

# Kraak Festival 2014

March 1st – Network  
center for contemporary art (Aalst)

Expo's  
Bert Danckaert / Sean Edwards / Miks Mitrevics + Kristine Kursiša



RASHAD BECKER (DE) — CALHAU! (PT) — JEROME COOPER (US) — FORM A LOG (US) — MIKE & CARA GANGLOFF (US) — THE JOYOUS COSMOLOGY (BE) — LÉO KÜPPER (BE) — ENZO MINARELLI (IT) — OLIMPIA SPLENDID (FI) — PUTAS BÊBADAS (PT) — RAMLEH (UK) — SWEAT TONGUE (NL) — ANTTI TOLVI (FI) — VARKENSHOND (BE)

It is with pride that KRAAK is presenting the 16th edition of the KRAAK festival. If you have never heard of this festival, we can say this much: if you are interested in underground music, avant-garde or weirdness in general, this festival is probably the best Belgium has to offer.

I picture you reading this, you, a metropolitan reader in a eco-friendly designed coffee bar that just opened around the corner. You picked it up, intrigued by the absurd picture it sports, studying the adventurous design. I can easily imagine you, weirded out after reading the first paragraph. I guess you might need some context now, don't you?

KRAAK used to publish a monthly magazine called RUIS. Both writers and readership belonged to what is generally referred to as a 'niche'. Their main activity was a frenzied discussion about obscure music. Each issue featured an editorial kick-off that became

more infamous every month. Felonies against the scene codes were severely put on the table, phoney *undergrounders* were ruthlessly exposed, harsh language was used commonly. Following these war-fares, perpetrators and victims always made truce over a cold trap-pist. All musicians, critics and label bosses involved, dropped their knives or pulled them out of each other's back to hug each other gently. It was this generated animosity that kept our minds snappy.

Instead of crusading or shocking our traditional foes again, I would like to address the reader who is only vaguely familiar with KRAAK, and has never even heard of our legendary festival. I'd like to point out some things for you. Please do mind the light ironic tone – the only weapon left to cope with the saturation that has dawned upon us since the climax of western consumption culture.

Most importantly: KRAAK is an independent record label and a concert promoter.

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In which ways does KRAAK differ from the countless other record labels and concert organizers? Well, we have an outmoded passion for focus. Therefore we limit ourselves to *the Other*. We even took up swollen headed terms such as ‘off-stream avant-garde’, ‘deconstructed pop music’ and ‘brain melting outsider bossa funk’

For the uninitiated: we operate within a small network of sub-subgenres and niches that are characterized by a ‘do it yourself’ attitude – a heritage of the punk spirit of the 80s, one of the founders of our club is an old cunt –, a high level of contemporary dandyism and an attraction towards the anti-musical.

Brussels based writer Joost Vandecasteele recently wrote about how he believed in the power of the niche, because it is in the niche we can find passion and true dedication. We could not give you a more accurate description of what it is that has been keeping KRAAK rolling for the last seventeen years.

If you are experiencing difficulties in keeping track of me, I can only recommend you one thing: come to our festival. You will be blown away by the amount of musical forms it has to offer. Our festival is an Ode to Imagination. The feeling of deep pleasure we encounter when the artist shows us that possibilities are unlimited, is something crucial to the experience of art. There are millions of forms of existence.

I realize all of this is perhaps sounding slightly vague. Please let me proceed a moment to clear it all out for you. The human species

has an urge to see reality as a monolithic whole. As if the universe is a block of concrete, a clear object, easy to analyze and overall predictable. Centuries of scientific research however learns us that reality presents itself as innumerable shattered electrons, all subject to arbitrariness, constantly collide.

Music does not escape this phenomenon, it develops expensively, according to whimsical, intuitive patterns. The form it takes, is only one of the many forms possible.

But never mind, philosophical meta-reflections about music should not be in the introduction of your festival journal, it belongs to the speaker’s corner that is the festival bar.

To conclude I only need to mention a few more details: people drink hell loads of beer during the festival, the audience is beautiful, intelligent and sweet. You can easily find company to discuss both Schopenhauer and the production of Fleetwood Mac’s *Rumours*. Tickets are only € 20, which includes a full day of live music with 15 concerts, three exhibitions and the best record fair in Belgium. Your cold turkey will coincide with another *niche* called Aalst Carnaval on Sunday.

NIELS LATOMME, WASTE MANAGER & CEO KRAAK

COLOPHON

About

The Avant-Guardian is a free newspaper published by KRAAK. Its mission is providing background information concerning events KRAAK organizes. This is the first edition and presents the 2014 edition of the annual KRAAK festival.

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Hugs

To all the volunteers who help KRAAK out at the festival and who interviewed the artists. To the NETWORK crew, a special hug to Hans.

Practical info

KRAAK festival 2014 takes place on Saturday 1st of March at NETWORK / center for contemporary art. The address of the venue is Houtkaai z/n, BE-9300 Aalst. They co-produce the festival. The doors open at 1 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased in advance on [www.kraak.net/festival2014](http://www.kraak.net/festival2014) for € 20, or at the door for € 25.



## RASHAD BECKER

### “I write the characters first and then I sit down and sonify them.”

Check your record collection and say it is not true: one third of all the techno and avant-garde LP's of the last ten years was cut by Rashad Becker. In 2013 the master cutter surprised with his album *Traditional Music of Notional Species vol. I* (PAN records), a sci-fi trip filled with entartete synth compositions, floating in between an empire once created by Throbbing Gristle and the manual of the USS Enterprise. This is Becker's debut live show on Belgian soil.

SOURCE: FACTMAG.COM

Becker has been disappointed that talk of his music has been projected through the prism of his day job, and yet it is difficult to speak about him without acknowledging the singular presence in dance music that his 9 to 5 has wrought. In 1996 Becker began working at Dubplates & Mastering, the studio established by Basic Channel. Today he is one of the world's most sought after mastering engineers, splitting his time between Dubplates and his own Clunk. Discogs credits him with more than 50 releases last year alone, notable highlights amongst which include Keith Fullerton Whitman's split with Floris Vanhoof, *Dozzy Plays Bee Mask*, and Stellar Om Source's *Joy One Mile*.

Becker has also mastered all but a handful of the releases on Bill Kouligas's PAN, the label on which his debut LP *Traditional Music of Notional Species Vol. I* is released. Becker's record is an acutely physical thing. Split into 'Dances' and 'Themes', but with both sides more or less sharing a palette, it is a series of vistas of an odd new world, sometimes ghoulish, sometimes vaudeville, inhabited by burbling, intensely talkative creatures. Even without having seen the title of the record it would be easy to identify these noises as somehow vocal. They move dramatically across the stereo field, at times appearing as elongated screams and at others as delirious incantation, interlocking with each other in an unsettling chatter.

The landscape, meanwhile, creeps slowly beneath them, undulating with contorted bass frequencies. Very occasionally a melody will appear, seemingly accidentally, only to submerge itself back into the mire almost immediately. It is a 'challenging' record, certainly, but far from an impenetrable one. The act of listening feels more like travelling; of having an aberrant new planet, complete with its own peoples, thrust in front of you, as in a snow globe.

Despite its biological feel, *Traditional Music* contains just one acoustic sound. "It's a filing cabinet," Becker explains, from which emerges "structure-borne feedback. It's nine points of microphones that I can route to three points of transducing, via a matrix mixer. By opening a drawer, I can retune the instrument, because it's all about the physical dimensions. "It's a very fun live instrument," he says, "but it also reeks a little bit of novelty act."

Although Becker has not visualised a new species to which his traditional music is attached, the creatures that inhabit his world are each distinct – and even named. "I write the characters first," he says, "and then I sit down and sonify them. To me it's really animated sonic entities. Working on this record, whatever equipment I touched I ended up squeezing the same kind of aesthetics out of it. I realised that I like all of the sounds in that branch to be as if they could emerge from some kind of a physical body. There is a specific progression of harmonics and envelope that comes from physical bodies."

Becker's writing process begins with a piece of mind mapping software called The Brain. "You can horizontally connect information," he says, "and then browse it through all kinds of different paths. It's a very comfortable environment to sort your thoughts." His characters are then reified through a relatively limited set of equipment. "A big part of it is one Oberheim Xpander. Another part of it is the Waldorf Microwave, and there is a little bit of Cwejman synth. But a really significant part is the Xpander, just because I've had that instrument for such a long time. It's a very playable synthesiser too, without even having keys."

Becker's view of instruments is characteristically perceptive. In instruments with which we are familiar, he says, there is an inescapable class character. He notes that "there are attributes of dominion within the sounds of specific instruments, and within specific harmonic and melodic progressions. They carry some auretic element of feudalism. You get to a police control and you

have a harp onboard, they go, 'Oh, please be on your way sir'".

He seems drawn, then, to unfamiliar instruments in which it is less easy for "outsiders" to discern a class component. "The Pontus, a little ethnic group in the north of Greece – they play on pig bladders that get punched, and they play it as a flute. They play insane sequences on it. It's really, really breathtaking music. It's probably a peasants' instrument, being a pig bladder. There is a class connotation to that, but that's not what I perceive, really." Similarly, "from the perspective of an outsider, there are a lot of exotic instruments [of which] we have no class concept. But they have other attributes or connotations that are compelling. For example the begena, an instrument that I love and adore, is just so compellingly bound to Coptic Christianity, because everything that is being played on this instrument, as far as I know, is deeply devout religious music. Also traditional instruments like the shō, for example – it's a very, very expensive instrument. It's only available to a certain group within society. But from an outside perspective we can't necessarily grasp these concepts behind the instruments."

Becker's class analysis is derived from, or a component of, his enduring communism. As a teenager he wanted to move to East Berlin, which he considered to be "more accommodating and friendly," but arrived with little time before the Wall came down. His views of East Germany, perhaps the original pariah state, have endured since his first visits as a 14 year old on anti-fascist youth exchange programmes. Around the same time he turned his back on anarchism and began more concertedly to read communist theory. He speaks admiringly of Lenin's ability to forge a revolution at a time when "the main contradiction between labour and capital [hadn't] even emerged into most people's lives."

Becker's politics are brought to bear in subtle but significant ways on his day-to-day life. His treatment of his day job at Dubplates seems psychologically intricate, and born of a feeling of shared responsibility for the way in which the nature of work has changed in the past quarter of a century. "I walk miles at Dubplates," he says, "just saying I'm not here to live my life, to meet interesting people, to listen to great music – I'm here to pay my rent." I feel a lot of things have changed in the image of labour since the 90ties, and a big part of that is people mixing their personal idea of achievement and value with their professional surroundings. People who like to work with freelancers pick up on that quite easily, and it has become such a natural input to your profession or your qualification, that you do not properly separate it from your culture or identity. The Deutsche Bahn takes on interns, 400 a year, and they give education after that to maybe 15 of them. But for a year they just have to show their personal commitment to serving drinks on the platform, or saying 'No sir, unfortunately this train is delayed.' The right to hate your job has vanished from all professional fields with a very steep curve, since maybe the mid-90ties. I've always felt that people like me take a big bite in the responsibility for that."

It is not too significant a leap to suggest that Becker's musical world-forging is also born from his politics. While the landscape he has created in *Traditional Music* might not be one in which we would wish to live, the instinct to build a new society, with its own modes of interaction, can clearly be seen in all aspects of Becker's life. His are fundamental convictions, and they make for a bewildering record – and a fascinating man.





## CALHAU!

During a long holiday in Portugal, I accidentally got lost in the great Matéria Prima record shop in Lisbon. Completely in tune with the Portuguese pace, I spend a few hours listening to records of local bands. It was there that I picked up the second album of Porto-based duo of Alves and Marta von Calhau! After meeting Marta in Porto, I completely got into their mix of art and music and decided to ask them for this festival.

The artist couple knit together raw electronics with grotesque vocal parts. Using the deepest layers of their obsessions, they mould an absurd post-apocalyptic *Totalkunst* that swings the listeners through intertexts of Gombrowicz, alchemy and rural Catholicism. I talked about this with Marta, and got even more confused.

INTERVIEW BY NIELS LATOMME

**I'm really curious to what the titles of your two self released albums refer to? Google Translate gave me something I couldn't understand either, but I figured out they refer to Alchemist symbolism**

M. Actually, only the second album is self-released. The first is a Rafflesia Records edition. Each title refers to the structure of each record. *QUADROLOGIA PENTACÓNICA* (2011) refers to the space between number four and number five. It's actually a four-track-echo-soundtrack of a film made out of four small 16mm films. All four films together make a fifth film. The titles of the films correspond to the titles of the music tracks. Along those lines, the sleeve is made out of four drawings: each drawing refers to each film and to each track. In this record you can find palindromes specially in the lyrics or in the title *LAMINA-ANIMAL*. The title of our second album, *MAGNETO LUMINOSO CONDUTOR SOMBRA* (2013), refers to paradoxes that lie between light and shadow, and in

between black and white. A possible translation could be something like "Luminous Magnet Shadow Conductor". This record is possessed by the Law of Reversed Effort (The french psychologist Émile Coué defined the law of reversed effort as: "*When the imagination and will power are in conflict, are antagonistic, it is always the imagination which wins, without any exception*", ed.).

**What's happening in Portugal these days, and what happened in the past? There is a big and interesting music culture, in terms of traditional and experimental music: You have the great Ama Romanta label, but also nowadays there are tons of stuff happening that doesn't get to this side of Europe? Any idea's why most Portuguese music stays in Portugal?**

M. Atlantic Catholic waves? We don't know: you should ask Soror Violante do Céu (*17<sup>th</sup> Century Portuguese religious writer, ed.*) There are some singularities which are really outstanding stuff and breaths of fresh air around here. Of course there are economical, geographical and political reasons why a great deal of Portuguese music doesn't get out of Portugal. Centuries of reasons perhaps...

**Okay... How did Calhau! start? Was there music first, or first the visual part? How do those art disciplines seep into each other?**

M. Calhau! comes from an ensemble of non-musicians that were trying to make noise-compositions. It was named *ELECTROCUTATUS SANTIFICATIS RUDIMENTARUM EXTREMIS* and we even put out a cd-r. This was 2006. It was an under brut electronic ensemble. The less you knew about music the better! It was all about learning by ourselves! After a few performances everyone left, except us two. It was there that our duel started. During the next performance we changed, in the moment, on stage, the name to CALHAU! In the beginning of a set we just announced that at that particular moment we made the decision of changing our name to CALHAU! Audience reaction to the show was unclear so we kept making stuff until now. In the beginning was just performances and designing posters for shows, soon we started to experiment with film and other media... Now the disciplines are interconnected. We never know what comes first. There's a song in *MAGNETO LUMINOSO CONDUTOR SOMBRA* named *VENTO DE FACAS* which is at the same time a black and white/light drawing. Suddenly a drawing was transformed into a music composition...

**I discovered Calhau is also a place on Cabo Verde, do you have a special relation to it?**

M. There's no special relation to it except perhaps the fact that we would like to go there! We love to climb *calhaus*.





## JEROME COOPER

Jerome Cooper is a obscure figure in the history of free jazz music. He collaborated with the big shots of jazz history, such as Art Ensemble of Chicago, Anthony Braxton, Cecil Taylor, Kalaparusha Maurice McIntyre, Rashaan Roland Kirk, Steve Lacy, Lou Bennett, Alan Silva, Frank Wright and Noah Howard. From 1971 on he helped questioning existing genre restrictions with his influential Revolutionary Ensemble, a trio with Leroy Jenkins and Sirone that bridged the gaps between contemporary classical music and spiritual free jazz. As a solo artist he developed a groundbreaking, unique and personal style of drumming which combines polyrhythmic improv with out there synth compositions.

Jerome Cooper's musical path commenced in the late 50ties when he started studying drum with Olivier Coleman and Walter Dyett. He attended the American Conservatory and Loop College. In the late 60ties he moved to Paris – home of fellow spiritual free jazz cats Art Ensemble of Chicago. In Paris he met long time collaborator Roscoe Mitchell and he worked together with a.o. Alan Silva, Frank Wright and Noah Howard. Remembering his Europe years, Cooper recalls 'We were just playing free... which was beautiful. But it didn't have any direction'.

This made him decide to move back to the USA in 1971. Upon instigation of Mitchell, he dropped by

at the house of ex-AACM violinist Leroy Jenkins in New York. At that moment, Leroy was practising with bassist Sirone and they were looking for a drummer. Cooper, in need of a more solid cooperative project, joined them and together they formed the Revolutionary Ensemble. In 1972 they made their debut with *Vietnam*. The trio was unique in their instrumentation – violin, bass and drum –, but also special in their cooperative nature. Cooper remembers that 'With the Revolutionary Ensemble, we were supposed to play together. It was meant like that. So we never played a bad concert, although we were arguing and fought, to the point that we would kill each other. You could ask why that I stayed in this band? Well... because of the music'.

In 1977 The Ensemble split up, and Cooper started to pursue a defined vision of solo drumming. For this he looked back to the past, the roots of drumming. He didn't limit himself to North-American and Afro-American traditions, but opened himself to traditions of the world. He set himself a singular goal: 'I have traveled to Africa, Malaysia, India, Indonesia, Europe and Mexico. In these cultures there are drummers who once they get to a level in their art, can pursue a career as a soloist. This has not been the case in American music, but it must happen if Jazz is going to be considered American classical music. All instrumentalists must be able to have the option of becoming a soloist. So this — for the past thirty years has been my goal; to improve the quality of American music.'

Coopers idea on drums starts with two simple

observations. The first: the drum is the oldest instrument which exists in the history of music; the second: the drum is the only instrument which is represented in every society over the world. Although he admits that he knows music of the drums from all over the world, and that he incorporates many ethnic instruments in his drumkit – like the Mexican reed instrument Chiramia and African balaphones –, he stresses out that he is a North-American drummer, not an African drummer.

He claims that the problem in the North-American drumming is that it has no roots. Cooper: 'The reason is partly psychological. The drums represent the subconscious. In our society, the subconscious is something not to be dealt with. Everything is rationalised and intellectualized. Another part of it is that black people don't have a tradition in America. It was cut off, when the brought the slaves over from Africa, one of the first things they took away from them was the drums.' By this lack of tradition, he sees distortion happening, which causes that American people came up with stereotypes about what drumming should be.

He developed ideas about 'sacred rhythms', which come through improvisation — in opposite of fixed rhythms, which are written out. They deal with acoustics, emotional environment, how the people are feeling at the time of the performance and many more aspects. Drumming is about sound, which is rooted in the ancient traditions of drumming. He pursues as such a holistic and spiritual vision of music, in which drumming is the key element. About fellow musicians Roscoe Mitchell and Cecil Taylor he tells: 'Roscoe Mitchell plays drum music. He eliminated drums from his groups for a long time, because he is a drummer himself. Cecil Taylor is a drummer too. When I play with Cecil, I played like a saxophone player. Cecil is one of the greatest drummers in the world.'

During the 90ties he incorporated digital keyboards to his set up. They allowed him to program polyrhythm structures, and drumming on top of it. Cooper: 'In order to find the music of the drums, I had to change my assumptions and beliefs about music in relation to the drums, which is sound in the creation of multi-rhythms. All of my percussion instruments are synthesized into one instrument'.

For the releases in the early 90ties on Mutable he fleshed out his so called multi-dimensional drumming into abstract compositions. He became part of a circle of electronic composers and vocalists such a Tom Buckner, who connected to the legendary Lovely label.

In the tradition of real Afro-futurism, Cooper realised to the fullest a true new vision on music and drumming for the future.





**FORM A LOG**  
**“I would rather hear**  
**shitty techno than**  
**good techno”**

Psychedelic four track proto-techno. Transcendental mushroom dance. Happy nu-hypnagogic noise funk. Satanic Negroid Trip Metal... At the Kraak office we often work on new genre denominations like suppressed Taiwanese children work on novelty Nike sneakers. Enter Form a Log, the four track all star band consisting of Ren Shonfield (aka Container, cfr. Mego’s sub label Spectrum Spools), Noah Anthony (aka Profligate) and Rick Weaver (aka Dinner Music, Human Conduct). Their music sounds like a crossbreed of all mentioned genres above. In short: Synapse burning tape collages that can only bring a crowd to brutally move their legs. We had a nonsensical conversation with Ren Shofield (R.) which reflects pretty well the universum they are operating in. Johann Kauth (aka Fyoelk, and one half of Laser Poodle) started of the conversation, which followed the illogic of a cadavre exquis game.

INTERVIEW BY JOHANN KAUFF & NIELS LATOMME

**Who are the two Benji’s?**

R. The two men on the cover of the LP.

**Who are the two men on the cover of your LP *The Two Benji’s* (Decoherence records, 2013)?**

R. The two Benji’s.

**What is the concept of “Throwing Benji’s”?**

R. Giving the sign of the Benji’s by holding up two fingers. Two fingers are held up because there are two Benji’s.

**Are you a 2 benji’s collector?**

R. A collector? Keep the benji’s away from me, please. But there are only two, so a collection would be easy to achieve. I see your point. this type of collection could cause a lot of stress though.

**Do you guys watch a lot of action movies with the ‘mussels from brussels’?**

R. I hadn’t realized he was from Brussels. This clears up a lot of things for me actually. As a band we rarely engage in movie viewing, mostly we focus on the parts of Jeff Goldblum’s musical career that were captured on film and step by step culinary instruction videos.

**Talking about Goldblum, it makes sense if I think of the closing scene of *The Fly* where he became a 3D collage of a machine, a fly and a human. Do you remember that scene?**

R. Yeah that ones fresh in my mind, but I watched it alone of course.

**Talking about television, does ‘form a log’ refer to the log lady?**

R. No, it is a barbecue reference. Once the log is formed, you lay it in the quilt.

**Are Form a Log superstars in cassette country?**

R. I’m thinking a lot about this, and my answer has to be ‘no’.

**What do you think about this whole noisers-turn-into-techno wave, that kicked of in 2013 and definitely will go on in 2014?**

R. I would say it kicked up in 2011. I would rather hear shitty techno than good techno, so I guess I like it.

**Is it the fault of tumblr?**

R. Tumblr is to blame for many things, but noise-techno? I’m not sure if that was their idea... Maybe it was!

**Are you guys digital natives, or do you remember how to write letters and the slowness of off-line life?**

R. I could write a letter if I needed to. Everyone in the band has lived or lives in the American south... I think we all know about slowness. Internet can be scarce in the south too.

**Who do you prefer most: Jessica Rylan or Stevie Nicks?**

R. I haven’t heard Jessica Rylan in like six years. Some goofball is always blasting Stevie Nicks though, and that gets annoying fast. I remember a Rylan picture disc record that was really good. I might say Rylan.

**Have you sometimes fights over eachothers solo projects?**

R. We’ve been meaning to start doing that.

**Any thoughts on the tour with Laser Poodle?**

R. Yes. I love Laser Poodle. I think musically the two bands will compliment each other very well. Also, oure advisor, Kevin Esposito, will be joining us on the tour. To make sure we realize the full potential of each day.

**Is he a law advisor, or more a spiritual guru?**

R. He has the interests of the log in his heart and we have full faith in him to guide us correctly. Since 2009, he’s never let us down.

**Any plans for 2014?**

R. I’m also curious about that.

**What is your favorite Neil Young song?**

R. *Mirrorball*

**I completely forgot about that one, thanks for the interview!**





**MIKE GANGLOFF**  
**“You should dance on  
your home  
continent too!”**

A fiddle, a banjo, a shruti box, a couple of gongs and years of experience in combos such as the legendary drone machine Pelt and hill music minstrels Black Twig Pickers, these are all the ingredients Mike Gangloff (M.) needed to make *Poplar Hollow* (Blackest Rainbow), one of the most intimist records of 2013. With his unique blend of psychedelic raga's and American Primitivism Gangloff proves he is at the top of his mastery. Our favorite Belgian minimalist Hellvete cherishes a long lasting love for Pelt and Mike Gangloff's work. Subscribing themselves in a tradition of artist's correspondence, they mailed back and forth about authenticity, transcendentalism, and dancing.

INTERVIEW BY HELLVETE

**You’ve been around for a lot of years and your musical activities have covered a wide range. From free rock to drones, from feedback to folk. On your first solo record you use only fiddle, banjo and shruti box and the music is rooted in the Appalachian old-timey tradition. Can you tell how you came to that point of making music in that tradition? Was it a far drive from blowing speakers with feedback to learning old tunes from local people in Virginia?**

M. I was just floored when I first heard the sort of scratchy, screechy, wandering traditional fiddle

music – or clawhammer banjo music – that I like best. Just absolutely captured. Once I heard it, I had to try to play it. And since it is such a local music, with little pockets of sound that have hung on for so long, it seemed like the best way for me to come to terms with it was to go sit in living rooms and on porches and in barber shops and try to soak it up as directly as I could. Of course, I couldn't just walk away from the speaker-blowing side of things. For better or worse, it's all got mixed together for me.

**Why did you decide to record a solo album after being active in bands for all those years?**

M. It finally seemed time. I thought maybe I'd learned enough to do it. And at the same time, I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to do it.

**In all the music you have made with Pelt, Spiral Joy Band, Black Twig Pickers, ... there is a strong link to an ‘authentic’ or ‘rural’ sound and feel. How important is that ‘authentic’ part for the music you make – although ‘authentic’ seems to be a marketer tag nowadays, just as anything else?**

M. Ah, yes, *#authentic*... You're right, that it's an overused term in a lot of quarters. But let's put that aside for a moment. I've always thought there was much to be said for musicians who commit to pursuing some essence of their music. There are certain sounds and images that are touchstones for me and they tend to be associated with rural settings, rural life. That's not too surprising, since I've lived in small towns or rural areas for nearly all of my life. Is that

authentic or just a lack of imagination? For me, it's enough – more than enough.

**A lot of music you were involved in, to me, has a ‘transcendental’ vibe to it. Even your solo album, which features some great lyric melodies, sounds a bit out of this world. There is always the aspect of the drone, because of the open tunings, that create a little state of bliss. Even the dance tunes with Black Twig Pickers are a bit mind altering (dancing gives a little ‘high’, I re-experienced in JouJouka last year (*JouJouka is a Moroccan village and tribe with an ancient culture of communal music making*). What role does ‘transcendancy’ (or whatever you want to call it...) play when you are making music? Is it something you aim for?**

M. First, I'm jealous of your JouJouka trip, Glen, and want to hear some stories. But you should dance on your home continent too! Transcendental – thank you, I'm glad you hear that. Yes, absolutely, music should make one reach beyond one's usual experience of oneself, whether it's deeper within or above or whatever. That's what music is for, though it gets used for lots of lesser purposes. From hearing your music, I think you agree with me. There's probably some element of trance, of the transcendental, of some sort of gateway beyond, in all music. At least I want to think there is. Some of the stuff you hear, though... surely somebody's getting off on it. I try not to be a snob, even though I'm pretty definite about what I like. For me, that set of key elements that I try to base my music around is a sort of engine for lift-off, or a map toward some deeper experience of the day to day, some sort of continuing conversation. I keep shuffling the pattern around, or trying to sharpen this or that aspect of it all, to try to make it work better. Of course, the best stuff usually doesn't come from conscious manipulation. That's why improvisation or instant composition or whatever term you want to use for in-the-moment sound is so important.

**You just finished recording a record with your wife Cara. Can you tell us something more about it?**

M. I tell you, it's been great, and also so different than anything I've worked on before. It's amazing to work with someone I'm personally so close to. But there are definitely different creative styles. Cara's approach is to involve a more overt extended narrative than I'm used to. We started out with this idea of our a capella singing and fiddle/wheel-fiddle duets, and somehow a bunch of garagey, psychedelic stuff started appearing. At one point a bunch of friends joined us and we were making a sort of rock opera about death. At another point we were singing in a choir with Nathan (*Bowles, ed.*) and four other folks. We're still working on it, and who knows how it'll come out.





THE JOYOUS  
COSMOLOGY

This quartet hides in the dark traces of the Sun Ra Arkestra's heritage, while injecting their own cocktail of ECM styled fusion. All the while they bludgeon their influences with a contemporary form of witchcraft that went completely out of hand. Think next level cosmic jazz, space poetry and Antwerpian free-booting all beamed up in one band. It will not surprise you that part of it literally sprouted from the semen of Ludo Mich. Last year, I interviewed saxophonist Djuna Keen (D.) for the fine Belgian Atonalists festival, which had the fitting title Naast de Kwestie II. Up to you to google its meaning. Just do it

INTERVIEW BY JOERI BRUYNINCKX

**Your playing techniques have something loose, but are at the same time very recognisable. It's like you use certain patterns as a back bone.**

D. You have it all nailed down. Sometimes I searching for sounds that mix with the sounds of my fellow musicians, and at the same time I'm searching for a structure, a thema, which I can inject during a live performance. I love dissonant and low-end notes, or very high pitched tones.

**How long have you been playing the saxophone?**

D. I started as a fourteen year old kid. I also draw and paint.

**You are the daughter of Antwerpian Fluxus artist Ludo Mich. Has that anything to do with your artistic skills?**

D. Since our childhood my brother and I have been very creative. We draw, and played a lot, encouraged by our parents. They also gave a lot of background information. I took over some important things of my dad's advices, like: stay yourself, and just do. Those ideas got stuck.

**The four people playing in the Joyous Cosmology, seem to me very different strong personalities.**

D. That's true. Our musical inspirations are very different, and sometimes the same. We learn from eachother.

**Can you introduce the other bandmembers?**

D. Frank, our guitar player, is mostly focussed on folk and blues. Maarten, who is also my boyfriend, is more into electronic sounds; like the Berlin school, Klaus Schulze, Cold Wave, Minimal Synth music, Italo Disco, that kind of stuff. Niko is an old friend. He is the spoken

word guy from the band. He also plays piano and loop station.

**How did you guys meet?**

D. We met through Erwin Vanmassenhove, the anti stress poet, who isn't a part of the band anymore. He had this presentation in a small book shop in Antwerp, named Bert Roses. He asked Frank, Hans De Ley and me to back his poems with music. I asked Maarten en Niko to come along, which led to an epic jam. It was there that the Joyous Cosmology was born.

**I suppose, the band's name refers to the meta-physical book with the same title, written by Alan Wilson.**

D. Yeah, Erwin and Frank read it, and dubbed us like that during our first rehearsal.

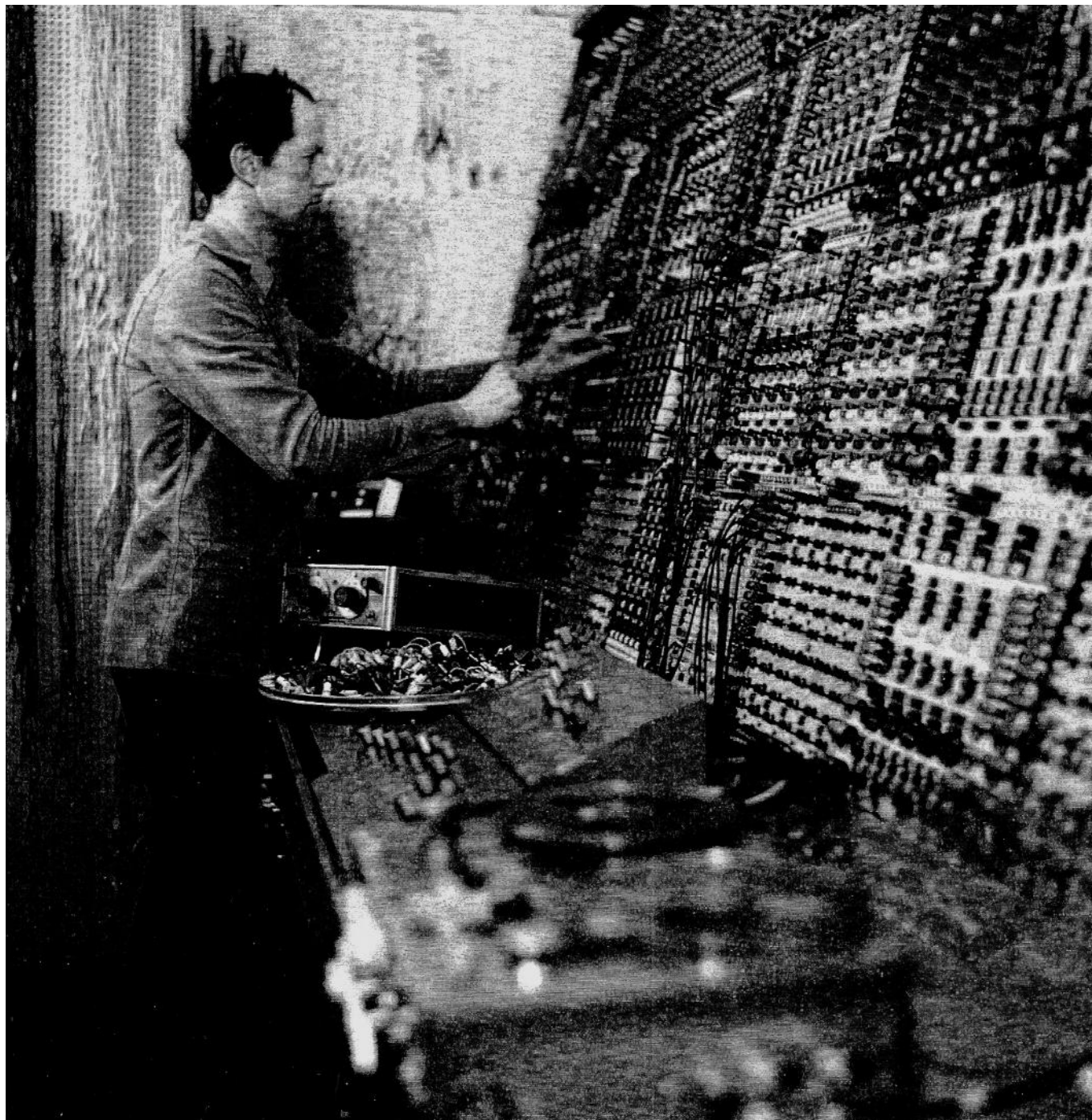
**Back then, did you guys got an exact idea about what you wanted to do?**

D. On basic level, we just wanted to create something, spontaneous music. But you can hear some inspirations, I suppose.

**Like?**

D. Maybe Sun Ra?





## LEO KÜPPER

Leo Küpper started his career as an assistant of legendary electronic music pioneer Henri Pousseur. Ever since the early sixties Küpper started working on a ground-breaking oeuvre at the Apelac studios, in which he developed interest for electronic sounds and the abstraction of language and the human voice. Küpper is still an active composer, playing the game in the highest levels of the avant-garde, to be heard on his album *Digital Voices* (Pogus, 2012).

Küpper is a piece of living Belgian musical heritage, belonging to a generation that included kindred spirits like Bernard Parmegiani. A generation that helped redefining the boundaries immediately following the innovations of such composers as Luciano Berio and Karlheinz Stockhausen.

(ADJUSTED VERSION OF THE EXPLANATORY TEXT BY GUY MARC HINANT, ACCOMPANYING *ELECTRONIC MUSIC & VOICES 61-74* (SUB ROSA, 2013))

### DECOMPOSED VOICES, UNIFIED TIME

During the 60ties Küpper was ardently seeking out structures distinctly applicable to purely electronic sounds (as opposed to those already-prevalent instrumental sounds). The body of work, produced in those years, exposes also Leo Küpper's profound interest in the human voice, and demonstrates his passionate and persistent concern for, and his

preoccupation and dedicated work with this instrument. In the capable hands of this artist, the human voice — so often disregarded as a viable instrument by many composers — undergoes transformations that transcend its conventional use.

It is along two parallel streams then, that the work of Leo Küpper may be generally identified: a search for abstraction with and within new electronic forms, and the phonetic decomposition of words taken to the point of abstraction of language itself.

### SONIC ADVENTURES

In 1961, having terminated his musicology studies, Leo Küpper left Liège for Brussels where Henri Pousseur had founded "Apelac" the first Belgian electronic music studio. By that time, centres for music research such as those in Cologne, Paris and Milan had already produced works of experimental music, where pioneers were forging new and diverse routes in electronic music, "musique concrète" and electro-vocal music. In electronic music, works such as "Studien" by Karlheinz Stockhausen presupposed the use of oscillators and electronic filters; "musique concrète" 's point of departure, as in "Etudes aux chemins de fer" by Pierre Schaeffer, was the microphone and recordings of all manner and duration of events from the physical and external sound world; electronic-vocal music, such as "Ommagio à Joyce" by Luciano Berio, stemmed from innovative vocal and phonetic research; and concurrently with these developments, Henri Pousseur, in the "Apelac" studio, was composing "Trois visages de Liège".

The decade 1960 to 1970 witnessed a strong spirit of competition and an intense call for renewal in the domains of politics, sociology, philosophy and culture. A certain spiritual liberty was born

with the advent of "Happenings", verbal poetry and abstract painting as with developments in serial music, and it was in the heart of such an effervescent cultural environment that the innovations which Küpper conducted in his 60ties and 70ties compositions, were conceived and created.

Around this time, the large-scale manufacture of inexpensive transistors began to replace the lamp. This development opened up fresh terrain for the construction of new musical instruments and of infinitely more complex machines advanced to the point of automatic action. The interpretation of music at and through traditional musical instruments — which until then had symbolized "Music" and true "music-making" — gradually shifted onto technological automatic instruments, a trend which provoked both reticence and enthusiasm in society in much the same way as did the loudspeaker, which was perceived, at its inception, as an offensive and vulgar object.

The GAME machine — Générateur Automatique de Musique Electronique [Automatic Generator of Electronic Music] was constructed during such period and spirit of renewal and technical exploration. The GAME consisted of a collection of variable "sonic cells" sensitive to modulations of positive and negative voltages and programmable manually through the aid of colour-coded cables. At first analogue, then digital, the machines evolved into MIDI structures whose behavior was determined by impulses originating at microphones external to the machines. The sound emanating from these structures was projected and diffused over a sound system consisting of an ensemble of loudspeakers arranged within each listening space in a geometric lay-out corresponding to the general form of each hall. The projected sound was captured by microphones controlled frequently by the public. Complex electronic loops and sound from loudspeakers and from microphone pick-ups were then either recorded by tape-machines or performed and interpreted by musicians who opened automatic channels, thus triggering automatic sound to exit the speakers. This in turn penetrated the machines by means of microphones and was replayed. Here then was an entirely new way of playing a musical instrument and how the work "Automatismes Sonores" [Sonic Automatism] was composed and performed.

The nature and gathering of sonic material for this work covered a period of six years, from 1962 to 1968. Initial sounds were gathered by Henri Pousseur from Munich through the Siemens firm which had constructed the "Lochbandstreifen Machine", a punch-card machine capable of generating micro-sounds of variable transients (this in itself was a small musical revolution at the time).

During this time the construction of the GAME underwent numerous stages of development which were to continue on through to the 1980's which led to the innovations in later stages of electronic music.





## ENZO MINARELLI

Both as a researcher and a performer Enzo Minarelli (E.) is pushing the boundaries of transmedia poetry. Ever since the seventies he combines electronica with bizarre linguistic sound experiments. His oeuvre is a new form of mime art, recontextualizing sound and meaning, pinching holes in the Broca area of your brain to open up a new dimension of Language.

INTERVIEW BY PAUWEL DE BUCK

**I discovered your work a few months ago when Niels showed me a youtube movie about one of your performances. I instantly liked the way how you combine musical and clear theatrical elements. To me it seemed more than pure sonic experiments. Where found these different elements each other and how did they connect?**

E. Indeed, it is more than pure sound experiments, many elements contribute to the final product, but the starting point is at any case language. I started as a poet and I am still a poet despite all. By language I mean a word, a phoneme, also a sentence, which must be developed orally, then next to it, comes the voice, which is the real *prima donna*, as my Manifesto of Polypoetry declares. This occupies the first place, let me stress that such a statement is very important as herewith it lies the difference between what I am doing and a song or an art performance. Of course after the voice there are the typical elements of a show, image, mimicry, music, light... But

they develop a secondary role; take music, for example, I can't deny it exists inside my sound poems, but it is a sort of 'music un-music'. Forgive the contradiction, in the sense that it is compressed. I had in the past influential collaborations in terms of music, and I always remember the first embarrassing moments in the studio, before starting the recording, when I loud announced that we were going to make a sound poem and not a song!

Being a poet, my references inside the world of literature are few, Ezra Pound, James Joyce and Samuel Beckett. In the field of the sound experience the person who represented a clear lighthouse was Henri Chopin, a friend too, if I have to point out a movement of the past which had some influences on my work, I should say Futurism.

**Are there other media involved in your work and how are they presented? Do you always work within a timebased frame or did you experiment with poetry in installation contexts as well?**

E. Yes, as told above, the first software regards the voice. On the most recent release, *Fame* (New York, 2012), my voice is actually treated by special programs – from this point of view I am poet in love with technology. This is more evident if you look at the images used in my shows (generally behind my shoulders), in a way related to what I am doing live but also independent, remember that I am still a videopoet, I started to produce my first videopoems in the early 80ties.

Time is perhaps the most important element both during the period of creation and during the live act.

Time reveals the goodness or the failure of a poem, sometimes I hear excellent poems, but they are too long or paradoxically too short. That's why when I work, I repeat many times in a studio the same poem until I feel that it's correct. There is not a rational rule to establish the time of a poem, think, for example, one of my best known poems, it is called *Poema*, in the first version in the end of the 70ties it lasted more than twenty minutes, then it became five minutes and sometimes for some TV performance I reduce to two minutes and a half.

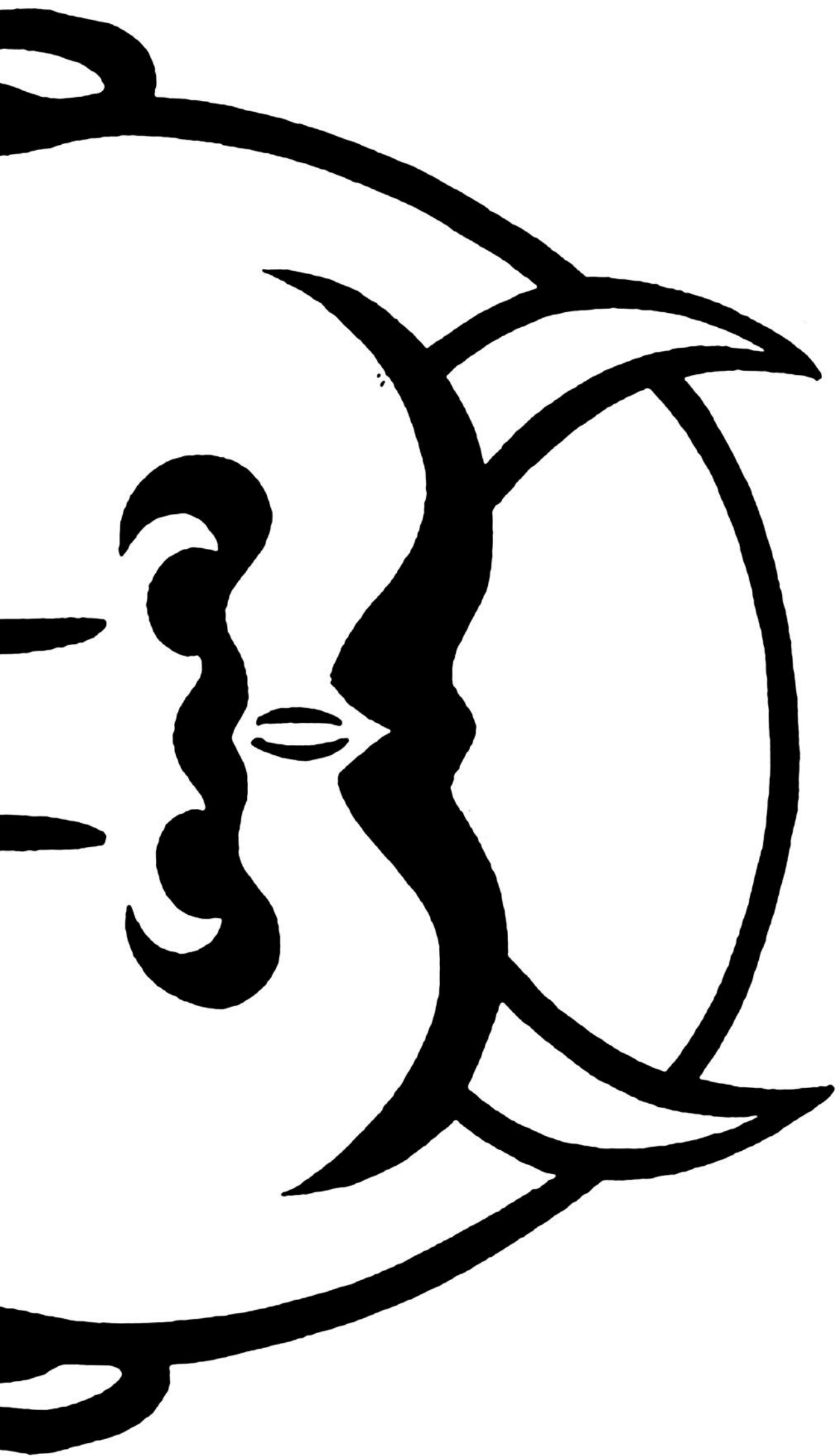
Finally, you have already understood that I am used to play many cards in my game, I have considered to expand sound poetry into spatial context, it happened since mid 80ties, I have been producing ten video installations of sound poetry. One of them, which I love a lot, is called *The Flag*, and was chosen to represent Italian art during the World Football Championship in Rome in 1990. The sound track is always a sound poem of mine and this is very unusual because generally video-installation has a bad relation to sound.

**How do you feel related to the contemporary avant-garde music culture these days? Do you think vocal poetry is well integrated in that? Does your work often get programmed at events like the KRAAK festival where many musical borders get destroyed?**

E. Well I am accustomed to appear inside these festivals where sound poetry is mixed with any kind of music, the contemporary music avant-garde has no particular effect on my work, simply because I see a ritual repetition of the famous *Noise Manifesto* written by Russolo just 100 years ago. I find it stimulating, but it has no close relation to my work.

The problem I generally meet is when I come to the stage after many minutes of pure noise, that's why on purpose I delay my arrival to permit the audience to get rid of such an excessive burden, to allow the air to be de-saturated and to restart a new acoustic experience with my Polypoetry.







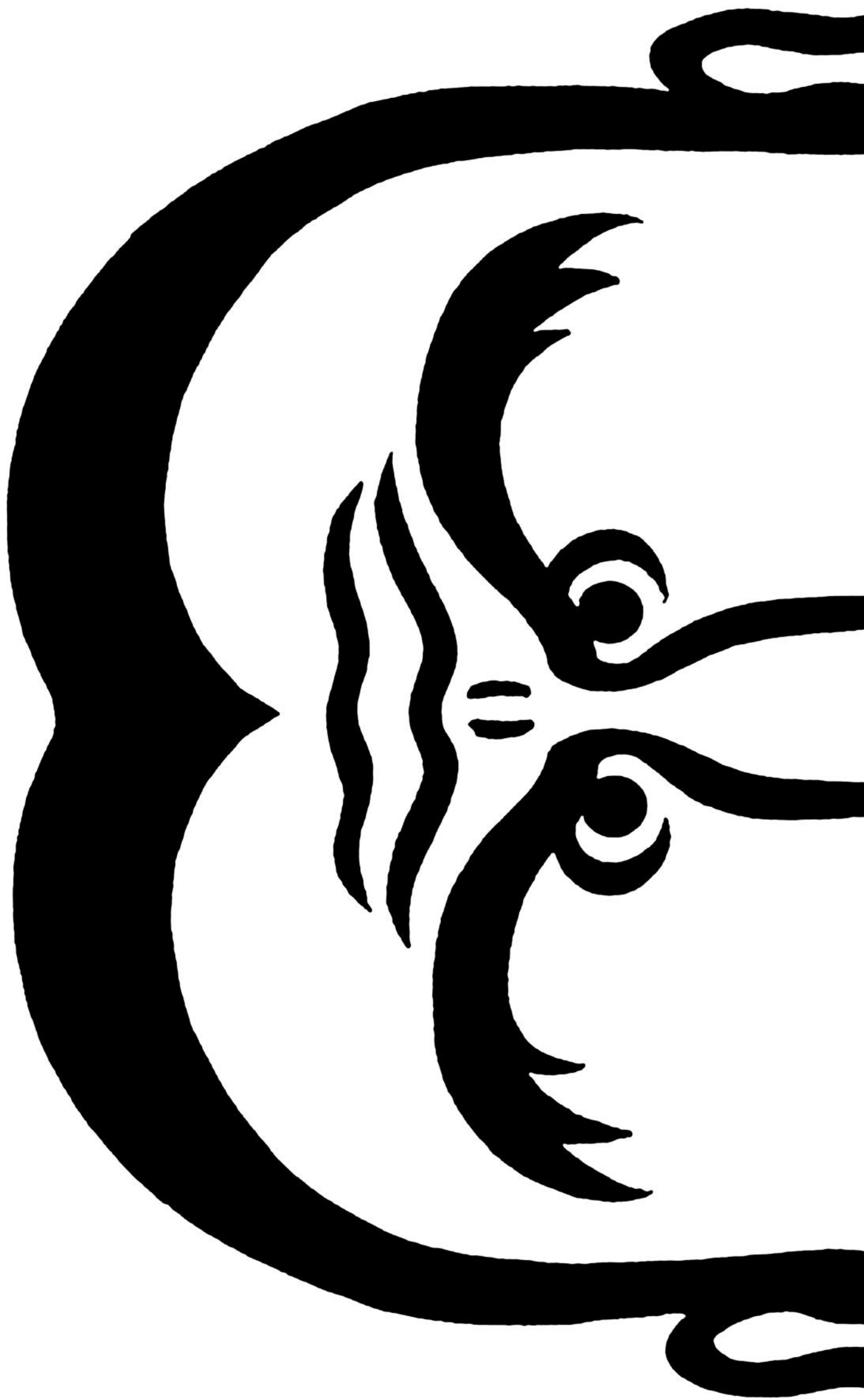


Collage by Jonna Karanka













**OLIMPIA SPLENDID**  
**“The time of the guitar**  
**heroes is gone.**  
**The new spirituality**  
**builds up on communal**  
**sharing.”**

A soft spot for screaming women with guitars brought me to mail a list of random questions to Katri (K.), Heta (H.) and Jonna (J.) of post-Velvets meets The Shaggs-trio Olimpia Splendid. Their EP *Nuttu Nurin* (Fonal) consists of three rambling and screeching songs. I have no idea about the lyrics, but I wear my jacket inside out since I've heard it.

INTERVIEW BY CLAIRE STRAGIER

**Where did you grow up?**

- K. We all grew up in different places. I am from Eastside Finland, by the Lakes, where we have our own Karelian dialect. The stereotype of Savo person is foxy and folksy.
- J. I mostly grew up in Tampere, but we used to move around southern Finland quite a lot when I was a kid. Now I've been stuck in Helsinki for the past eight years, but Tampere is my nostalgia-filled hometown *4ever*.

**Who's under the blanket on the cover of the *Nuttu Nurin* 7 inch?**

- K. What do you say, Jonna and Heta? Let's keep it a secret! People have to use their imagination. Is it a witch? A monster? Or the president of Finland? Or who? Or what? The title of the album are the first words of a Finnish proverb, *nuttu nurin, onni oikein*, which could be translated *Jacket inside out one is luck. Nutt* in estonian language means 'a cry'. Knock over cries and be happy.

**Did you make mixtapes in your teens? What was on it?**

- K. I can't remember particular mixtapes. Probably there was some North Karelian punk on it.
- J. Yes, I did! I listened the local Tampere radio station, and they had these charts coming once in a week. I remember being very annoyed about the deejays talking on top of the music, you had to be sharp with the pause and rec buttons. The music was late eighties and early nineties disco & pop. Unfortunately I don't have those tapes anymore.

**Did you come up with the band's name first while only later discovering that it was a brand of air conditioners, or was it the other way around?**

- K. The Olimpia Splendid air conditioner is situated on a wall of a cafe in Helsinki, a wooden villa on top of a hill.
- J. It sounds bombastic enough.

**Was it a deliberate choice to be an all-girl band?**

- K. We all have had and have other bands with all genres (sic) in them. Gender is more than two.
- J. The main reason for me to start playing with Heta and Katri was because I knew them a little bit, but not enough. I thought (and I still do) they're awesome and talented people and I wanted to get to know them better. There's no all-girliness involved, it's about the shared sound.

**I hate chocolate, but how do you feel about Toblerone, which is also the name of one of Heta's bands?**

- K. I like dark chocolate. Heta has another great band too, which is called Melmac, which used to be bananas, but when the other band with the same name quit, the name of the Alf's home planet was free again.
- J. Toblerone is an airport type of chocolate, and Toblerones are always flying high.

**Did you go to art school?**

- K. We all studied art, although you don't need to do that to do great art. It was a good time, with free equipment, machines and advice. Some older teachers who dedicated their lives

- to interesting things, were good to meet. Now I feel art schools can be boring, because of being too much a part of the art world and repeating in-line ethos.
- J. Over the years art schools are being shut down in Finland. But like Katri, I have ambivalent feelings for art education, it shouldn't aim solely for the market or get sanction by selling objects. I guess artists are hated because of the freedom they have.

**How do you feel about playing in galleries or art centres, compared to regular music venues such as bars, clubs or festivals?**

- J. Usually in galleries people listen silently and sound systems are crap. I learned to enjoy playing in venues where we can play loud and the sound is good and the audience is also interacting with us.

**Do guitar freaks often tell that you should learn how to play?**

- K. Usually people come to tell you only good things. One can be a virtuoso in many ways, it is more interesting.
- J. Personally I think that the time of the guitar heroes is gone. The new spirituality builds up on communal sharing. But once a dude wanted to see my guitar after the show. I didn't show it.

**Did you have a job in a supermarket? I did and it felt a lot like the videoclip for your song *Jukka-Pekka*.**

- K. I never worked in supermarket, but I've been taking care of the flowers and graves in a cemetery. I also cleaned a bus station once.
- J. I worked in a bakery, four hours a day straight forward putting cardboard pie-boxes on a conveyor belt. In that way I can relate to the person in the video.

**What are you doing when you're not playing in Olimpia Splendid?**

- K. Lately I've been drawing and building a wall from dumpster derived materials to get a studio for myself. Everyday I cook good dinners!
- J. I've been watching The Wire, Season Four, and getting an alike wardrobe.





**PUTAS BÊBADAS**  
**“Straight forward crazy-  
ness while licking my cum  
of a pigs cunt.”**

A lo-fi dirty mess, psycho-delic noise, feed-back orgy feast, overlapping chaos, cacophony at its fucking best, corrosive war of distorted instruments, tie-dye grindcore meets obscure acid rock: welcome to *Jovem Excelso Happy*, the first record of Lisbon boysband Putas Bêbadas. We had a look inside the eye of the storm talking to drummer Leonardo Bindilatti (L.).

INTERVIEW BY SERENA  
E. KIPPENBERGEN

**Who are Putas Bêbadas?**

L. Putas Bêbadas are me on drums, Abras on bass and vocals, Nória and Sushi on guitars.

**How did the band got together?**

L. In 2008 us and some friends started a label called Cafetra Records which is basically 11 friends playing in 12 bands. We were already friends and played in some of those other bands before we started Putas. Me and Sushi played in Kimo Ameba, I was the guitarist and he was the drummer, we decided to start a side project where we changed positions to make music with the instruments we played worst. We called Abras to play bass because we wanted a bass player, and he had a bass which he didn't know how to play at the time, neither did he have a band. Me and Abras started to play a lot together and sooner we started making songs. Neither me nor Sushi could sing while playing, so Abras was in charge of that too, because of his Pavarotti

styled voice. We did some gigs with in formation. Nória was playing guitar (still does) with another band on Cafetra, called Os Passos em Volta. He started to play with us because we had some gigs scheduled while Sushi was out of the country. So we called Nória to substitute him. Eventually when Sushi returned we decided Nória should stay in the band considering he was the only guy who knew how to play his instrument properly. And that was it.

**How would you describe your sound?**

L. Straight forward craziness while *licking my cum of a pigs cunt*.

**What's your process in song writing?**

L. Usually me and Abras structure a song and add beautiful poetry to it, lyrics that will make you cry and then we show it to Sushi and Nória, to destroy it. Sometimes Sushi and Nória bring some riffs to the table and magic happens... We also do a lot of brainstorming at Casa Cid, aka the best "Tasca" in town, that turned 100 years old in 2013.

**What are your lyrics talking about?**

L. It's about all da milfs we loved or love, it's also about the life in the glamorous Olaias (*Metro Station and neighborhood on the red line of Lisboa, ed.*).

**What sound / object / animal / whatever do you feel close to?**

L. Pink dildos cumming Aquafresh, Wild Pigs.

**Is acid good for people?**

L. Why not?

**What are your bigger musical influences?**

L. Bach, George Brigman, Three Six Mafia.

**...and the not so musical ones?**

L. Girls and how they deal with make up, Jameson, spirituality with no religion and sucking for money.

**Your music would be the perfect soundtrack for?**

L. Eating people alive while fucking every blonde girl in da world featuring wild animals.

**Are you guys part of a Lisbon scene? Is there such a thing?**

L. All the people that we know and hangout here are somehow related to music, definitely there are things happening. But everyone is doing its own thing, in its right place. We have our group Cafetra and we label several bands with different tastes and opinions about music. I dunno know if it's a scene though, Rihanna would give a better answer to that. Anyway, we know almost all the bands and musicians that matter in Portugal, its a small country as you may have seen it in a map, we can only assure you we are the best band that ever existed in Olaias!

**Is the place you're living an influence to your music?**

L. Yes. Because we live here and our songs are about life.

**A message for Belgium?**

L. Another day another dilla, Sorry for party rocking, Amor de mãe, Always live fancy!





RAMLEH

“It is a work of art that is gradually evolving and developing over time”

Ramleh destroy your eardrums with love. They're British legends in the fine genre of power electronics and guitar noise. Their early releases date back to the early 80's and since then they have split up and reformed on a regular basis. In the past, the band has assimilated members of other noise legends such as Whitehouse and Skullflower. In one way or another they produce the a kind of Grand Cru noise. The brain of Skullflower, named Matthew Bower, once said that Ramleh is Mahler, written by someone who can't spell. But Bower isn't in Ramleh anymore, so I've asked Anthony Di Franco (A.) and founding member Gary Mundy themselves.

INTERVIEW BY JOERI BRUYNINCKX

What is Ramleh about?

A. The primary thing is that, for us, the band is a playground of absolute freedom in terms of creative expression.

Do you see Ramleh as a band? A project? A concept? An ideology? An attitude?

A. In a way it is each and all of these things. For us, it is a work of art that is gradually evolving and developing over time.

If I want to experience ‘the real Ramleh’, do I need to hear them live than, instead of listening to the recordings?

A. Yes.

I found a flyer, announcing concerts of Ramleh, Total and Madame Sadie. Location: Air Basement in London. Date: Saturday, July 21st, no year — I guess 1983? 1984? Also on the flyer: last ever performance.

A. It was 1984. At the time, the line-up was me and Jerome Clegg. I felt that I needed to do something drastically different, so I formed the group Toll. After a couple of years I had got that out of my system and felt ready to restart Ramleh. Jerome wasn't available so I started again on my own for a while.

Which Ramleh album deserves a deluxe 180gr vinyl re-release?

A. Probably the *Homeless* album.





SWEAT TONGUE  
“Poop rock & Watermelon”

The Rotterdam threesome Sweat Tongue has kickstarted a year and has already licked some crowds in the Dutch and UK underground scene with their boisterous noise rock excesses. The Dutch trio is spearheaded by two female members and one male, accordingly pseudonymous known as Miss R.E. on drums and noise, Ms. Blueballs on vocals, ventilators and keys and Petit on guitar and effects. A self-released tape with the suggestive double juiced in-your-face title Fast Cummers was sold out faster than a premature ejaculation, followed by a second tape which is still available through their blog.

We meet Ms. Blueballs on a Rotterdam bridge while cold rain lashes down on us from all angles. She introduces herself as the smooth spokeswoman of the band, while the others prefer to remain invisible — something we can’t blame them, consid-

ering this nasty virus inducing weather. Not bothered by the rain, Ms. Blueballs talks freely about the band without needing to sit down. Although the craving for alcohol and warmth urges us into a bar. We land in the drinking hole where a Dutch karaoke session with a rowdy bunch of locals is in full swing.

Over two beers I ask why they have chosen the name Sweat Tongue? Ms. Blueballs tells us that ‘Sweat is the most pure, cleansing liquid that the human body produces, our salt is the most sincere merit of hard work and exertion. The tongue is a soft sensual organ that speaks very much to everyone’s sexual imagination and this word combination fits our sound perfectly. Although it is physically impossible to taste salt and not to get sick’.

Ms. Reyedens was the glue between Ms. Blueballs and Petit. Their different backgrounds in music and arts inspire their joint creative process, as if being each other’s muse without a fixed reference point. ‘On stage we improvise nearly all our music, hardly anything has been decided before stepping on stage. Sometimes one of us takes the lead within a piece or we each just submit our own parts to the overall sound mesh. We want to shock the crowd,

leave them numb and confused with sounds that can not be fathomed or understood with common sense. Honestly, we prefer no reaction above the common ‘goody-goody’ or wild applause as if you just performed some silly or brave trick. They have to feel abused in some way, definitely not happy or enlightened.’

When we ask how she would describe their sound to someone who never heard Sweat Tongue, she comes up with the term ‘Poop rock, that’s what we make, pure and simple. It’s a hotchpotch of filthy sexual moods and dirty themes, but above all a gnawing feeling of an abrupt perversion. The mosquito in your tent, that is Sweat Tongue, annoying and irritating. Picture the sensation when you, after 15 years, finally fucked again and that you lose the stuffed condom in her. That sums up quite accurate what Sweat Tongue is about. Pathetic ejaculation, sad sperm or glum cum, a half hearted failure that balances on perversity.’ What followed, reads as a promotional text about the 100% protein value of sperm and how it can be applied facially as an anti-ageing potion. ‘Leave it on for fifteen minutes and then your cheeks will feel so soft, which is why all whores are pretty’. She launches into a shrieking laugh. The Dutch emo-trash carnival song ‘Droomland’ (Dreamland) by Paul de Leeuw suddenly seems awkwardly fitting.

About their expectations of the festival, she says ‘we visited the festival in previous years as spectators and has been each time a different experience, but always exciting. I really look forward to see and meet the Portuguese guys of Putas Bêbadas, because they make such warm, rough and hairy music... RRRRRRR! (Ms B. rattles her tongue in sheer excitement). Also the sound poetry of Enzo Minarelli will be a special live experience, not to forget to mention Jerome Cooper and Mike & Cara Gangloff.

Her open hearted and raw way of conversation, seems be crucial to Sweat Tongue. Be sure to catch their improv set and their gritty under-your-skin sound, and try to grab one of the copies of their new tape Watermelon.





ANTTI TOLVI

Antti Tolvi (A.) is a Finnish multi-instrumentalist who has been active in the Finnish experimental improv underground for ten years now, playing in bands such as Päivänsäde and Rauhan Orkesteri. In his piano improvisations Tolvi mixes influences from jazz, minimalism and Indian raga's and lets them subliminate in unworldly meditations. Pure music for the unconscious.

We had a short chat with him about Pianoketo (fonal), which ended up in many lists of best records of 2013.

INTERVIEW BY NIELS LATOMME

Hi Antti, nice meeting you. From your mails, I read that you live on the countryside?

A. Yes, on the biggest Island of Finland.

So tell me a bit about Finland? Someone told me that there aren't many people living there?

A. Yeah, there's a lot of space and there are only five million people. One fifth lives in the capital Helsinki, the rest spread out over the country.

In other projects, you're mainly a reed player, so how did you come to the record *Pianoketo*?

A. I wanted to do something different. More minimalist stuff. And we just got this old piano at our home. I always want to try other instruments, and it just happened. There's nothing interesting there, no big concept or masterplan. For instance I just started to work on pieces for a church organ, it seems that I go through the complete array of instruments available. I can play almost every instrument.

What does *Pianoketo* mean?

A. 'Keto' is the Finnish word for a wild, uncultivated field, with small trees, lots of flowers and no human traces. If you look out of our old house, you see such a field. I used to watch it

and play at the same time. You can think of a keto as some kind microcosmos, with a lot of butterflies, bees and flowers.

**That makes complete sense to me, because the pianopieces are small musical ecosystems in themselves. Were you influenced by the minimalist movement in the 60ties and 70ties, like Reich, Riley, La Monte Young?**

A. Yeah, ofcourse. In 2000 I travelled to India to study Indian classical music. It emerged from there, and I became interested by all these people who were equally influenced by Indian music.

**With the difference that your music is definitely rural, if you compare it to the New York based minimalists.**

A. And they are classical trained, I'm totally self-learned, which is also a huge difference. I never practised in a classical sense, only for my own fun. All my rhythms are totally out of rhythm, following a natural beat.

**Did you use studio trickery for *Pianoketo*?**

A. No, except for binaural microphones, which you put into your ears. They record what you actually hear, and by moving the body you create effects. I can't sing that well, so I was thinking, what can I do instead. So I came up with moving my body while playing, and manipulating the sound that way.

**Does it work in a live context?**

A. No, the microphones will produce feedback. But I do it when I use my electronic organs and effect pedals, but never with the piano.

**Do you always limit yourself to eleven notes?**

A. On *Pianoketo* I did, but know I'm working on other pieces with more notes.

**One of my favorite things to do is walking in the mountains. Your music has the same effect, it's similar how during walking idea's, thoughts and**

**feelings pop up, but they don't have a direct purpose because you're walking. They just come up, and float away. Does that make sense to you?**

A. Yeah, I totally understand that. For many years I'm studying tai chi and Zen Buddhism. During practice, you get into the same state of mind. You find 'piece' and 'harmony', and stuff like that. I think it's similar to walking, because you don't have to think about the walking. I was playing the piano for six months, almost everyday. Your fingers start to know how to play, so you don't have to think about it anymore. While playing, I become a listener to what I'm playing.

**By playing, are you trying to reach the same state as when practising tai chi?**

A. Yeah, I think so. I'm certainly dropping in the same state of mind, what they call 'emptiness' and I stay there. It's a acoustic space, in which I can stay. It's similar to what happens to you while walking, idea's pop up, but they just float away, because I stay inside the sound. The music functions as an architecture.

**Do you aim for this state in other projects?**

A. No, mainly in this solo stuff. Playing with other people is about action and about meeting your friends.

**You and other Finnish acts played a lot of times in Belgium. How do you feel about this Belgian-Finnish connection?**

A. Yeah, there is a same kind of underground spirit in Belgium and Finland. Lot of common things are happening, I don't know why. Maybe because suicides are really popular in both countries (*chuckles*).

**It might be... Anything you'd like to see on the festival?**

A. Yeah, I don't know so much of the line up, but Jerome Cooper and Mike Gangloff sound interesting.

**See you at the festival, then!**





## VARKENSHOND

**“Ever since our first gigs people think of us as a cult. And it only seems to get worse.”**

After roving about the railway district in Antwerp, where I marveled at Jewish headgear I could never have imagined really fitting on anyone's head, I finally arrive at Ed (E.) and Sebastian's (S.), both members of the Varkenshond troupe. They guide me to the sixth floor of a charming, and acoustically interesting anti-squat building. There I hear them out about the therapeutic side of chaos, harmony and the embracement of mystery, all while the skin of my face is enjoying the sweet vapour of the hot ginger tea beneath me.

INTERVIEW BY AMBER MEULENIJZER

**You guys met at a congres about cosmic rays. Could you please tell me the whole story.**

- S. Well, it was a gathering of people who, in one way or another, took interest in cosmic rays. Sometimes kindred spirits find each other while being surrounded by hippies. What interested us most of all was the influence of cosmic rays on the electro-magnetic fields of the Earth, or how radiation from space, and of sun storms in particular, could be transposed to sound. Soon we started talking about Van Gogh, and about music and sound in general. It did not take us too long either before we decided to play music together. In an early stage this was only with three guitars.
- E. After that phase, we threw everything open. It felt like therapy!

**Like therapy?**

- E. To step away from everything I had ever learned about music.
- S. I had just graduated as a classical guitarist and I was looking for directions. When I met these guys, melody and tuning were thrown overboard. It was making tabula rasa in this first stage. I remember our first gig on a stu-

dent party in Leuven, where we shared the bill with the usual cover bands. We went on stage without really knowing what we were going to do. The only option was just starting to play. If you erase everything, you can start reconstructing things from the chaos, because you do have basic concepts of melody, rhythm, or a musical narrative. You could compare it to a box of legos: you have a set of a police station, an indian ship, a prate ship and then you throw everything together, which creates the possibility of putting the head of an indian on the body of a police officer, or whatever. This canvas we used to re-introduce melody and rhythm, but without going back to the traditional 4/4 beat. Everything revolves around the deconstruction of what we have created. That is something which comes naturally. Besides the musical quest, Varkenshond also became a search for a sort of identity. In that sense, playing together was something of a therapy.

**What does sound mean to you?**

- E. Sound and music are very much related to the Ritual and the Theatrical. A ritual is not musical per se, but through music one can enter a ritual. The essence of Varkenshond is not the purely musical, it is not 'art for art's sake', our aim is to evoke images outside the music.
- S. Images that leave enough space for interpretation.

**I feel a sort of urgency in Varkenshond, and I hear a kind of rising liberation. Does that sound apt to you?**

- S. There are two extremes: you either try to make something beautiful and aim at the purely esthetic, or you just express yourself. Everything can be tracked down on the continuum between these two poles.
- E. Expression also calls for the esthetic. The energy of a person is very important.
- S. We do want to add a form of seriousness to what we do.
- E. The level of seriousness differs for every band member. I like the fact that everything can be taken with a pinch of salt as well. The band has three guitar players, but my guitar case does not support a guitar anymore. It is stuffed with all kinds of small instruments.

Everything that produces a useful sound is welcome.

- S. Like the 'Tooter of Life' for example! We put the mouthpiece of one of those small paper party horns on a recorder. It sounds *très* free jazz.

**You release your music on cassette. That is pretty interesting, given the fact that this medium also produces extra sound.**

- S. Moreover, a cassette avoids the song culture. You cannot skip tracks, you can only forward them. That foregrounds the story, and the experience of listening becomes a ritual.

**Are Varkenshond 'tribal'?**

- S. & B. Ever since our first gigs people think of us as a cult. And it only seems to get worse.

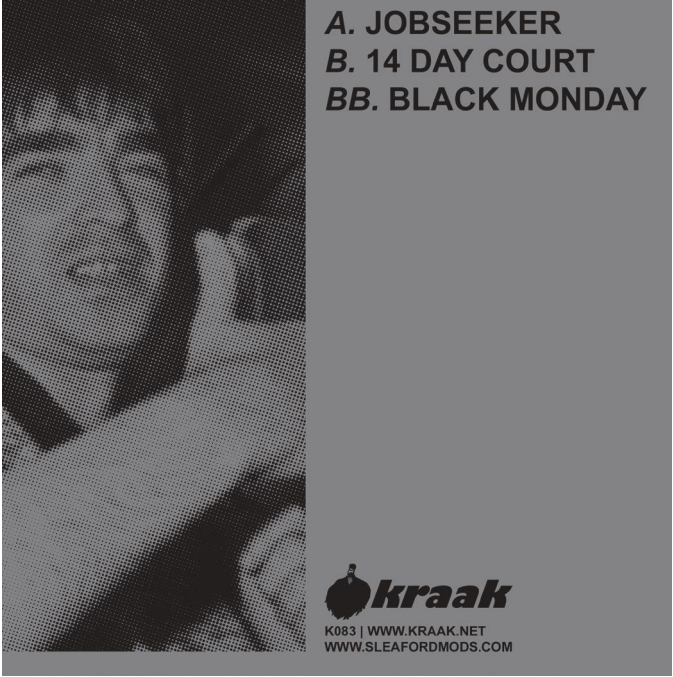
**What about language in music?**

- S. It does have an influence, but we try to keep a certain distance, out of an urge for freedom, to break loose from genre thinking. Only cross-pollination is interesting.
- E. A foreign language is a black box. You know that something is being said, but you have no clue what exactly. This creates a kind of tension and energy you can play with, during the whole length of a track. I love it when I do not grasp the meaning of a work of art or a composition. It can be disappointing to finally understand something. Sometimes I have absolutely no idea about what we are doing.



OUT ON KRAAK

K083



Sleaford Mods  
*Jobseeker*  
7 inch

K082



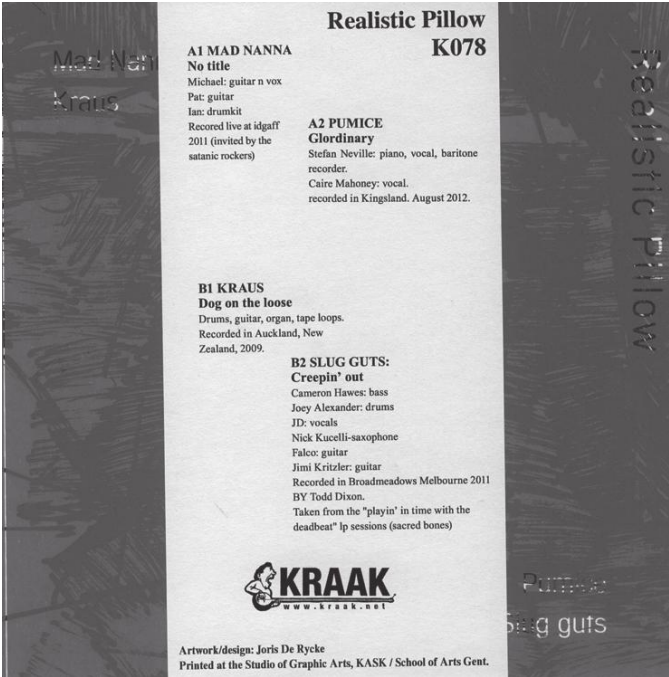
Lieven Martens Moana  
*Music From The Guardhouse*  
LP

K080



MAAN  
*Manifold*  
LP

K078



Realistic Pillow  
4-way split (Mad Nanna, Pumice, Kraus, Slug Guts)  
7 inch

K079



Razen  
*Rope House Temper*  
CD

K081



Naast De Kwestie  
*Tweede bloemlezing der hedendaagse Belgische Atonalen*  
2x Cassette / zine



## EXPO

## BERT DANCKAERT Simple Present



SU 08.12 2013 – SU 09.03 2014

Bert Danckaert (b. 1965, Antwerp) is working on a doctorate in the arts. The research is reflected in two publications, one with pictures that act as protagonists and the other in the form of a novel. In Netwerk he presents to the public a presentation of his final thesis with a wide selection of photographic works and an installation with two new films. Since 2007, Danckaert has been working on the series “Simple Present”, a photographic research in a globalized context and in the (post-) photographic digital era, reflecting a strange resonance based on images from our familiar reality. From Beijing to Havana the photographer captures locations from everyday banality and composes them into balanced compositions, which through recognisable techniques associated with painting, are reduced to abstractions. Stripped of human activity and taken out of the context of the urban environment, the extensively contracted “careless space” shown in the images are loaded with a social undertone that trespasses the formal registration of an everyday scene: an attempt by the artist to grasp the majority of problems that manifests itself on a global scale.

## SEAN EDWARDS Drawn in Cursive

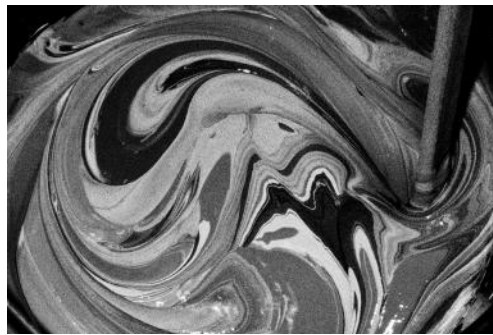


SU 08.12 2013 – SU 09.03 2014

**Sean Edwards** (b. 1980) intelligently examines the functional value and the sculptural potential of everyday objects. His oeuvre consists of minimal sculptures and installations, which are composed of small objects, drawings, photos, pictures and clippings he has collected. Remnants of a previous artistic activity, a found object stripped of its functionality, or objects in his studio are used as starting points in constructing a coherent archive. Many of his works are presented in

the exhibition space in an unfinished state. He refers to this as “artistic intuition”, undermining the premise that a museum exhibition space is devoted to the presentation of fully realised artworks. Sean Edwards invites the viewer to play a role in the completion-process of his work. The exhibition *Drawn in Cursive* is set up as an in situ installation trilogy, in which, Sean Edwards delves deeper into the DNA of his collection, the expanding of his archive and engages in a dialogue with the buildings, architecture and history of the three different locations. The first part can be seen this summer in, Chapter, housed in a former school building in Cardiff. After appearing in Netwerk the installation will migrate to the Mostyn Gallery in Llandudno, Wales.

## MIKS MI- TRĒVICS + KRISTĪNE KURSIŠA Let me google that for you



SA 18.01 — SU 09.03 2014

The foundation for this project comes from something resembling a personal diary. A compilation of everyday observations, photos, personalities, notes and remarks made in many towns and in different times, under various circumstances. For most of the time, they reflect certain personal investigations, the accumulation of which became the main creative action of not only the personal space but of the whole creative space.

Excerpt from Miks Mitrevics & Kristīne Kursiša book *Seven Thursdays. A Dialogue for Two*.

- KK I will never forget the phone call of August 13, 2012 at 1:01 AM. I was trying to sleep as the phone rang and there was silence on the other end. The fifteenth day of your silence was over, so you called right at midnight but could not talk. Recently you told me that you actually had a stroke of paranoia on the island in fear that you might not be able to ever speak again.
- MM When some seven days had passed I started to think that there was atrophy in my vocal chords and I will not be physically able to speak ever again. I remember that it was the only time I uttered a quiet sound to be sure I am still able to do something like that.

*Miks Mitrēvics (b.1980) and Kristīne Kursiša (b.1979) work together on an irregular basis since 2003.*

## MICHÈLE MATYN Arrows of Thought SA 18.01 – SU 09.03 2014

The artistic research of Michèle Matyn (b. 1978) is driven by her interest in traditional folk tales, anthropological myths and legends, but also by popular comic books and movies that feature some form of animism. The thoughts that speak from these stories encourage her to both physically and mentally broaden the reach of her studio through traveling. The pictures she makes as a “participatory observer” at certain mythical locations, initiate the creation of performances that colour outside the lines of contemporary humanity and its world-image.

## KELLY SCHACHT + YVES VANPEVENAEGE on unfolding / De geschilderde kamer SU 08.12 2013 – SU 09.03 2014

Within the conceptual format of the previous group exhibition, *Diffractions of Destroyed Design*, artist Kelly Schacht unfolded the space into a sculpture. Following the recent acquisition of several works by the artist Yves Vanpevenaeghe, which were featured in his solo exhibition, *De geschilderde kamer* in 1995, the idea arose to perpetuate the idea of the Netwerk Museum in its current form and to invite a dialogue between the two artists as an integrated presentation formula. Both have a connection with Netwerk through various exhibition projects over two generations. There are clues to be found in the individual presentation practices and the emotional and intellectual approach they each entail, resulting in both a fresh reinterpretation of the painted room as a new spatial and reflective movement in the pliable sculpture.



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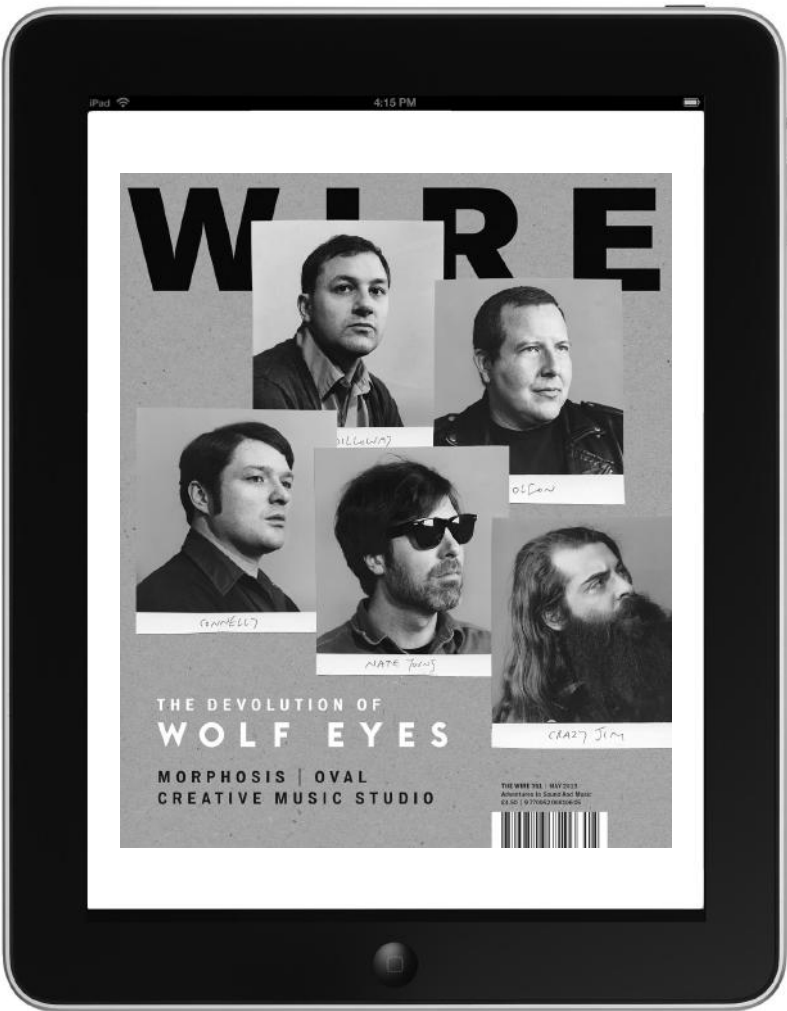
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