of a job and spent many days (months) on the project. For the next album we'd like to go back to a more analogic recording in order to get more space and full-range sound.

Nattsol: XXI century could be described as a deadlock for the Art. At least, this point of view has some backgrounds to exist. What do you think about the situation for the Art and if there're some ways of its development?

Patrick: XXIst century is only at its beginning, that leaves a lot of time to develop new things. It's true that we don't see at the present the same artistic revolutions that occurred in the last centuries. We tend to think that everything has already been made and that we're only using past things trying to make them look new. But I'm quite confident that the human mind will be able to find new ways that we don't think of right now. The only thing to avoid is conformism. Maybe computers could be a way. They're mostly used to recreate existing things but not so much to develop a new form of the Art.

Nattsol: In this case the new question appears itself. You said about the possibility of using computers in Art purposes, but even if this is a technique which itself can improve many art directions (Photoshop, some sound programmes and so on), it on the other hand makes some machinery of the Art. And another deadlock appears then, - how is that possible to combine soul and machine?

Patrick: The real problem with computers is that it has to be programmed by human beings. I've heard that some research is made on computers able to program themselves. I'd really like to see if a machine with no soul would be able to produce any kind of the Art (maybe is it too sci-fi?). I don't know what the future may bring. Combination of human body and machines is already a reality and will certainly develop widely through biomechanics. Could it be the same with soul?

Nattsol: Well, a short "game-question". Could you call your favourite film (or director), book (author) and painting (artist) ever and the latest ones which impressed you?

Patrick: It's difficult to choose only one in every category... Let's say Stanley Kubrick for cinema. "2001, a space odyssey" is maybe the only film I could watch on and on without being bored. For books I'll choose the complete Philip K. Dick's short-stories (nobody went further into the realm of paranoia and schizophrenia under normal appearances). And for paint-

ing I'll say Velickovic (especially his works during the 70s and 80s years). The latest film I really loved is "Waltz with Bashir" (Ari Folman), the latest book is "The Road" (Cormac McCarthy) and the painting(s) are the ones of my close friend (and that is not the reason why I love his work) who played in CdG, Philippe Huart whose last exposition was called "Memories, Dreams, Addictions".

Nattsol: And another one of this kind. Among the Art movements (not musical), which one is the closest to what Charles de Goal does? Why?

Patrick: I feel close to the minimalism and functionality of the Bauhaus movement and of their first intentions "There is no real difference between artists and craftsmen" because I consider myself more a craftsman than an artist. But the Bauhaus lacks the human factor that is inherent to our human condition. Once again, the artist whom I feel the closest is Velickovic... Cold and minimalist environment with very disturbed central characters (men, rats, dogs). A turmoil of living fury against a cold environment.

Nattsol: How could you describe your personality?

Patrick: Complex like every human being. The list would be too long, sorry! That's a real answer because I'm kind of a secret person.

Nattsol: Huge thanks for the interview, hope to hear some news about CdG soon. And the final words are yours.

Patrick: Thanks in return for your interest in our work. I really hope we'll be able to come to Russia one day (never been there) to play some gigs. Let's go back to work on the new album!

*Questions: Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*



Charles de Goal - "Restructuration" album review

It's always much easier to write about bad music than about good one. And in this case I faced extremely hard task. I must confess, I don't like 10/10 grade, because it means that the work which got it is a kind of musthave which determines and develops the music itself. Especially it's a very hard to do so for a contemporary full-length album. But Charles de Goal with the latest album "Restructuration" LEFT me no choice at all.

To clarify this hard decision I dropped several points to explain why I did so:

-Even if this album is done 22 years after its forerunner, Charles de Goal managed to stay Charles de Goal, one of THE pioneers of decadent punk/coldwave music in France.

-The band evolved as time was passing, and it really took everything it could from the contemporary environment, managing to stay a band from the 80's, but not to sound so.

-With "Restructuration" Charles de Goal reminds that an album should be an album, not a compilation of songs, i.e. every next song flows from its forerunner, making the sound conception, the thing which has become almost forgotten since the vinyl era was replaced by the digital one.

-Charles de Goal of the XXI century demonstrated incredible sense for the music: each part of each song lasts exactly the time it should. There's no these procrastinations in a song as they can be noted in "3", as an example.

-"Restructuration" can be used as a textbook for many young bands of how to work with sound. Even though most of the stuff was recorded at home, "Restructuration" has the quality many "rich" bands can only dream about.

-On a par with staying Charles de Goal in "Restructuration", this album doesn't sound as any other band's one and actually this would be extremely hard to find something related in other bands' music as well.

So, these reasons were enough for me to make my choice. Actually, whereas the band's resurrected colleagues mostly do the music by which these bands' roots can be hardly recognizable, "Restructuration" can be compared with The Damned's "So Who's Paranoid" by remembering the roots and at the same time having no repetitions in own music.

Rate: 10/10
Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'



Expositions: a tribute to Charles de Goal review

Tribute seems always a pretty doubtful thing, and "Expositions" isn't an exception as well. It's hard to imagine indeed a cover better than original, especially when we talk about Charles de Goal, the band which certainly has outrun its time. But on the other hand, tribute is always a great chance to show new bands, new viewpoints to songs and, of course, to pay a kind of homage. And the latter aspect obviously worked out well for this tribute is released by collaboration of three labels ("Str8line Records", "Brouillard Definitif" and the Charles de Goal's label "Self-Control") and it contains 22 songs, three of them even had to be put as CD-rom bonuses.

Actually, mentioning all the covers could more confuse a reader than give any opinion. Enough to say, that this tribute exactly shows that Charles de Goal music is true Art, i.e. as it happens with true art creations, there can't be two same opinions what it's about: everyone finds personal meaning as if it was written for everyone and for this person only at once. The same thing happened with the bands which contributed to the tribute: some just confirmed my thoughts and feelings about the songs, some showed their viewpoints very contradictory to my own ones. Anyway, the tribute is filled with shades and contrasts. This can be futuristic dance in "Modem" by "The Rorschach Garden", and "Technicolor" by "Hot Dog Addict", underlined "coldwave-ism" in "Guerre Froide" version of "Fermez La Porte", passionate mystery in "Retour Au Dancing" by "No Tears", very tense electro in "Dans Le Labyrinthe" performed by "Synapscape" with Patrick Blain himself on vocals, or pretty shoegaze/post-punk version of "Expositions" by "Denner" in which the vocalist the very right caught the tense mood under cold cover of the original version. It indeed can be everything there and I'm sure that if there had been up to 100 covers, we would have seen plenty of other different and unexpected colors of known songs.

The conclusion is simple. If you like Charles de Goal are not conservative and prepared enough to not to call any covers "vandalism", this release is worth for you to pay attention to. But of course this is not a release with which is possible to create any opinion of what Charles de Goal is. And of course Charles de Goal deserves more because as it was said in the foreword, nothing could be better than original. But ignoring this thought, this is a good release and probably the best realization of tribute to Charles de Goal which could be possible.

Rate: 7/10
Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'

THELEMA



<http://www.myspace.com/93thelemaheband>
<http://www.thelemaaband.com/>

ID:

Name: Thelema

Location: Modena, Italy

Time: 1984-1988; 1993-1997; 2004-...

Close to: darkwave, goth, post-punk

Current Label: Small Voices – Black Light District

“The fathers of Italian darkwave”, Thelema had been the witnesses of the foundation of the scene in Italy which later was called “goth”. But not only being the pioneers of the scene makes them known, - the occult approach also gave birth to some legends around the band. Which of them are true? How had the creation of the “goth” scene happened in Italy? What was the band in the past and what is it now? Fortunately, Thelema agreed to answer these and other questions.

Nattsol: Greetings! To start with, please, give some foreword to this interview. Whatever you’d like.

Thelema: We’re happy to be here with you, albeit through the medium of modern technology. We’re also happy that the news of our existence has got to you...

Nattsol: Tell, please, about your musi-

cal backgrounds and influences. What you were inspired by in the musical aspect when you created Thelema? Have you had some experiences of playing in a band before?

Thelema: Plenty of experiences, as far as bands are concerned. All the members of Thelema, both the original founding father and those in the present line-up had been playing before. Gior-

gio was bass player of Throbs of Pleasure, a new wave combo strongly influenced by the most extreme sounds of the new wave, such as Chrome; Gianluca played guitar in seminal punk band Stigmathe, and in a plethora of other bands; Massimo had been playing regularly in several bands since 1978 at least, among them Stigmathe (again) and Les Blousons

Noirs, his first Crowley-related project. To sum things up, punk has been the starting point of our musical experiences.

Nattsol: Could you tell more about these pre-Thelema projects (and probably some side ones, - depends on your choice). What were (are?) they? Is there a possibility to find the records? And is it worth to be found?

Thelema: Briefly, before creating Thelema Giorgio played bass in a dark-experimental band called Throbs of Pleasures and Massimo sang and played guitar in Les Blousons Noirs. None of these bands released records, only tapes. Les Blousons Noirs tape, "The Book of the Law", shows pre - Thelema interest in Crowley. Ganluca was axe-man in punk band Stigmathe, where Massimo was guitarist pre-Blousons Noirs, before doing his time in the Italian army. Stigmathe released two 7". All these works are obviously

wonderful, although hard to find now.

Nattsol: Now about the "basic line" of your inspiration, Aleister Crowley and his Thelema. How do you personally interpreted his "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law"? And how have you wanted to reflect it in the music?

Thelema: We basically take it as being true to ourselves, both in music and in everyday life. This is a tricky question, which we think will be more completely answered in the course of the interview.

Nattsol: You seem much influenced by occultism in the 80's, your Crowley thing, side project, called "Rose + Cross" and so on tell for themselves. So, was Thelema more a musical band or a kind of occult society? How has it changed through years?

Thelema: Tricky question again, but helps shed some light on the previous

answer. Thelema has never been an occult society, even if SOME of the members, present and former, have been and are practitioners of some form of magick and/or mysticism. Being a band: we were surely a band, albeit and unconventional one, in the beginning: we rehearsed regularly, played live, recorded records and behaved, more or less, as the members of any band usually do. Since the end of the 80s, however, we have become more a "league" of individualists who, at certain moments in time and space, decide to express themselves through music. We never played or recorded for the sake of it, except when drunk, but only when we thought we had something meaningful to play or record. Thus the erratic history of the band: releases, splits etc.

Side projects like "Rosa+Croce" were therefore avenues to express the less "common" vein of our creativity.

For 20 years we have pursued parallel



careers: Giorgio has been working in the music business (playing bass and producing several bands, and finally building his own studio), Massimo has written several books on healing and magick, Gianluca is an industrial designer. Strangely enough, now we're coming back to the "band" dimension: Gianluca is a "real" musician, he comes from a very intense background of rock-punk bands and is trying to have the rest of us behave like every little good rockstar would, eh eh eh...

Nattsol: What's your attitude to religion (itself and institutes of it)?

Thelema: We think religion is a natural instinct in man, and we think that the religious instinct shouldn't be subject to mediation of any kind. It should result in gnosis, a direct link between man and God. Churches are very far from this idea, but they do their job, we do ours.

Nattsol: Was there something else in your ideology apart from mysticism? Like disappointment in society, may be, or something of this kind.

Thelema: Strong individualism, libertarianism. We wouldn't say anarchy now just because it's become a political movement in itself, with its own rules and regulations. We don't like rules and, as the late Robert Anton Wilson said, "We don't believe anything".

Nattsol: Seems that we finished this brief clarification of your ideology. Let's turn to the music itself now. What was the post-punk/wave atmosphere in Italy when you started? Was there any scene, movement or something like that? I know that you were inspired by British post-punk like The Banshees. Was it easy then to find like-minded people?

Thelema: Yes, it was very easy at the time. You had to be there to believe it,

but after the punk explosion of the late 70s the idea was that this "new" music could really take the place of the old. Bands like, say, Devo, used to gather thousands of people. Theatre of Hate could easily fill a 3000 people venue, like Play Dead or Sex Gang Children. To step back in time a little more, when Patti Smith first played Italy she was shocked to find a whole stadium waiting for her gig, as she was used to small clubs in the States, or to basketball halls at best. If you put this situation as the context in which we started playing, you see that we had many opportunities that today's new bands lack: Italy was literally filled with places where you could play, small new labels were eager to get new bands under contract, and even majors were interested – provided you sang in Italian, which we didn't and which was a very big block in stepping from the independent to the major scene. Looking back we were lucky, others were much more, but we never accepted compromises. Anyway it was great fun: any medium-to-big-size city in Italy looked a bit like London on Saturday nights, at least in certain quarters, and a very big scene was there. In a way it was also a deception, as a lot of people in bands kept playing instead of trying to get other careers, in the hope that – it really looked like a real possibility at the time - bands like, say, Contortions could become the new Rolling Stones and destroy the music establishment. It wasn't so, of course we now know, but it was an illusion that stayed there for a rather long time.

Nattsol: Tell me, please, about your first steps before the first album, - I mean your first records and appearance on stage.

Thelema: It was all ridiculously easy, at least on the surface; we recorded a demo and sent it around: some labels

answered and this led to the release of the first single and the first album. Same as for live shows: the scene at the time was quite alive, and the few reviews of our stuff got us a lot of gigs. Looking back we have to say that we were reasonably lucky. Disappointments were yet to come.

Nattsol: Your first album, "Tantra", which now is re-released by In the Night Time records. Can you represent the record itself, and say what the public reaction in its two release periods was?

Thelema: We don't really know. When "Tantra" was released in 1986 it was hailed as a really good record (someone called us "the fathers of Italian dark-wave" – "gothic" was not a label then). We received very good reviews and very interesting fan-mail. The same happens today: the cd has been favourably reviewed as an important part of history of Italian independent music, and we keep receiving fan-mail from people who were there at the time and are happy they can have the record on cd as well as from young people who have discovered us late and were eager to fill the gap in their collection.

Nattsol: After the intense touring the band broke up for the first time due to personal reasons in 1988. Tell me, please, what your activity after it was.

Thelema: See above: poor motivation on part of some members, different interests in others.

Nattsol: The reunion of Thelema happened in 1993. How had it happened, and what made you think that Thelema is still actual?

Thelema: Pure chance. An old acquaintance who used to run a label approached us and asked if we were still playing and had something to release. We hadn't even been in touch for years



but talked on the phone, discovered we had something we desired to “write in stone” (id est record and release) and signed a deal.

Nattsol: How can you describe in your own words Thelema’s activity and musical evolution of the 90’s? Drop a few words about your releases of that time, please, and also I want you to note what you personally find the most exciting impressions connected with Thelema of the 90’s.

Thelema: Again, it was fun: the label provided us with good recording studios and producers, so any fault in the records is our own. We played gigs in Italy, France and Germany. From a musical point of view we were much more aware of what we were doing, much more conscious of the way a recording studio works and about the use of electronics (the “first” Thelema was an essentially electric band).

Moreover, at the time the band was made up of just Giorgio and Massimo, and we had a more complete artistic control on what we recorded. We learnt a lot, both about ourselves as artists and about the music industry.

Nattsol: The band broke up again in 1997. How did it happen? And for the history repeats itself, I think I can repeat a few my questions for it. What was your activity after it, and how the next reunion happened? Let’s cover this part of history, please.

Thelema: Yes, history repeats itself. We split more or less for the same reasons we split in the 80s. Lack of interest or, if you prefer, more interesting things to do. Perhaps we were wrong, who knows?

Nattsol: The band found itself beginning again in the third decade. To compare times, you seem to be much

experienced with beginnings and activity. What are the pluses of minuses of these three decades, 80’s, 90’s and 00’s? When was easier to start a band? Thelema: We try to be positive and optimistic: each decade had its good points. In the 80, as we said earlier, creating a band and getting in business was easier. The 90s brought a good measure of disappointment, which helped us get a firmer grip on reality. The new millennium is just begun, let’s see what the first decade has brought after it’s over.

Nattsol: Let’s pay more detailed attention to your third beginning, 2004. What Thelema turned into for the new century? What were the most remarkable its achievements for five years?

Thelema: We’re not afraid of repeating ourselves, so here it is: we discovered we had something to do in the music field. For the history record: Giorgio

had kept working in the music business and recording stuff on his own. One day he discovered himself thinking that the stuff he was doing could have been working well with Massimo's voice. A phone call and Thelema were back on the street and ready for action again. Artistic stimulus, pure and simple. After "Burnt Memories" we continued recording and, at some time, noticed that the songs we were recording could have been much better with a real guitarist involved. Gianluca was a logical choice, since he is great with the axe and shares our common punk roots. We went along so well that, after years of being a duo, Thelema decided to become a three individuals band again – and Pino Dieni, who recorded fantastic parts on "La Sangre Real" and is working with us again on the new tracks, is on his way to become the fourth. At this point a digression is in order, because the matter is cognate and brings us to the real important

point of Thelema existing in 2010: we wouldn't want to sound elitist, as if being part of the band were a rare privilege but, after years of working together, Thelema has developed into something that is more than a band (again, we're not common...) or a "simple" league of artists. The big conquest of the 2004 and on phase is that now we are more an existential brotherhood than anything else: being a member of the band means more than sharing musical tastes or being very good at playing, it means a wider and deeper level of communion: magick per se has nothing to do with this but ideology, politics, music, a generous amount of individualism and art are just part of the cocktail. Let's take Gianluca as an example: he's a fantastic guitarist but that wouldn't have been enough to make him a member of the band – his life, feelings, ideas and deeds were. Again, the big result of this our third manifestation is that we've developed into something

deeper than a band. End of existentialist/romantic logorrhoea.

Nattsol: Let's turn now to your latest release, "La Sangre Real". Represent it for our readers, please.

Thelema: Well, "La Sangre Real" was indirectly born out of the interest in Jesus started by The Da Vinci Code (both book and movie). We've been obsessed by the thought that there was for decades a different side to the story. Not the official Xtian story, not just the fictional Brown story but the more fascinating idea that contact with the Divine could have been, thousands years ago, contact with something "other" that could be something different from what we commonly label as "spiritual". Clarke wrote that any sufficiently advanced and unintelligible technology is dubbed "magic", we add that any sufficiently and unintelligible evolved being is labelled "divine". Just a provocation: and if Jesus (or those who started his "lineage" and de-



scents) was not a god as we “understand” it but a being from other planes, planets, dimensions (you choose and meditate on it)? We also enjoyed the idea of Jesus enjoying the pleasures of the flesh. This is the idea the concept was born from.

Nattsol: What is “La Sangre Real” in comparison with its forerunner? And more globally, which of the previous albums “La Sangre Real” is closer to Thelema: Hard to say. None of our records sounds like the others. We know this is not a way to build a stable audience and commercial success but hey, after all we’re mad artists. Some have likened “La Sangre Real” to “Tantra” because there are lots of guitars, but we’d say that it can be considered closer to “Burnt Memories” as both are concept albums.

Nattsol: You wrote that you work on some new stuff. Can you a little bit comment it, or as usual, it’s a grave secret?

Thelema: No, it’s not a secret but, at the same time, we don’t like boasting on stuff that’s not ready yet. Our peculiar way of working could bring us to finish the new shit in a month or in a decade, so there’s nothing to brag about. We can say this: those who have listened to some rough versions of the new tracks DO like them, and the concept theme of the new album will be an anagram of Smith in numbers. It’s a riddle, check Crowley for the reference: if you guess it you win a signed copy of “La Sangre Real”.

Nattsol: Tell me, please, about “DEMOCRATURA”.

Thelema: Shortly, a very good friend of ours is Maurizio Loschi, painter, sculptor, writer and 360° artist. He started this project, which puts together visual and written stimuli, under the name of “DEMOC-

RATURA” (for those not familiar with Italian language, the word is a composite of DEMOCRAZIA (democracy) and DITTATURA (dictatorship); see the www.democratura.it homepage) whose aim is to express the struggle of the individual against all systems of oppression and control, especially those masked as “freedom”. Our old friendship brought us to work together in giving audio dimension to the project, and together – Maurizio also sings - we recorded a 50 minutes piece which will probably be released with a book. Any ideas or proposals, hints or suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

Nattsol: And one more, you make soundtracks to films, as I know. Tell me about it, please. What personally are you inspired by in cinema?

Thelema: Well, too many to mention... to give just three names: Kenneth Anger, Ken Russell, Stanley Kubrick.

Nattsol: And as conceptual addition to my previous question, what are your preferences in literature?

Thelema: To many to mention here too... We are avid readers, from old grimoires to fantasy and hard-boiled novels. We avoid fluffy-bunny new-age stuff, but we read anything else. If we must give three names – Crowley, Spare and Grant apart – Lovecraft (and all the old horror school, Machen et al.), Dick and Robert Anton Wilson. We also like modern novels by writers such as Masterson and Evangelisti (a bit of Italian pride here).

Nattsol: I decided to make this question a single one. Tell me, please, about your collaborations with other musicians for the entire band’s history. Which were the most exciting for you?

Thelema: None that we’re particularly proud of, so no comment. We are of

course referring to the projects we were involved in as members of Thelema, not the personal side projects of every Thelema member.

Nattsol: You say you’re interested in the musical industry and that the word “gothic” wasn’t a label when the band begun. May be, you have some thoughts about when and how this word has appeared (apart from these known legends)? What’s your own approach to this word?

Thelema: We don’t know of any legend, just when this music started going around here in Italy the word was dark, goth and gothic came at the beginning of the 90s, probably as a result of English influence. The fact, I think, is that there was a major influence, on those of us literate enough to read books from gothic literature: Walpole, Shelley and the rest of them. Our point is different: if you were called dark it means you were there before, if you’re called goth you’re a latecomer, at least here.

Nattsol: In one interview you said that John Zorn is more magical than tons of “magical” bands. What is the magic in music in your opinion?

Thelema: We think music(k) is magick in the sense that music(k) is an art, and therefore a precious moment of expression of one’s being. This involves the expressions of one’s feelings, instincts, researches and discoveries. A priceless gem of self-discovery, and a report thereof. This does not mean, at least in our humble opinion, that music should be experimental to be magical: according to our point of view Killing Joke are as magical as Psychic TV. So every TRUE expression of self in music is magic. What we call “ritual” music is another thing: here the music is magical because it tries to express the feelings of DOING magick, or to create an audio environ-

mente for the practice of magic. Our “Rosa+Croce” was something of this kind. John Zorn, for instance, has released tons of music influenced by his research on the Kabbalah (or Kabbalah, Qabbalah, whatever way you decide to spell it), whilst we sadly have to notice that many goth bands are just xeroxes of what has already taken place in the past: we had our share of vampyres (and of vampyre girls, which can be a pleasurable experience at times), but we’re rather tired of this. Give us Grahame Bond back and don’t forget that, as the Virgin Prunes put it, “magic rhymes with tragic (burp)”.

Nattsol: What’s your own approach to the music you do? Are you satisfied? And what’s more important for musician, in your opinion, - satisfaction or discontent?

Thelema: We are never absolutely satisfied with everything we make, as we’re living beings. Being completely satisfied would mean being dead, or not having anything else to say. We don’t believe any artist says: “Well, this thing I have done is perfect, it is my absolute masterpiece”. This would mean stopping forever. As is usual for musicians, when we release a record we are not able to listen to it for a while – how long depends on how much we emotionally involved ourselves in the making. When we go back to listen to it we usually find mistakes or things we would do differently after some time has elapsed – but this is the rule of the recording/releasing game: once you release something it is there and you’re not able to change it anymore. Perfection is not of this world, we think, and as Crowley’s True Will is a work-in-progress so is our music: there’s always something that could we have done better, and we keep it for the next release.

Nattsol: What can you say about the

musical evolution of the scene you’re witnesses of? Do you think it’s a kind of evolution or decline?

Thelema: It’s hard to say. We think that we cannot judge the quality of what is being produced and released at the moment. As far as quantity is concerned, however, we cannot avoid noticing the things are worse: the scene is really smaller than 20 years ago and thins?? This makes it difficult to find good labels, gigs etc.

Nattsol: How does being a musician reflect on your daily life?

Thelema: Less time for girls-hunting but an easier game when we find the ones we really like. The artist’s charm still works...

Nattsol: You said that "goth bands are just Xeroxes". But are there some you like? In particular, do you see a development of goth/post-punk music? Are there some remarkable contemporary bands? Why so?

Thelema: No comment. Too many to thrash and too few to praise.

Nattsol: Do you see any particular music which could’ve become the music of the future?

Thelema: Any kind of crossover between genres.

Nattsol: What are you likes and dislikes in the [contemporary] world and society?

Thelema: We have a deep hope that mankind keeps true to its heritage. What we see, however, is a strong assault on the individual, religious fanaticism and isolation on Man from God. No ideas about the future.

Nattsol: Thanks for the interview, hope for this time the decade finishes without a break-up! And the final words are yours.

Thelema: Never say never... Anyway,

we think the world will have to stand us for a while this time. We’ve just “discovered” we have tons of things to say right now, and this will be the reason for not splitting for a while: we like playing right now, and we like the old/new band “dimension” that’s been re-brought into Thelema by the new members. In this context we’re happy you gave us a chance to chat with you a little, sometimes answering to intelligent questions helps keep thing clear and in focus. We’d be happy to play there, should the chance arise. So, regards and greetings and, of course: Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.
Love is the law, love under will.

*Questions: Pall ‘Nattsol’ Zarutskiy
‘Grave Jibes Fanzine’*



Magick – change your Religion for
 Magick – turn your pain in
 Magick – all you see is Magick
 “Magick”

“Tantra” is the first album of the band Thelema from Modena, Italy. And this is that release, which has made them known as “godfathers of the Italian darkwave”. Is that darkwave or not, - it’s the question for discussions, but it’s exactly the magical music which has been determining the genre since 1986 it was originally released in till nowadays. So what makes “Tantra” sound so unique and brilliant?

First, as a human body, the album consists of different “parts” which in combination give the entire release. It is the 80’s “wave” sound, so recognizable, a little bit gothic rock approach, the one which created the entire Rosetta Stone’s “An eye for the main chance” thing later in the 90’s, a touch of Joy Division (quite obvious in “Samekh” which sounds as one of the best Joy Division’s “meditative” songs), the flute additions, - not far from the ones which recently got listeners’ attention in the debut *The Spiritual Bat* album, the lyrics which really deserve being called Poems by their figurativeness and complexity (it’s not that often when even the bonus tracks lyrics are published in booklet, but in this case it’s the integral part of the release). But what’s the most important it’s that apart from the body, “Tantra” has its soul, that is inimitable so even if all the pieces of the band’s music will be combined altogether it never will be “Tantra”. Probably this is the soul that makes the album so versatile. I.e. being perfectly fit for any new/dark wave or goth lover for its brilliant hits (which are almost every song of the

Thelema – “Tantra” album review

album, but the most outstanding are) “Magick”, “Your God”, “The Face of the Angel”, “The Book of Law”... many different approaches can be used for this album. It exactly can attract some occult oriented people for the band is so obviously inspired by Aleister Crowley’s Thelema, and one side of understanding the band’s music is completely about it. It also can be attractive for those who has lyrical preferences in music since even though some parts may be hidden from not initiates, it still has plenty of poetical figures and beauty. It as well can be interesting for musical gourmets since the music has many hidden backgrounds. Enough to mention so beautifully veiled reference to “Jesus Christ Superstar” in “J.C.S. (A Pagan Ritual)” where the quotes of it can be found in the motive and lyrics, but there they are parts of absolutely another picture, which is the band’s viewpoint about the initial Christ, the abuse of the Christian ideas and how Christ himself didn’t know that it will happen if he’s the son of God. There are more references in the band’s music, but they’re used in the way like quoting in literature.

To summarize, we have the reissue of the great and a kind of legendary (it has been a real rarity before this reissue) album with 70 minutes of brilliant music and 7 bonus tracks. But it’s not only the music, it’s the entire world. The World where the Music is the Law.

Rate: 9,5/10

Pall ‘Nattsol’ Zarutskiy

‘Grave Jibes Fanzine’

Russian view of post-punk

The Siberian field of experiments

It's not a secret for the national post punk's amateurs that this popular in the 80's genre was exposed by :1)mainstream groups(Kino, Alisa, Agatha Christie) 2) by underground groups (Durnoe Vliyanie (Bad Influence), Matrosskaya Tishina (Sailor's Silence), Francuzskoe Soprotivlenie (French Resistance)). You can find a lot of information about them in the internet and in musical literature "for wise men" (Kushnir, A., "100 Magnitalbomov of Russian Rock", "Rock music in

the USSR"; Troitsky, A.,«Poplex») but you can find very little about the «Siberian» wave of post-punk, which dies away with its older brother basically because of illiteracy of Russian people and also because of the widespread opinion that Siberians can only sing the "heart-felt" songs, playing the out-of-tuned guitar. The third reason is the lack of information.

What is the "Siberian" post-punk? What is its evolution, and who can be attributed to its representatives?

Children of Hospitals

At first, no one separated punk and post-punk in Siberia. The same people were involved in it and the quality of studio records didn't put forward radically new sound. Novosibirsk was the center of the musical life. At that time the little known group GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA, GO (The CIVIL DEFENSE) had given a concert after which people began to say that "the Punk Rock in USSR existed only 20 minutes - during the concert of GO in Novosibirsk. All the rest is Post-punk" (Kushnir, A., "100 Magnitalbomov of Russian Rock"). In general, it's difficult to estimate Egor Letov's (the band's leader) influence on post-punk. His musi-



INSRTRUKTSIYA PO VIZIVANIJU

cal ideas were reflected not only in the GO's records, but also in collaborations with the musicians whose works are associated with post-punk. For example, he participated as a bass player in one of the best post-punk's records YANKA I VELIKIE OCTYABRI (Yanka And the Great Octobers) – «Declassificirovannim elementam» ("Declassed elements") which reminds SIOXSIE AND THE BANSHEES. And in Yanka's Concert in Kurgan the band even got close to X-MAIL DEUTSHLAND. Unfortunately, Yanka had focused on the acoustics, and that's why her post-punk side didn't develop.

Yanka also played with ZAKRITOE PREDPRIYATIE (BURIED COMPANY), whose dark industrial sounds can be compared to PIL or HELMET. Even more striking in the field of "industrial" branches of the post-punk was Dmitry Selivanov's (GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA, KALINOV MOST (KALINOV BRIDGE)) PROMISHLEN-

NAYAARCHITEKTURA (INDUSTRIAL ARCHITECTURE). Bordering with indifference, alienation and hopelessness in the texts on the one hand, and atonal guitars against a background of icy keys with a simple drum-machine on the other send us directly to EINSTURZENDE NEUBAUTEN and even Kraut-rock. The band leader's life was the example of keeping up the traditions, started by Ian Curtis – "Musician Selivanov hanged himself with a scarf" (E. Letov, "Ver-shki i Koreshki" ("Tops and Roots"). Postscript was the project of the ARCHITECTURE's remaining musicians with Dmitry Kuzmin (CHERNIY LUKICH (BLACK LUKICH)) - MYJIK DANCE. The result of it was some albums (in English) which after 20 years were recognized as indie production's consumers. However, besides indi-kids is not the honor of recognition of the forerunners of modern Russia Independents none of the Siberians, and they hardly recognized as such by the Novosibirsk group BOMZH (HOMELESS). Their lyrics, full of gothic and Nazism were partake of Freudianism and were extremely provocative. In the 86 the Soviet people were simply not ready to heroes such as Dr. Mengele and, in spite of several successful performances at various festivals the group disbanded, leaving only one studio album.

Another musical center was Tyumen and it also had its heroes: INSRTRUKTSIYA PO VIZIVANIJU (INSTRUCTION FOR SURVIVAL) and COOPERATIV NISHTIAK. IFS – were the main opponents of GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA. Their studio-



BOMZH . photo by - Lev Goncharov

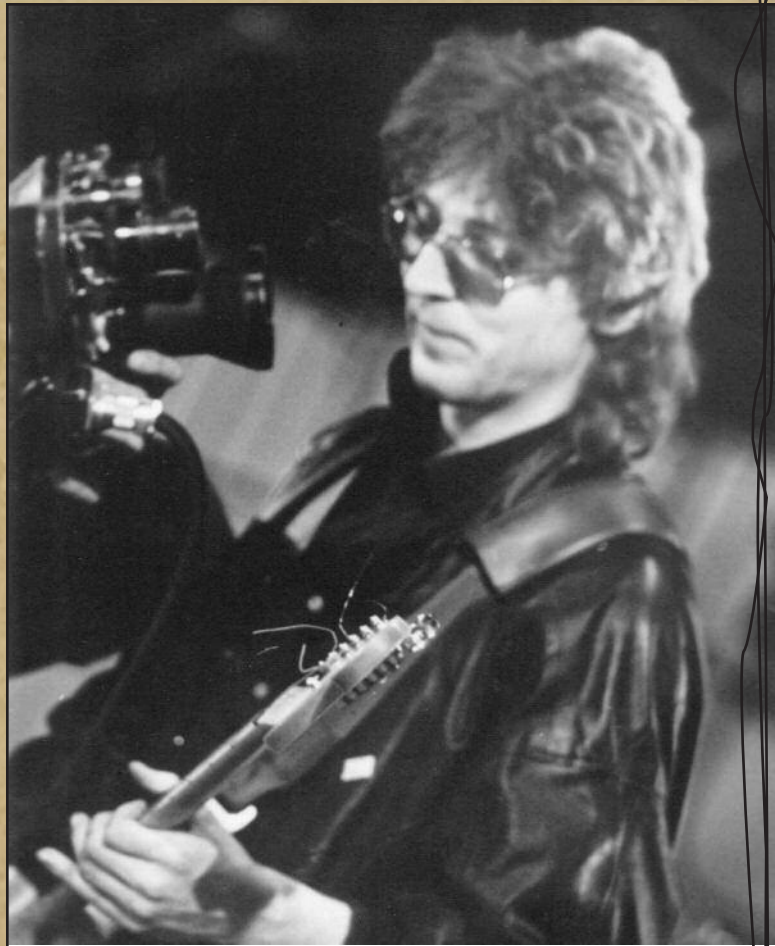


Cooperative Nishtyak

works were pure post-punk and the Neumoev's crystallized lyrics were full of mysticism, apocalyptic spirits and obscurantism. Kyril Rybyakov - the leader of The COOPERATIV NISHTIAK imbued his work with the images of alchemy, esotericism and LaVey and Crowley's works. Rybyakov's works associate with Jaz Koulmon from KILLING JOKE, but Kyril realized his potential only in the 90-s when he moved to Moscow. Speaking about Siberia it's necessary to mention the unique person Nick Rock-n-Roll, whose name is not associated with any particular city in Siberia. He represented the whole Siberia. Nike was called Russian Iggy Pop and his theatrical performances were added by furious garage ("Moskovskiye Kanikuly" ("Moscow Holidays")) and ruthless post-punk ("Vechnik", "Mertviy Men" ("Dead Men")) albums.

Darkness over Moscow

The next period of the development of the "Siberian" post-punk should rather be called "quasi-Siberian," because the main characters mostly



PROMISHLENNAYA ARCHITEKTURA



SOLOMENNIE YENOTY



YANKA I VELIKIE OCTYABRI



Nick Rock-n-roll and Lolita. (from Yuri Chashkin archives)

were not Siberians. A new wave coincided with the second wave of "Siberian" punk. It had its roots not only in Siberia, but also in Manchester and other cities of the capitalist world. Moscow was in bloom at that time. The new band BANDA CHETYREH (GANG of FOUR) emerged on the ruins of the punk-group RESERVATSIA ZDES (RESERVATION HERE). Gang of Four is the most powerful group of this wave. Perhaps, Santim and Co. were the most resembled to JOY DIVISION, but at the same time, their ideas were somewhat different. In addition to the usual post-punk existential motifs, the band was interested in radical policy (NBP), didn't shy away near-nazi slogans (and, therefore, was wildly popular in the football fans and skinheads' circles) and sang about chaos and rebellion. By the 2005 The Gang of Four had been exhausted. It was disbanded and gave way to a new Santime's project – ANGELY NA KRAYU VSELENNOY (ANGELS ON THE EDGE OF THE UNIVERSE), which had more music without policy.

Moscow bands had Siberian continuity - the same people were involved into different projects. So

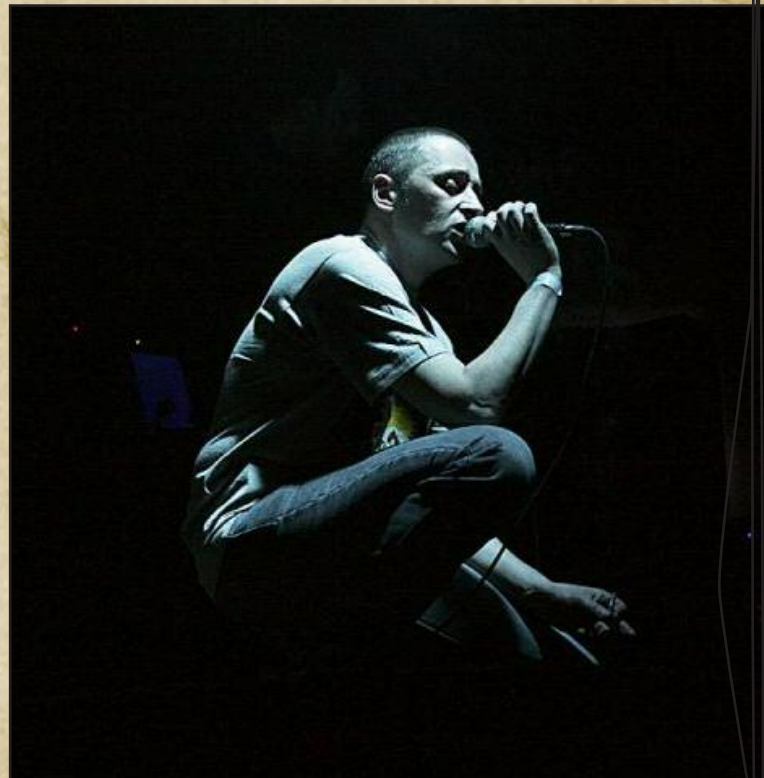


PRegion 77 (1988)

the musicians of BANDA CHETYREH at one time played in different projects such as: OGON (The FIRE), OZHOG (The BURN), SOLOMENNIE YENOTY (STRAW RACCONS), BRESH BEZOPASNOSTY (SECURITY FLOWS). OGON was a project of Alexander Ionov-Leshy, and at first it was more inclined to the psychedelic-rock. But the time has elapsed. Their latest album «Zajivo» ("Alive") sounded according to the canons of the genre. But on account of the crisis of musical ideas OGON disbanded and gave way to a new group, - REGION 77. The line-up was the same except guitarist Konstantin Mishin who concentrated on BANDA CHETYREH and his project The BURN at that time. OZHOG followed the tra-



ADAPTATSIA



Banda Chetyreh



OGON



OZHOG (photo by Maria Ionova-Gribina)



PEREDVIZHNIIE HIROSIMY

dition of JD, THE FALL and BAUHAUS, but it was boring. Nevertheless, after the release of the album "Electrostantsia Z" ("Power station Z") OZHOG firmly found its place in the existential post-punk for the marginalized people and misanthropes. It is interesting to note that all the Moscow groups realized their connection with the previous generation, and played cover versions of the BOMZH, PROMISHLENNAYA ARCHITEKTURA, INSRTRUKTSIYA PO VIZIVANIJU, COOPERATIV NISHTIAK songs. The latter group, as we have mentioned earlier, reached the peak in its Moscow period, developing from a dirty punk and dreary post-punk to post-rock and even to dark-folk, maintaining an active relationship with the Moscow soul-mates.

The Province during the 90-ies in the field of post-punk shone in cities like Tomsk, Tolyatti, Samara, Rostov-on-Don, Minsk and Aktobe. Tomsk was represented by PEREDVIZHNIIE HIROSIMY (MOBILE HIROSIMS) who played at the junction of post-punk and dirty garage rock in the spirit of MC5. Unfortunately, they didn't leave any studio record (solo Slava Shatov we don't count), but did a lot of good live-records.

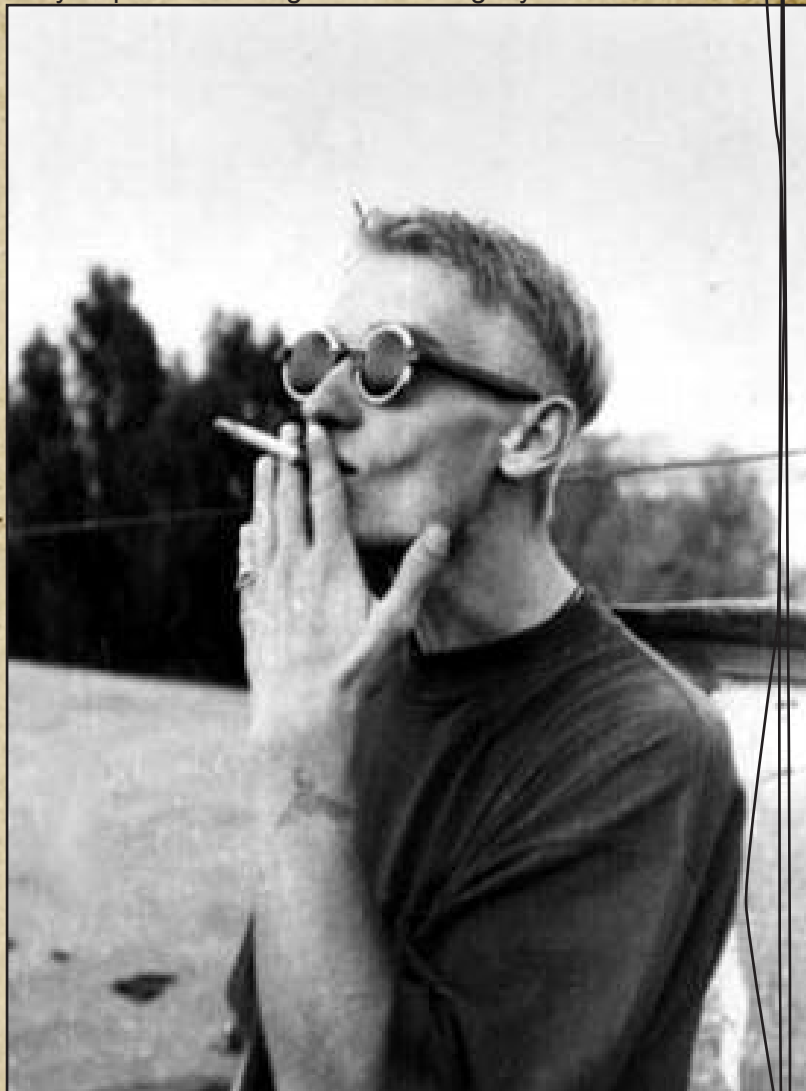
HUGO-HUGO played in Togliatti. The publisher Mikhail Verbitsky (Ur-Realist Rec) said about them: "HUGO-HUGO are the most looking like Joy Divi-

sion because these guys in their 15 wonderful albums on the spur of the moment re-created the Martin Hannek's sound experiments. I think they didn't try to do it. It was just the time..."

In Samara there was KONTORA KOOKA, which became known only in recent times. They were noticed by the critic Andrew Bukharin from 'Rolling Stone'.

In Rostov-on-Don in the time of the first "Siberian" wave there was a band Illusion, which created the whole school of the independent musicians (they didn't incline to post-punk) The Gaponov's poems were full of Cossacks' romanticism and patriotism what presented the unique combination of this music.

Minsk and Aktyubinsk were presented by politicized groups, such as KRASNYYE ZVEZDY (RED STARS) and ADAPTATSIA (ADAPTATION), which persistently exploited the Egor Letov's legacy. The first



Hugo-Hugo

band played post-punk in 'red-brown' colours with Russian melodies. And the second band after a number of weak albums about anarchy made a post-punk masterpiece- Jute.

The End of the Epoch

Today most of the members of the both waves have gone into the oblivion (BANDA CHETYREH , ZATERYANNIYE V KOSMOSE(LOST IN SPACE), PEREDVIZHNIIE HIROSIMY, HUGO-UGO) or live an inactive lifestyle (SOLOMENNIE YENOTY, BRESH BEZOPASNOSTY, COOPERATIV NISH-TIAK), but some bands endure the renaissance (REGION 77, KRASNYYE ZVEZDY, MYJIK DANCE). And only few groups have remained relative saved (OZHOG, ADAPTATSIA). These remaining groups work on new albums and play concerts. But it's difficult to say, that there are a lot of followers of the "Siberian" and the "quasi-Siberian" post-punk, except of PORA KONCHAT (IT'S TIME TO STOP), ANENERBE or BRATSTVO KONTSA (BROTHERHOOD OF END) from Moscow. And, of course, nobody will call ENFACE (Omsk) or CORBAIN KILLS (Novosibirsk) the followers of "Siberian" wave.

The epoch is going to its end leaving only the history and records for us- on audiotape and in a wretched mp3 format.

Golden Fund "Siberian" post-punk:

1. YANKA I VELIKIE OCTYABRI (Janka Diaghileva and the Great Octobers) – “Declassificirovannim elementam” (“Declassed elements”)
2. PROMISHLENNAYA ARCHITEKTURA (Industrial Architecture) – “Lubov i Tehnologiya” (“Love and Technology”)
3. INSRTRUKTSIYA PO VIZIVANIJU (Instruction for Survival) – “Smertnoe” (“Death”)
4. Nick Rock-n-roll i TRITE DUSHI (Nick Rock-n-roll and SoulTrite) - "Vechnik"
5. Cooperative Nishtyak – “Pamyaty Dika” (“In memory of Dick”)
6. Zakrytoye Predpriyatiye (Buried Company) – “Konstruktsiya” (“Design”)
7. Myjik Dance – “Karmanniy Lebed” (“Pocket Swan”)
8. BOMZH – “BOMZH 1”
9. NACHALNIK PARTYI (Chief of Party) - "Pops-underground"
10. Hugo-Hugo – “Mne tak strashno” (“I'm so scared”)
11. ZAZERKALYE (Through the Looking Glass) – “Soldatskaya Sovest” (“Soldier's conscience”)
12. KRASNYYE ZVEZDY (Red Stars) – “Epoha Izhepatriotizma” (“Epoch of pseudo-patriotism”)
13. ADAPTATSIA (Adaptation) - "Jute"
14. OGON (Fire) – “Zajivo” (“Alive”)
15. Banda Chetyreh (Gang of Four) - "Ugliness Time"
16. OZHOG (Burn) – “Electrostantsia Z” (“Power station Z”)
17. Region 77 – “Azbuka Straha” (“The ABC of Fear”)
18. ZATERYANNIYE V KOSMOSE (Lost in Space) – “Isklucheniye iz pravil” (“The exception to the rule”)
19. BRESH BEZOPASNOSTY (Security flows) – “Obratnaya Perspektiva” (“Reverse Perspective”)
20. Santim and ANGELY NA KRAYU VSELENNNOY (Angels on the Edge of the Universe) – “Mir Na Zakate” (“Peace at Sunset”)

*Artem 'Iguana' Burtsev
Grave Jibes Fanzine*



(с) Мария Ионова-Грибина

Interview with Region 77

<http://www.myspace.com/region77ru>

Iguana: We're sitting with the band Region 77, not practically in the full staff, but at least with the main creative units: Alexei Exhich - guitar, Alexander Ionov-Leshiy - vocals. So we begin with the current line-up, represented with guitar, drums, vocals and keys. Why such a composition?

Ionov-Leshiy: Cause of the lack of people (laughing).

Exhich: Perhaps in order to get rid of stereotypes in the rock'n'roll sound, as the live instruments cannot provide enough plastic and monotony.

Iguana: Do you think your sound has to be synthetic and plastic?

Exhich: At some extent - yes.

Iguana: But at your concert the sound was quite rock 'n' roll...

Ionov-Leshiy: Live performance is live performance, it should differ from the studio recording, giving drive.

Iguana: Maybe it was worthy to include live instruments exactly for your live performances?

Exhich: But in fact all our instruments are real now, except bass-guitar, which isn't used in order to not expand the composition. The last two decades electronic music has been developing intensively and we're not going to ignore

it, especially through there are some bands among others, which we sympathize with, the bands which gave up the standard format of drum-guitar a-la “The Beatles”

Igguna: I see. Speaking about the electronic bands or more ‘rock’n’rolla’, which of them influenced the music of Region 77 more?

Exhich: I think everything beginning with the Beatles and ending with techno and trance influenced our music.

Ionov-Leshiy: Actually our music is quite electronic, especially now, when with the years we’ve become widely erudite in music, listening a wide variety of different music, which of course influences our creation, but again it’d be difficult for us to perform some certain kind of music, hardcore for instance, because the art is an interchange and one way or another, everything is remelted and reflected in your own creation.

Igguna: Talking about the idols, do you have any? What about you, Alexander?

Ionov-Leshiy: Now it’s difficult to mention any. 10 years ago I’d mention Nick Cave, Tom Waits, Jello Biafra - these are the roots of my youth, but now the range of the music

I listen to is much wider.... It’s easier to say what disgusts me - that is the Russian stage and Russian chanson.

Exhich: And Russian rock!

Ionov-Leshiy: Yes, because it is very close to the chanson.

Igguna: What about you, Alexei?

Exhich: I’ve just outgrown the age when there can be idols. (Laughing)

But frankly speaking, I listen to very different music; I went to the ballet yesterday, for instance.

Ionov-Leshiy: And I listened to Grieg again.

Exhich: Of course there was a time when we were fond of Nick Cave and Joy Division. For example my solo project Lost in Universe was under the hard affection of this band, but now again there is nothing to mention.

Igguna: You’ve mentioned your solo project, tell us about it!

Exhich: It existed inconstantly for 10 years. It was like a peculiar school in which I learned how to play, record and arrange. Six programs were written, but then there were some troubles as I had exhausted all the ideas, which were originally projected, plus the low interest among the audi-



ence made me turn to the other projects. I worked with Santim ("Gang of four"), Kostja Mishin (The Fire) and with Sasha we've resurrected Region 77.

Iggua: Lesha, your songs sound in the repertoire of some other bands, "The Coordinates" for instance. Firstly it was performed by The Fire, and now by Region 77. What is opinion about the authorship, don't you mind when somebody performs them?

Ekzich: Not on stage, cause I'm not the artist and it's complicated to represent these songs by myself. For me their recording might be interesting, but to appear on the stage as a front man is not for me. So I think that the show must make only those who really do manage it.

Iggua: Sasha, the question is to you as a vocalist. What can you say about the importance of the charisma for the musician, especially for the front man?

Ionov-Leshy: I'll start from the end. There is no notion of leadership in the Region 77. In fact we are both leaders with Alexei, but the concept of the band is a project of kindred spirits, an option close to The Beatles. Historically the most of the lyrics are written by me and the music - by Ekzich.

Ekzich: In studio we mainly work in duet. Maybe, with help of our new musicians: drummer Vitaly Chaplin, keyboardist Andrei Gavrilov - we'll have one more pole. The scene - of course is Sasha's field, where, thanks to his artistry and charisma, the emphasis is focused on him.

Ionov-Leshy: Now about charisma. Vocalist must have some artistic talent, which should be developed over the years. At repetition for example, I try to rehearse some stage motions. Certainly, it's not the theatre but I remember the 90-s, when I didn't know what to do with my hands and moved as I could. Now it looks more spectacular. Generally, every front man, for example Curtis, has his own motion, but sometimes it's normal to loan something. Depends on sympathy.

Iggua: Speaking about the 90's, what are the differences between the Fire (the first Leshy and Ekzich's groups) and Region 77?

Ekzich: Listen to the records and you will hear everything. (laugh)

Ionov-Leshy: You had to be in fire to feel, what a deadlock it was. The Region 77 was born as the new songs had been written. They weren't suit to the concept of The Fire, and potential of us as musicians was bigger than Kosta Mishin's (guitar-player of the Fire), whose level of the play was

rather mediocre so we couldn't play what we wanted. At that time a good bass player Alexander Aronov joined the Region 77, but there were some problems with the drummer, that's why we had to attract Sergei Amelko by force from the Fire, as he wanted to play in the Gang of Four only.

Ekzich: The Fire was guided by the late Siberian punk. The sound was close to the "Guidelines for Survival", some kind of the russophile punk, that was difficult to call neither punk, nor Russian rock. It was something incomprehensible. At concerts everything was made up with drive and emotions. This time we've been listening to a lot to different post-punk, in particular to 'Nick Cave's company' (CRIME AND THE CITY SOLUTION, THESE IMMORTAL SOULS). We tried to come closer to such music.

Iggua: Speaking about "the Siberian" wave, how strongly did it, particularly Yegor Letov, influence you?

Ionov-Leshy: At the year 1994, the time we assembled, it was not as strong. It was peculiar to our early ages.

Ekzich: We've been listening to "The Instructions for Survival". Letov was too infernal figure, and Neumoev beared bright ideas, But then we stopped listening to it.

Ionov-Leshy: For us Letov's music was just a creative urge.

Ekzich: Of course his personality will always be in our minds and we can't do anything with it, even though it's difficult to find some allusions in our work, now especially. Actually on the first Region 77 album "ABC of Fear" we've recorded the cover-version of "Guidelines for Survival" - "Autumn Drive". Doing that we showed that our youth interests had gone.

Iggua: The name Region 77 is referring to the capital of Russia. Do you consider yourself as a "Moscow-band"?

Ionov-Leshy: We're a group of the big cities.

Ekzich: Actually, I think - yes. You can find many similar moments in stylistics. There was a period when I was listening to a lot to Moscow groups: Polite Refusal, Center, Sounds of Mu (Zvuki Mu). Of course, our music is cold. It's better to name it "the music of the metropolises". It's clear that a band living in Moscow sounds different from bands from Tomsk, Vladivostok and Los-Angeles.

Ionov-Leshy: In our music there are some references to the concrete streets and places: "Night of the Little Tula", "Homeless man at the Kazan station", "Upper Fields Street".

Igguna: Our magazine is intended not only for Russians but all over the world readers. Therefore the next question is: you made a strong emphasis on melodeclamation and poetry in the latest Region 77 works. How do you think: will it be interesting for non-Russian listeners?

Ekzich: Well, they perceive music of Vysotsky or Kino. So...I think, It will be.

Ionov-Leshy: Just as we can perceive Ginzbur, Aznaur, Dassin. These musicians had a lot of melodeklamation.

Igguna: That is to say, you think we can perceive everything on our emotional level, don't you?

Ionov-Leshy: Sure. Though Western people like to listen to the Russian language, that's uniquely. And we're going to translate our melodeklamative things, to make easier for understanding at least the main ideas of our not-mixed yet album "Street Upper Fields". We will print the lyrics. Listening only to the mini-album "Society", which is very conceptual, it's rather difficult to judge our music. There'll be more music as it is, songs themselves and less melodeklamation on our LP. Though the lyrics in Russian often demand the melodeklamative method of rendition.

Igguna: One question about the release of your album. As I know you are serious admirers of the album's releasing through the Internet. Considering its development, is it expedient to release CD?

Ekzich: I commonly share some music, and if I like some band's album, I'll buy it eventually. But nowadays buying CDs is mainly a kind of aesthetic pleasure. No one stands in long queues, trying to buy a new single or a record. The time has changed. We'll continue to spread our songs through the Internet and do the records, it only depends on our interest.

Ionov-Leshy: Internet is a phenomenon of civilization, and it shouldn't be ignored, because with its help musicians can do a minimal promotion. Since we laid out our mini-album ten days ago, it has been downloaded with 200 people - I think it's not bad by now.

Ekzich: Perhaps the 'big' musicians suffer losses from the Internet but we do not.

Igguna: Today, Russian scene, including underground scene has a tendency of doing 'funny' projects. Such musicians as Barto, KACH, Prokhor, and Puzo, Pakhom are popular. What is the reason of this tendency?

Ekzich: I can't say that these musicians shouldn't deserve attention. I like Barto, for example. There are a lot of worse examples: when the brains of music publishing staff are very saturated with information. When the consumerism grows to absurd, this music companies find bad talents and try to make them stars providing as manna. As a result - these week-bands are on the glazed magazines' covers, attracting attention of the crowd, we get horrified with it. But



their time will pass away...

Ionov-Leshy: The situation is that. For example, one group is very popular among the journalists of the magazines "Afisha" and "Rolling Stone". Those magazines have good audience, and that of course will attract attention.

Ekzich: There are few good musicians nowadays. And someone wants them to be invented.

Ionov-Leshy: Since ancient times there is a trend that obscene, entertaining music is very popular in distinction from the dark, thoughtful music. At present there are some exceptions surely: Depeche Mode, Pink Floyd - but they just confirm the rule.

Ekzich: At this phase bands like Barto are as important now, as important and necessary was the civil verve of so called 'Russian Rock'.

Iguana: In 80-s post-punk was very popular in America and Europe. In this period of time it was a kind of mainstream direction. But why in USSR and then in Russia it didn't have a growth? Catastrophically few people know, that Kino, Alisa, Nautilus Pompilius played post-punk.

Ionov-Leshy: What for do they need to learn it? People just listen to the music.

Ekzich: Another point is that they are not sufficiently educated and Russian rock-culture don't have the roots. Russians are more inclined to chanson, romance, stage and urban bard's song.. In those traditions everything is all right in our country. It may sound strange, but rock-culture hasn't got accustomed to our country.

Ionov-Leshy: France is a striking example of the country with the same situation. The rock-boom passed aside this country. They have a strong tradition of chanson and pop as we do. And all Russian groups that popular in crowds are anyway connected with the bardic tradition - DDT, Garik Sukachev.

Iguana: Is there a lot of darkness in Region 77's music? Ekzich: We don't charge it.

Ionov-Leshy: In general, our songs are written such as they're written. Our world isn't a very nice place – I cannot write something in a positive way even though I want to. Mostly it depends on human nature.



Region 77 - "Social life" mini-album review

So, in anticipation of long play release, Region 77, one of the most interesting Moscow's post-punk bands which revived last year, made a mini-album, unfortunately only in virtual form. The band's sound became more mechanized and electronic - a lot of samples and drum-machines are used, which is primarily due to the line-up - Region 77 at the moment is almost a duet, but the importance of guitar player Alexei Slezov, draws inspiration from the Mick Harvey and Trenston Moore methods is difficult to overestimate, because his instrument creates atmosphere and sets the tone.

Musicians used recitation of poetry to musical accompaniment in most tracks on mini-album. A high level poetry by Alexander Ionov does not look shabby. There are two or three songs that make up the pearl - sticky "Coordinates" (which has been performed well by groups Burn and Lost in Space), "In the Magadan Region" - an old song of the first Ionov's group - "Fire", which is played with such power that creeps run through the skin, and "Epitaph", which logically completes the record with the existential truth: "No matter how, from what and when: you too will die alone."

In conclusion, I want to say that "Social life" is sufficiently mature work, in general, no longer young, and therefore, unfortunately, not sparkling vigor and freshness, but a confident and firm in its sound.

Rate: 7/10

*Artem 'Iguana' Burtsev
Grave Jibes Fanzine*

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Interview with

BRETT SMILEY

ID:

Name: Brett Smiley

Location: New York city, US

Time: 1973-...

Close to: Glam rock

Current Label: RPM records

<http://www.myspace.com/brettsmiley>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9xlvGSj88g&feature=youtube_gdata

Have kids you seen the movie "Velvet Goldmine"? Well... I first heard Brett Smiley's music through a friend, he burned me a copy of the album "Breathlessly Brett" which had been recorded in the seventies and remained unreleased until 2004. I've heard that the original masters for the full album had been locked up in some WW2 bunker for about thirty years. The few people around New York who really know about Brett and his music are very passionate about him, they always compare him to early David Bowie, T.Rex & even Dr. Frankenfurter from "Rocky Horror Picture Show". In 2004 a book was published about him by Nina Antonia called "The Prettiest star: Whatever happened to Brett Smiley?"

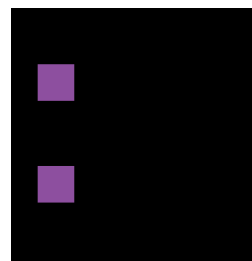
A lot of hardcore Glam Rock fans did wonder what happened to that beautiful androgynous crooner...

While walking around the village I've run into Brett a few times, usually sitting on the sidewalk or a park bench with an acoustic guitar on his back and a cigarette in his hand.

Why am I telling this to Grave Jibes readers anyway?

Because Glam Rock became Punk Rock which became Post-Punk which became Gothic which became me & you, you little cunts.

I recently got a chance to sit down in the park with Brett & do a short interview with him.



JV: So we're sitting in Winston Churchill Square in the West Village in Manhattan, um... Brett you were born... you grew up around New York & L.A.?

BS: No, I was actually born in a little town in the mid-west called Washington, Indiana.

JV: Washington, Indiana?

BS: I moved here when I was like seven years old and... What an adventure! And I don't know I wound up being around a theater circle. My sister was always getting the trades, the Backstage in show business and they wanted boys who could sing and I could always sing so on a fluke...

JV: And you were the youngest kid ever to play Oliver on Broadway.

BS: Well, I grew into the role actually. I was one of the boys, an understudy, and I grew into the role and I did a lot

of different companies. I spent about four years doing Lionel Bart's Oliver - different productions, the Broadway Company, west coast companies, the Summer Stock Company, whatever. Then I just grew up around theater and art. I guess I was very fortunate in that way. It's a double edged sword though. Meaning, you know, of course at eight years old, we'd open in a town and the champagne would open up and I would...

JV: The champagne would open up and you were how old!?

BS: Oh eight, nine, ten, ten! I could handle the champagne better then. Than I do now. Ha ha ha! I was much more of a sophisticated drinker then... at seven years old. Pink champagne for us and all the adults would say "Oh isn't he cute"! And it made me feel alive man. I was the star of the show!



JV: You've outlasted many of your Glam Rock contemporaries. Why don't you tell us how you've survived?

BS: By the wits of my teeth (snickers)... on a wing and a prayer. I say that a lot. Um... let's see. Um, you know I'm in touch with my old producer Andrew Loog Oldham and the guy's really brilliant.

JV: This was also the Rolling Stones Manager.

BS: Yeah he was the manager and the producer of the Rolling Stones. He did a lot more than that with the media and records; like, you can name any band... He was instru-

mental in Humble Pie, Black Sabbath, Y'know, a lot of bands and they were all gangsters I guess in those days. I mean, basically, I mean they still are if you ask me (the music business). But I stay in touch with Andrew and we both agree that had I really taken off and had, like a sky high big hit in those days I probably would be dead too, like a lot of the ones that did. And the thing is I HAVE kept writing over all these years. I do periodically put something together, put something together, but it takes a lot of work, energy, money, and um, I'm dealing with it as best I can because also I'm dealing with a lot of the consequences

of my lifestyle where it went from like the champagne, but it went to like living in Alphabet City and shooting dope every day. And you know I don't do that anymore, thank God, but it was really, you know in my mind. I thought I was this observer (this was back in the seventies mind you) but I thought I was an observer of all this weird New York bohemian drug addled... um prostitutes, rockers, whatever, um, scene, and, um, where I was I thought I was just taking notes. I was just as much a part of it as anyone else and, yeah, I guess I am lucky. I guess I'm fortunate that I was able to leave New York or else, yeah; I would have fallen under here like everyone else. Yeah, this is a tough town. You gotta be strong to live in New York. That's the first requirement I think - you gotta be lucky & strong.

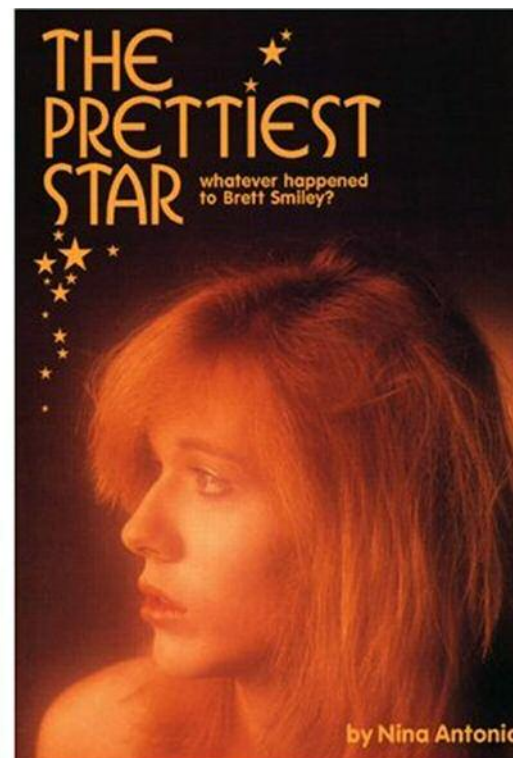
JV: How are you feeling about New York now, compared to then?

BS: Well, I don't really care now that my life's ruined. HA! I don't give much of a fuck. Ha ha, no I do just... well it's definitely prettier! Um, there's a certain root New York element that I don't believe can ever be taken away. (Around this point in the conversation Brett points out that there's a kid near us glaring at the iPod which I'm holding out to record him. - JV) Hey, but they sure are trying to take it away with all the glass and steel and... and all that, and you know I run into people that are still alive from back in the seventies and it's like, you know we're all dangling on a wing and a prayer. It seems, some people are quite successful, but we've lost a lot of people you know due to drug

overdose, H.I.V., whatever, what have you, some of my heroes you know?

JV: After Glam kind of faded out of style and punk rock took over. I'm surprised you didn't kind of re-invent yourself for that. Were you kind of not into that style, or the whole thing? You were certainly self destructive enough, probably more so than some of the early punkers.

BS: Y'know, I know what you're saying. You know, before I started this whole thing I liked The Rolling Stones, The Beatles, John Lennon and I went to England in '71 and I saw T-Rex. There was a song of theirs out called "Hot Love" and it totally revolutionized my whole way of thinking. It was like I go, "Wow, guys can dress like that and look like that?" And I started glamming up then and this would be like the early, early seventies, like seventy one, and I started wearing the boots, and it was very innocent times mind you. And I met David Bowie and I was just amazed cuz' he was like on his first tour of America and he was showing up in gowns, wearing dresses and stuff. Now, I was a very pretty boy and all that, but I wasn't like a drag queen or anything like that, but the, um, ambiguity was very pop at the time and like I say it was an innocent time. And you know when glam didn't sort of kick off in America the way it did in the rest of the world, you know there were still people who stayed with it, but I kept writing songs. Then of course, the battles with drugs and booze, getting free of that was really difficult and I've had periodic relapses. But my music sort of changed. I really sort of started



getting back into my roots thing even almost a country western feel on some stuff. And one thing Andrew Loog Oldham taught me was something about a "good song" and structuring songs. And even listening to Hank Williams and people like that and the way they structured their songs, where it's very sincere and from the heart. And like the simplest of melodies... and you're working on a melody and

what naturally comes next. And that's what happens and you know. And I write still; not as much as I wish I could. It's like I started this riff a couple weeks ago and I really like it. Like its one of the few things I'm patting myself on the back about and I go, "Brett, you've really got a good song". But I've got this flu thing and yesterday was the first day I really started picking up the guitar and I sang through



a song of mine called "Carpe Diem", which is almost like a vaudevillian type number, uh, but it's a cute little thing. Anyway, there's good music out there. Music is alive and it evolves. I'm like, set in a place though where I like a structured song.

JV: Any new artists you like?

BS: Oh who is this girl, this new artist I like? She has a song called "Dreams" and one called... oh what is it Brandy... what's her name? It's Carlyle, not Belinda Carlyle but maybe it's Brandy?

JV: I don't know.

BS: And I really liked her, but there's so much out there. I wouldn't know my Death Cabs from my Cuties.

JV: Ha ha!

BS: Anyway there's such a GLUT of stuff out there. But if you have a discerning ear there's some awfully good stuff out there that I actually get real jealous of. I'm real pop oriented. I like Fountains of Wayne. I know it's really light weight stuff but they're real witty with the lyrics and stuff. I know that there will never be another Beatles or Stones. I got a little line that says "No more Beatles, no more Stones, but Ladies and Gentlemen, here are The Rolling Bones!" As my weight dwindles and I get more skinny, I feel like that's my band now... The Rolling Bones... EHH! I was calling the band "Brett Smiley and his Better Angels" and that's what I'd like to build off of now; the better angels of our nature, which is stealing a line from the late great Abraham Lincoln. At Gettysburg he said "It's time to draw upon the better angels of our nature."

JV: Oh Jesus.

Brett, I'm glad to see you've begun performing again. Can I expect to see you in a fabulous hot pink Gabardine suit & pair of high black platform boots?

BS: Hey, I'll go for the suit, sure. Yes, that was, um, on September tenth, I was asked to do a thing for a premier of a book and, like I rallied the troops and ah, thank you, people seemed to like it. I felt like we were all on Thorazine because you know it's like... getting fifty and forty year old guys up there. I've got to start spiking punch with Ritalin or Aderol or something, I don't know. Or a batch of crystal meth is probably the solution.

JV: Heard any good jokes lately?

BS: NO!!! OH NO!!! We... I'm always listening and...

JV: Any bad ones?

BS: Well sometimes you hear one it's so bad it's good. No I can't think of any off the top of my head, I almost had a "Knock Knock" joke for you there in a minute.

JV: Oh, come on.

BS: I stick with a few friends that are comedians because we'll go into some running monologues about whatever we're going through or a girl we happen to be upset about at the time. Usually the jokes are very personal and perti-

nent to the situation that we might be going through, like our feelings of inferiority or bad luck with women at the time. Now I have a girl who I feel like can save me. I got a woman devoted to me, but genuinely I don't feel like I'm worth it most of the time. I just want to suck tit and be taken care of. That's what I want.

JV: Yeah?

BS: And be taken care of most of the time. I just want to suck tit.

JV: You've answered all my questions, should we end this on sucking tit?

BS: I am doing more things in my life, but with the goal of sucking tit, yeah. That's like back to the womb almost.

JV: But I forgot to ask you about the shit you're doing now.

BS: Slowly doing things with Mick, my drummer. He runs a studio. I recorded a Christmas song called "I won't be home for Christmas" last year that I sent to my friends.

JV: Can we hear some lyrics?

BS: Well it's a very pretty song, but it gets a little political toward the end, the last part is: "The NASDAQ can suck my cold dead dick. Ring bells on their bloody floor. I won't be home for Christmas. There's no Christmas anymore".

JV: And you've been feeling more political?

BS: This is not for the guys going to war for such stupid crazy wars and shit. It's ridiculous. It's like this piracy's been made legal. That's my drawback. I'm always reading the Times. I see all this reality and read all this crap and, oh my God, I want to go back to the seventies when I could invent my own reality.

JV: Tell us about your hopes and dreams.

BS: To stay alive and to have purpose. I feel like I am a good song writer. I still am. It takes a lot of work. And, like I said, this older producer of mine, he's into doing something again. I'm going but I'm not dead yet so I guess that's my intentions.

JV: And?

BS: And the tit.

*Questions and introduction by Jon 'Vomit' Worthley
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'*



Camp Z 2009 “Mental Straitjacket” review

New Camp Z album was worth waiting for, indeed. The entire universe of dark sounds is offered to us. The stuff is hard enough because of dense, deep and volume sound rich in noises and experiments in electronics, instruments and vocals.

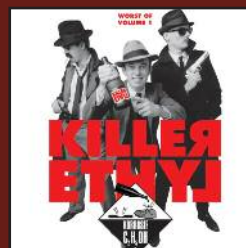
Album starts with charming and monotone “Intro/Section” followed by “No Reality” with extremely strong rhythm section (though that’s a feature of the whole album) and interesting structure where speed changes relieve the tension of hard atmosphere. The song “Schizophrenie” will seem known to those who listened to the previous single of Camp Z. Its anxious and fatal tune is like a melodic backbone of the album which gives the sense of conception to it (we can understand the concept of this personal drama better if we look at the cover art and read the name of the album). This song rhymes melodically with the next coming “W.Hell.Come” II which is also known to the project fans. Fore-stalled with such imposing tracks, it gets a new monumental, almost epic sound. “Unsound Voices” supports the chosen direction with drawl and weird noises which create some primordial spirit. Then logically comes “U-Bortched”, and this one seems a beginning of an apotheosis and semantic centre of the album because of its hard tension, beating and casting-a-spell voices at the end. Then comes “Retrosopic”, where we can breathe freely surprised with almost punkish rhythm and drive that’s though hard enough. Next coming “Obsolete Resistance” is more electronic. It’s not so catchy being a bridge to the genuine hit – “Further Schizo”, where we come back to “Schizophrenie” tune. The tune gets a real power here – dramatic, both oppressive and inspiring, punishing and calling high, frightening and giving hope, that’s like a scream of dying gods or soundtrack to fantastic anti-utopia. Emphasized with different noise effects, wonderful rhythm section and distorted vocal, the song touches and really inspires. “Beyond the Fences of Reality” goes next with weird start and distinctive rocking drive. As catchy as previous one, it finishes perfectly the whole musical picture. And finally the circuit is closed with “Conclusion”, which returns us to the start of all thanks to its ritual monotony.

So, this music has an aggressive force, oppressive psychologism, painting a line from a threat to a catastrophe came true. Despite of the album’s middle rate, it’s dynamic enough and is listened to with bated breath. This release is a great result of all the previous searches of Manu/Zorch and creates an impression of some industrial symphony because of its epic and tragic mood, depth and integrity. This name also seems to be correct for the complicated composition which bases on the harmony of different stylistic and sound devices. Storm of applause.

Rate: 9/10

Ela Salome

‘Grave Jibes Fanzine’



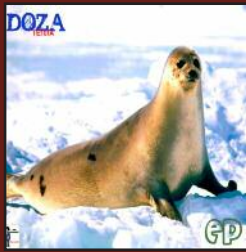
Killer Ethyl – “Worst of, volume 1” compilation review

Brouillard Definitif unexpectedly surprises us with releasing the compilation of Killer Ethyl, a band which actually could be called a punk one. If a cold label does so, it certainly has some reasons for it. Let’s try to understand what makes this band so timely and important in the label’s viewpoint. Brouillard Definitif themselves comment that there should be no borders in the underground scene. But is that the only reason? Scarcely it’s so. Killer Ethyl is considered to be a “mythical band”, and according to the myths it was founded in 1976 though the results of the band’s work could be seen only in the 80’s. As we know, many European bands of that 70’s punk wave were much inspired by Sex Pistols and UK punk explosion, and this youth fashion for destruction and nihilism was probably the loudest thing of the entire wave. But Killer Ethyl made their own conclusions of the punk protest, these ones which only intelligent people could make! Even without understanding lyrics (which are considered as one of their strongest points) it’s clear that even though it’s the music of protest, this protest is done with irony, cynicism and artistry. And it really explains why we know so much about Sex Pistols but know nothing about Killer Ethyl. The first ones were a commercially-oriented toy for youth whereas the latter really have had a chance to appeal to a more intellectual audience, so they were forbidden (it goes without saying that Killer Ethyl caused indignation in some circles) without any sensation around, and of course any appeal to thinking audience couldn’t have become a trend. You can call this statement conjecture, but the music of these gentlemen hooligans shows that it really has backgrounds to possibly be truth. Talking about the music itself, it shows that actually France could have its own individual punk wave: there can be found a little bit of The Cramps, a little bit of Dead Kennedys, a little bit of Sex Pistols, of course... but nothing which can be called a direct influence. Sometimes there can be heard even a touch of rockabilly, but even it can’t be called a background. To summarize, this first volume of the worst Killer Ethyl’s stuff is 24 songs (the CD lasts a little bit more than hour time) which can be called wonderful examples of what can be the most powerful weapon of protest in the arms of intelligence, humour and having fun approach! And this, on a par with the music, may seem the most essential reason for Brouillard Definitif to produce the first ever CD release of Killer Ethyl.

Rate.: 8,5/10

Pall ‘Nattsol’ Zarutskiy

‘Grave Jibes Fanzine’



Dose of Heat – “Dose of Peace” EP review

In the last time post-punk tossed the seeds not only on fertile of culture capitals of Russia – Saint Petersburg and Moscow, but in provinces like Penza. Thence romantics Dose of Heat inspired by “new-wave and post-punk from the 80's, girls with big breasts, their own hallucinations and seals” (!?) made touching EP, which, though a bit gives “Russian rock” or alternative pop music, has a tendency to be a confident and original material in new wave frameworks.

So what about record: there are 5 songs with lyrics of varying quality. The texts are rather clumsy and artless (“I do not care”) and quite neat and witty (“Only today”, “Hiroshima”). Catchy refrains are refer (“Narcotic”) to the Ilya Kormiltsev’s texts (who was the text maker for wildly popular in USSR in the 80's post-punk group Nautilus Pompilius).

Music is quite melodic – harmonies are remembered. Melodic lines are predictable, but they don't lose beauty and charm because of it. At the first time simplest fruity-loops drum-machine without any effects ugly stands out and cuts ear, but you accustom to it and I think that in future musicians will pay more attention to nuances.

Rate: 4/10

Artem ‘Iguana’ Burtsev

Grave Jibes Fanzine

Sister Ray - demo album review

Minsk nowadays along with Moscow and St. Petersburg has developed post-punk scene (“Petlia Pristrastia”, “Blackmail”). One of the bands from this wave pleased us with demo album, which quite could be a numbered album, if only the musicians of Sister Ray weren't so critical to themselves.

At the beginning songs of the group were mostly in English. But after they developed in a way of the bands like Jugendstill and Durnoe Vliyanie (Bad Influence), they radically changed their way of writing texts, which became Russian in language and sound. Frequent repetitions made it more organized and varied. On one hand the advantage of the record is viscous guitar sound, which doesn't climb a strange frequency and has its own line with accurate, intelligent and technical drum parts. Vocalist can sing good, despite the fact that texts in their poetic side are not so high-quality. But they are quite in frame of the genre with existential and gloomy mood and refer to the classics (especially the tunes “uaha-ha-ha” in the spirit of Bauhaus or Jugendstill).

On another hand the minus of record became too virtuosic bass-guitar, which is often not fulfilled its rhythmic functions, which is more suitable to this instrument. Man who made the reduction of tape obviously wasn't subjected in post-punk style and pushed bass in not characteristic frequencies. Also songs need more melodic lines, but if we mark it by death-rock canons (Sister Ray's music is close to it) it's quite justified.

I think that Minskians have a chance to achieve the desired sound, if they emphasize on death-rock and appropriate style of singing, or if they add in their post-punk more melodic lines and bass will be on suitable frequencies.

Rate: 5/10

Artem ‘Iguana’ Burtsev

Grave Jibes Fanzine



Nervous Breakdown – “Never Green” EP review

If I had suddenly appeared in Indonesia, first of all I would've gone not to the islands Balis's resorts and not at all to the well-known theatre of shadows, but to the concert of East Jakartian hardcore band Nervous Breakdown, for not to spend the life senselessly, and to beat out all the fucking nonsense in moshpit or to beat off any part of the body during stage-diving. Nervous Breakdown play a very original hadrcore-punk, which may be shouldn't appear in «goth» fanzine, but the band get out far from the borders of the said genre, adding elements of different genres from no wave to anarcho-punk.

Reviewed release named "Never Green" begins with the funny track "Jayabaya Hardcore Scene Rules", the song is so amusing that the guys made it acoustic. Than the "(Love Buzz) Cut The Crap" follows, which is the Shoking Blue cover. In spite of the fact that the song lasts only 2 minutes 11 seconds it develops very promptly, the first half of the track is a very gloomy post-punk/goth-punk similar to UK Decay with a hysterical vocals like Moss Icon, than the transition to the most severe hard part follows, which is slowed down by the end. And then you find yourself jumping as a ball between asphalt and a hand of the black basketball player. The next song "1999" is a crazy mixture of anarcho-punk and hardcore punk. Then goes the "Shure 5", which begins as a real indie-rock and turns to madness like the Minor Threat. As soon as you took breath the "HARDCORE SUCKS!!!" starts, in which the guys laugh at hardcore themes like "about hard life of the real guys from ghetto" and at themselves. The song begins with a half-blues tune and recitative like Rollins Band and turns into another madness. The last song "Animal Angst" is my favorite, it makes us understand that the guys love Rudimentary Peni, the lyrics is the real nonsense telling not about animal rights or other injustice at all, but about a man who wants to lick the clit and tits and to fuck orally a girl, to make long story short it's a hardcore-porno.

The conclusion is: Nervous Breakdown "Never Green" is a very good hardcore with the influences of the other related genres. It should be listened by the most open-minded music fans, who knows much about the different genres developments and who isn't limited by any borders. And this release is recommended to listening for those people who believes NYHC a very true hardcore, and doesn't know what the real old school hardcoreis.

Rate: 8/10

Vadim 'Bars-Ursula' Barsov
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'



Danza Meccanica – Italian Synth Wave 1982-1987 compilation review

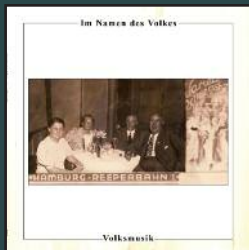
What do we usually see in post-punk/new wave/goth compilations, even in decent ones? Do we see in them any sense of movement, apart from that elusive one which actually creates the entire “goth” thing? Do we see any conception behind a bunch of [usually] good bands and songs? In 90% there's nothing even close to it, but the compilation “Danza Meccanica” belongs to those 10% which have both these features properly worked from the title and design to the music, and even can be used as textbook of how to do an organic compilation of wave music.

Seems that it really was hard work, two years of compiling and two labels' efforts to represent the almost totally unknown branch of wave/goth music - Italian synth wave. And in this case it isn't a far-fetched term, listening to this compilation creates the sense that there really was this wave or movement in the covered period (1982-1987). Actually, the term “coldwave” suggests itself for the description of the bands' sound, - it's cold, synthetic, mysterious, dark, and shows that the bands obviously had a great interest in the British wave, and Factory records and 4AD sound. But still, it's Italy and its own sound and music, inseparably linked to the country it was born in, so even if there can be some parallels with France (sometimes, the relation of the new wave/post-punk development in these two countries amazes), these three words “Italian Synth Wave” seem a little bit more suitable.

Musically, we have contents which really deserve the format the compilation was released in (limited to 500 copies vinyl 12”). All the tracks were kept unreleased or taken from hard to find and rare releases. It starts with a treasure for every DJ as well as for any melancholic, called “The story of the death boy” from probably “the most known of the unknown dark/coldwave Italian bands”, XNO. The following “A mortal song in a beautiful Sunday”, an unreleased track from 1984 of the band Vena, can be called a soundtrack to the compilation's title, so mechanical and danceable it is, but also it's ingeniously spiced with the schizoid atmosphere. Next it goes to one more never released track, “The mutant glow” from Victrola, the band which is inseparably linked to the Florentine 80's scene. To get the understanding what this song looks like, imagine the best songs of The Frozen Autumn and add that primary 80's approach. Then we can hear a melancholic masterpiece “Flower into the factory” from Tommy de Chirico (the founding member of the Turin's early 80's post-punk band Politburo), which is the b-side of his 7”, released in '84. And at last, minimal and atmospheric “Vulcani” from the first Turin's new wave band Carmody closes the A side. Then drum machine start by Janotor of Lunacy manifests the new beginning with the side B. The song, called “On the dancefloor” is probably one of the most depressive songs linked to the theme of dance since it creates almost visible picture of total individual solitude on the dancefloor. It's beautiful and sad, but never desperate. Monuments, the next band on the compilation, is still active and might be known for its works for theatre and cinema, but “Veiled lady” reflects their early stuff which is lively but impassive new wave which a little bit reminds the French Medikao. Then listener can have a pleasure of listening to the melancholic romantic hit “Loneliness” with brilliant combination of bass, synth, sax and female vocals from the band from Ferrara, Intelligence Dept. “Wake Up” of the Turin's Chromagain, an art multi-medial band, proves that even if a band is an “art” one, it doesn't hinder it in making a catchy and a little bit pop tune which stays in listener's head long after listening. And finally we listen to the song “Identity” by Lisfrank, recorded in 1982 and reworked in 2009, which has become the presented here “deep version”. This song is brilliant for being the final one since it's obscure, chilling and even a little bit infernal and keeps the tense atmosphere even after the stylus reads vacant space on the LP. “Danza Meccanica” is a great present to all the musical gourmets, a treasure chest with something old and new at the same time which certainly will take an honoured place in any collection.

Rate: 9/10

Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'



Im Namen des Volkes – “Volksmusik” CD review

All these musical genres are so much approximate that they hardly can be used as descriptions for any “unusual” music. And all that a journalist can do with it is to think up more exact genres or to give an extremely detailed description which is a pretty doubtful activity. In this case, may we assume that there exists electro dada, a branch of art punk? Eventually, why not? Especially since the music of the currently reviewed Im Namen des Volkes certainly is about it. Let’s now clarify what this electro dada is. Dividing the word in two parts, the first one seems to cause no doubts because “Volksmusik” offers us electro music. And as for dada, really, what makes this music being of this kind? First and the foremost it’s the “weird game” approach, reflected here even more than in another project of Im Namen des Volkes leader and the only member Matthias Schuster, Geisterfahrer. It manifests itself in many different aspects, like “childish” chant in “System Überlastet (Moog Mix)”, a kind of “toy music” in “Mauer”, schizoid hit melody in “Ich war da, leergebrannt...”, the song’s name “Elektro Fu*k”..., - almost in everything. But the entire author’s approach to the release seems even more attractive. Most of the songs sound a bit clumsy but it hardly can be considered as a defect and much more makes the impression that it is part of the entire Artistic scheme. The songs appear from nowhere, go to nowhere and structurally often have illogical moments. This approach much reminds short stories of Daniil Kharms which apart from their weird conceptions usually have no logical or illogical beginnings and ends. And at this point if we forget about links to dada, we will clearly see one more relation. It’s the relation with impressionism since the songs reflect momentary impressions and in this case there indeed is no need for them to have any logical or conceptual structure like impressionists rejected dominated at their times inspired by antiquity tendencies of making Art as realistic as it could be.

The style of Volksmusik is very versatile. And in record shops it has equal chances of being put to punk/new wave, electro or experimental sections. But it won’t be kept far from such bands as “Cabaret Voltaire”, that’s for sure. And it won’t be kept on a shelf for long if there are attentive listeners who like artistic experiments, wave and electro sounds.

Rate: 9/10

Pall ‘Nattsol’ Zarutskiy
‘Grave Jibes Fanzine’



Geisterfahrer – “Himmel und Holle” mini-album review

This is the first time in my practice when mini CD has the physical shape of mini CD. “Himmel und Holle” was recorded in 1994, but released only in 2006 as a 3” CD (which is not a CD-R but factory pressed CD) in limited edition of 100 copies. At those times Geisterfahrer, consisted of Matthias Schuster and Jurgen Weiss, was in search for new ideas and sounds. So don’t expect there any dada post-punk, since “Himmel und Holle” presents us 25 minutes of very decent experimental noise music. The general atmosphere of the band had become more serious, and sometimes even grave serious instead of that artistic hooliganism. Actually, this music is of a visual kind and it’s really hard to estimate it since the specific of this music is its individual approach to every listener without any established criterions. So these likes and dislikes are usually based on one factor: if the music touches the strings of listener’s soul or not and if it causes the visions hidden behind the musical pattern. Talking about the latter ones, it could be correct to call them this music’s essence because it’s recognizable in the compositions’ structures, and even the cover which is deserted landscape with transparent figures of something hints us at this.

And paying attention to the music specific, the release is done as it should’ve been - a beautiful 3” CD prepares us to something unusual, making “Himmel und Holle” a fetish release, unique by its look and essence, as it traditionally is in the experimental music. Can it be compared with the post-punk Geisterfahrer? Of course, no, all that remains from it if just persons who do the music. And is it worse than the previous band’s incarnation? No, as it isn’t better. It’s just different, and should it be accepted or rejected, - it’s the case of these 100 people for whom this CD is released.

Rate: -/-

Pall ‘Nattsol’ Zarutskiy
‘Grave Jibes Fanzine’



Geisterfahrer - "Zurück in die Zukunft – Live 1979" CD review

The CD "Zurück in die Zukunft – Live 1979" by Geisterfahrer isn't for you, if you:

- don't like Geisterfahrer;
- don't know Geisterfahrer, but look for the right release to start listening to this band;
- don't want to know Geisterfahrer at all.

But if you don't belong to these categories of people, "Zurück in die Zukunft – Live 1979" is 100% for you because it's brilliant! It contains two first gigs of Geisterfahrer, and represents the band in its best and rawest.

Geisterfahrer was one of the first and most outstanding punk/new wave bands for Germany, and in this country the understanding of the wave was very artistic and avant-garde. These two gigs (Geisterfahrer had become a real band after Matthias Schuster's solo project just a few days before the first gig) were small cultural revolutions. The crowd didn't understand these young dada (post-) punks and even smashed them with glass bottles on stage, which can be heard on this record. All this atmosphere of pure artistic and spontaneous energy, dressed in the (post-) punk clothes, can be felt by almost every listener. And pretty poor quality (which isn't far from the bootleg one) only underlines that Dadaistic destruction and experimental madness.

Yes, "Zurück in die Zukunft – Live 1979" isn't the best choice for making acquaintance with the band, but it's the invaluable document of the birth of something new in the music. And moreover, this music is unusual not only because of some unexpected instrumental additions like violin or experimental keyboard, but because of the entire artistic approach. In 1979 Geisterfahrer appeared on stage not only because they felt able to play, but because they had many things to say in their own and unique musical language.

Rate: 9/10

Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'



Das Institut – "Camera Obscura. Venedig" album review

Synthesis of Arts has become popular in XX century and this tradition steps forward into XXI century as the time does. In this case it's the synthesis of music and photography, but is the reviewed record a work of XXI century or Das Institut, the project of Matthias Schuster (Geisterfahrer/Im Namen Des Volkes), managed to invent time machine and create a record of XX century in XXI - it's a doubtful question. Let's first pay attention to the record background which is the second half of the entire work, the book "Venice. Camera Obscura" by German photo-designer Gunter Derleth. This book (honoured with KODAK price) contains photos of Venice done by camera obscura, the old technique of photography, older than photo-cameras. Following the photo technique, Das Institut took the same approach of old equipment and performed the music of the release using old school electronics like analogue modular systems and others, with addition of field recordings made in the location of Venice by Jurgen Weiss (Geisterfahrer member). Musically, "Camera Obscura. Venedig" is brilliant dark ambient with cold and static atmosphere. Each song of the album represents single photo from the book having the same title or location the photo has been taken. A listener who follows the music can get into a photograph without even seeing it, so much visible and physical this music is! So listening to "Camera Obscura. Venedig" can be compared with finding oneself in an old photograph when the time has stopped being frozen and a person can walk investigating all the details from the inside. It's really inconceivable how a musical project managed to create this atmosphere which draws a listener into the decorations and makes him an observer as well, in since it's too unusual even for experimental music to offer some particular figures and reflect them so brilliant. "Camera Obscura. Venedig" by Das Institut has its own essence and history. It's not only the history of Venice and the book of photos, it also got the touch of the events done with it, like premiere in Nurnberg where the photos were beamed on houses and walls and the music came from a PA. The music lives and keeps itself for its own eternity all the events it's the witness of. It is the music of static coldness, a moment which lasts eternally. It offers you a trip to Venice but it won't be a cheerful city, you even hardly will find people there. It will be misty, cold and mysterious beauty. So if you don't afraid of this trip, the CD is exactly for you.

Rate: -/-

Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy
'Grave Jibes Fanzine'



Seconde Chambre – “Victoires Prochaines 83-89” CD review

I met Seconde Chambre in 1985 and in 1986 I produced two their albums for the label "Divine"

(when I was working for MADRIGAL).

It was a big group for me and a good artistic experience.

I liked their music at once, - so dark and brilliant with a lot of energy.

But the group separated too fast.

(Nikolai ADA (Complot (Bronswick)))

Among the coldwave “movement” there was a band which could be described as burning ice or snow-slip. Its name was Seconde Chambre and its complete anthology was recently released by the label Brouillard Definitif in two CDs.

As it was said, this band can be referred to coldwave, but its style can't be completely described by this only word. Not less than the cold side, there also “no” side is reflected for the band, and its collapsing song structures underline this aspect very clearly. And, to complete the picture, add some pinches of wide range of rock music - some of hard, some of psychedelic and some of indie ones. And don't forget (post-) punk backgrounds, of course. Actually, the entire compilation's stuff can be called flirting with one basis, much experimental and rather oppressive one, but from very different viewpoints. It can be cold no-wave “Lord Brain”, indie-ish “Emptiness”, pretty punky “Secret Laws”, the headline “Victoires Prochaines”, which reminded me of The Doors, infernal and noisy “Maison D'Argile”, which can be found in bonus tracks and indeed made me regret that I hadn't had an opportunity to see this band live... as well as many other different ways of musical performance, which are invariably unified by the unique Seconde Chambre style, sound and song structure approach. This really reminds of nothing else, but this uniqueness also became the band's trouble. Having set their own style, the band got into its trap and couldn't go out of these boundaries, so listening to the complete, lasting more than two hours compilation is pretty hard.

However, this band is exactly worth to make acquaintance with. Certainly even those ones who're enough familiar with coldwave have never heard or even couldn't imagine such approach to this style.

Rate: 8,5/10

Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy

'Grave Jibes Fanzine'



Ligne Froide – рецензия на Ligne D'Hiver / Saison Froide split 7”

Brouillard Definitif gladdens us again with a coldwave pearl for any collector. This time it's a split of two great representatives of the “gold” and the “silver” coldwave decades, Ligne D'hiver of the 80's and Saison Froide of the 00's.

Side A offers us two songs of Ligne D'hiver, but this is NOT Ligne D'hiver. It's a small sliced bit of this great band, and it can actually more distort than create any opinion about it. Surprising is the fact that both songs are done in the very darkwave and Sopor Aeternus manner, but when these songs were written, Sopor Aeternus hadn't even existed. For the songs, in the first one, called “Tired”, this “suffering” approach and trembling whining vocals can more annoy than make sense, though, both ways are possible. And the second song, “Crime Passionnel”, is the document of what Ligne D'hiver was live. It turned out to be very simple, cut the final rush, which can be heard in the 1986 (“Fur Immer” LP) version of this song, and here's the result: the song is “castrated”. Probably I could have called this version a great one if I hadn't heard that other. So, to summarize all the A side pluses and minuses, this Ligne D'hiver stuff can be called quite decent which any collector would love to have. It really has greatly reflected in two songs what Sopor Aeternus reflects for almost twenty years, but it has nothing to do with what Ligne D'hiver was.

Side B and Saison Froide (project of Flav from Paris Violence) immediately shows what is the plus and the minus of contemporary bands at the same time. The case is that many XXI century coldwave bands INITIALLY want to play cold wave and sound as coldwave ones. It works out well indeed and the both Saison Froide songs, “Une certaine elegance” and “Les appartements tristes”, make the obvious sense of cold autumn (plus dried-up leaf, added to the 7” plays its role too). But this “cold autumn” is extremely artificial. There isn't any nasty cold wind, dirt or other minuses of this “cold season”, but “gold leaf carpet” and other over-romanticized things. So in this case I think of these Saison Froide songs as of a “coldwave souvenirs” (which totally fits the mood of this 7”).

And I guess this “souvenir” approach from listener's side would be the very right one. Because what do we have as the result? Nice, well done and designed representative of two different bands of two different periods with pretty different musical approaches. And this 7” can give a sense of cold comfort of being a spectator of something which directly depends on listener's imagination.

Rate: 7/10

Pall 'Nattsol' Zarutskiy

'Grave Jibes fanzine'

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